Imagining Irelands: Migration, Media, and Locality in Modern Day Dublin

by

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Suzanne Shanahan

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Cultural Anthropology in the Graduate School of Duke University

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ABSTRACT

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the place of Irish-Gaelic language (Gaeilge) television and film media in the lives of youths living in the urban greater Dublin metropolitan area in the Republic of Ireland. By many accounts, there has been a Gaeilge renaissance underway in recent times. The number of Gaeilge-medium primary and secondary schools (Gaelscoileanna) has grown throughout the 1990s and into the twenty-first century, the year 2003 saw the passage of the Official Languages Act (laying the groundwork to assure all public services would be made available in Gaeilge as well as English), and as of January 2007 Gaeilge has become a working language of the European Union. Importantly, a Gaeilge television station (TG4) was established in 1996. This development has increased the amount of Gaeilge media significantly, and that television and film media is increasingly being utilized in Gaeilge classrooms.

The research for this dissertation was based on a year of fieldwork conducted in Dublin, Ireland. The primary methodology was semi-structured interviews with teenage second-level-school students who were enrolled in compulsory Gaeilge classes at two schools in the greater Dublin area. Simultaneous examination of social discourses, in the form of prevalent television and film media, and the talk of the teenage students I interviewed led me to discern a “locality production” process that can be discerned in both these forms of discourse. While it is noted that this process of locality production
may be present anywhere, it is suggested that it may be particularly pronounced in Ireland as a result of a traditional emphasis on “place” on the island.

This dissertation thus makes a contribution to Irish and Media Studies through an analysis of Gaeilge cultural productions in the context of increased effects of globalization on the lives of the youth with whom I did my research. Additionally, this dissertation contributes to an on-going critique of identity-based theorizations through contribution of an alternative framework.
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1. Introduction

“There’s a certain logic that if you teach people a language. Then surely you say to them that it’s a worthwhile and valuable thing to do, to learn this language. Then you must allow them the place and space to use that language afterwards.” This statement was made by Coimisinéir Teanga (Language Commissioner) Seán Ó Cuirréáin during a discussion we had at his office in An Spidéal (Spiddal) in the west of the Republic of Ireland in April of 2007.

Coimisinéir Ó Cuirréáin was the first to fill the position of Coimisinéir Teanga, which was instituted in 2004 as required by the passage of Official Languages Act 2003. This act details requirements on public institutions in the Republic of Ireland to make services available in both English and Irish Gaelic (Gaeilge), the two official languages of the Republic, and provides for the establishment of the Oifig Choimisinéir na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Commissioner of Official Languages Office) to act as an ombudsman by assessing and facilitating the provision of public services through English and Gaeilge and responding to complaints from citizens about perceived shortfalls in the same.

By the time of my meeting with Coimisinéir Ó Cuirréáin, I had already been living in the Republic of Ireland for many months doing research on Irish-language education and the increasing use of Irish-language electronic media in the teaching of Gaeilge. While Coimisinéir Ó Cuirréáin’s mandate does not necessarily directly impinge
on the areas of Irish-language education and media, I had heard him give a speech at Coláiste na Rinne (Ring College) in the summer of 2004 and had since thought a meeting with him might be useful for my research.

I opened our talk by explaining my research interests in Irish-language education and media and asking if he agreed that his work as Coimisinéir Teanga was relevant to these topics. He agreed that they were, and detailed the time and resources that went into teaching Gaeilge to students in the Republic of Ireland before summing up with the statement above. He expressed that his role as Coimisinéir was part of an effort of creating this “place and space” for Gaeilge outside of school campuses.

At the time, this statement by Coimisinéir Ó Cuirreáin passed by me without particular notice; it came in a wash of communication that rolled from one idea to the next without time to really reflect upon any particular statement. It was only later, in comparing Ó Cuirreáin’s words with those of others I spoke with that these words took on singular significance. It was only in the context of analyzing the talk of others I met in Ireland that I came to attribute particular importance to the Coimisinéir’s mention of “place and space.”

The people I met and spoke with in Ireland were many and varied. The greatest numbers were transition-year students at two different second-level-schools in the
Greater Dublin area. Students at these schools, one in a suburb to the north of Dublin and one in the south of the city center, make up the core of the population with which I did my research.

At the suburban community school, I did multiple interview sessions with two-student pairs. I had originally intended for these interviews to be one-on-one interviews, my thinking being that the students would be more forthcoming with and honest in their answers if they did not have to consider the reaction their classmates might have to their statements. However, as my request to do research at the school worked its way through the institution’s hierarchy, it was decided that they could not allow one-on-one access to the students. In the end, (and as I hope will be seen by the end of this work) the two-respondent makeup of interview sessions at this school proved to be beneficial to my research, as it provided for an intersubjective social environment in which the students affected each other’s comments through minor contestations, questioning, or as a result of their simple presence.

At the inner-city denominational secondary school, I was permitted to conduct one-on-one interviews with students from two different Gaeilge courses. As will be seen

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1 The transition year is a one year curriculum that comes after taking the Junior Certificate Examination after three years of study at the second level and before beginning preparation for the Leaving Certificate Examination that is administered at the end of second-level study. Students in the transition year are typically 14 or 15 years of age. For more detail regarding the transition year and second-level education in the Republic of Ireland generally see Thornburg and Spires (2009).

2 In the interest of protecting research participants’ identity, students from this school will be designated by the letter “C” and the number assigned to the participant, C1, C2, C3, etc. The number of participants is kept constant between interview extracts.
in the data presented in this work, these interviews (also) provided very relevant and interesting data despite the fact that the students did not have a co-respondent affecting what they said. Similarities and differences between the comments made by students at the two different schools are also relevant.3

In addition to talking to students I also spoke with a wide range of adults whose work touched on points of interest in my research. Teachers and school administrators, media professionals, academic researchers, government employees, and others whose work brings them in regular contact with Gaeilge all contributed to my research.

Finally, I interviewed a number of young adults with no particular professional affiliation with/to Gaeilge. These “independent adult interviews,” as I came to call them, resulted from an informal conversation I had with an acquaintance in the company of my dissertation advisor, Naomi Quinn. Professor Quinn had stopped in to visit me in Ireland on her way back to the United States from a conference she had attended in Germany. We were on our way home after attending a viewing a collection of Irish-produced short films that was part of the Jameson Dublin International Film Festival at the Irish Film Institute.4 While waiting on the train platform, we came across an acquaintance of mine who was also waiting for a train with a friend of his that I had not met. The acquaintance explained to his friend that I was an American studying the use

3 As with the research participants from the Community school, student participants from this school are designated by the letter “D” and the number of the participant.
4 A collection that included short films in both English and Gaeilge.
of media in the teaching of Gaeilge in second-level education. “Cloisfidh tú trí cinn de chomhráite sa chuid seo,” (You will hear three conversations in this part), came the reply from my acquaintance’s friend, echoing a common construction of instructions for both tape-based training materials and the aural comprehension section of the Leaving Certificate Examination for Gaeilge. In tandem, these two explained how after years of subjection to these instructions it is a phrase that is “burned on the brains” of everyone who had gone to second-level school in the Republic of Ireland. After parting ways with these two, Professor Quinn suggested that I should interview the acquaintance, and others like him, for the purposes of my research. This started me on a series of interviews with adults who represented a wide range of professions and connections (or not) with Gaeilge. While they do not play the most significant role in this project, some data coming out of these interviews proved important to the overall conclusions resulting from my project, and is incorporated into my analysis.

1.1 My Project and its Predecessors: Positioning my Project in the Context of Prior Research on Ireland

1.1.1 Irish Studies

By virtue of its focus on Ireland and Irish cultural products and performances, my research must be seen as a contribution to the broad and varied literature in Irish cultural studies. Contributors to this wide-ranging field of study include academic researchers from a range of disciplines. In the last decade a major trend in works that can be considered contributions to this field has been an increasing emphasis on space,
place, locality as definitive of Ireland and Irishness. Milestones along this path include Brian Graham’s edited collection entitled In Search of Ireland, about which Graham suggests “[t]he themes of the book are placed within the context of the idea that any social reality must be referred to the space, place or region in which it exists. Places are invented, a myth of territory being basic to the construction and legitimation of identity and to the sanctioning of the principles of a society” (1997:xi).

Another major step along this path was marked with the publication Space and the Irish Cultural Imagination by Gerry Smyth, who in an early chapter of that book claims that attention to spatial analysis has become an essential element of cultural studies both in Ireland and elsewhere. Smyth claims that “[n]o self-respecting commentator, it seemed, could afford to ignore the spatial dimension to any social or cultural practice. Identity became ‘emplaced identity’, definitionally contextual, necessarily spatial” (2001:13–14). This emphasis on the spatial, perhaps more specifically the placial, is reflected in the quote by Ó Cuirreáin with which I started this chapter and, as will be seen, is an integral part of this work as a whole.5

This emphasis on location, place, and space can also be seen in the social sciences as well. The notably increasing amount of literature under the rubric of translocality is indicative of this. The webpage of an Ireland-based journal that publishes academic

5 See Madden and Lee (2008) for a wider consideration of the growing influence of the concept of space/place/locality in Irish Cultural Studies.
work in this theoretical vein states that “[t]ranslocations refers to an intersecting set of perspectives that create the terrain on which we choose to situate ourselves” (Translocations 2010). A major proponent of this theoretical trend is sociologist Floya Anthias. Anthias analyzes narratives collected from British-born youngsters of Greek Cypriot background to highlight the shifting sets of relations manifest as differing places in which they perceive themselves throughout their daily lives. This analysis, Anthias claims, points to problematic aspects of approaches to “identity” in the social scientific literature.

The focus on location (and translocation) recognizes the importance of context, the situated nature of claims and attributions and their production in complex and shifting locales. It also recognizes variability with some processes leading to more complex, contradictory and at times dialogical positionalities than others: this is what is meant by the term ‘tranlocational’. The latter reference the complex nature of positionality faced by those who are at the interplay of a range of locations and dislocations in relation to gender, ethnicity, national belonging, class and racialization. (2002:502)

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6 the use of “choose” in this description implies a degree of agency and consciousness of the processes of involved that I am at present hesitant to accept.
7 In this regard, Anthias’ work is an extension of critiques of the uncritical use of “identity” as a mode of analysis (see Brubaker and Cooper [2000]).
1.1.2 Ethnography

Like Antheas’s research, my own project focusing as much on the words of those with whom I did ethnographic interviews as on cultural, media products. As a result, my work also belongs to the tradition of ethnographic works on Ireland. Ethnographic research has a long history in/with Ireland that dates back (at least) to the nineteenth century work of Alfred Cort Haddon (Haddon and Browne 1891–93). Since these earliest works, there have been a large number of influential ethnographies that have left their impression not only on ideas about Ireland but on the discipline of anthropology as a whole (Arensberg and Kimball 2001[1948], Messenger 1969, Scheper-Hughes 1979). For a detailed description of much ethnographic work done in Ireland and its lasting effects on the field of anthropology see Wilson and Donnan (2006).

Many of these classic works by American anthropologists have been critiqued for their reification of Ireland as a rural (wonder)land trapped in a traditional mode of existence. This resulted largely from the fact that from the nineteenth century into the 1970s anthropological research focused exclusively on the non-Western, the “Third” or “developing” world, the exotic non-Euro-American “other.” Regarding this Ullrich Kockel has claimed:

Ireland is a particularly interesting case in this respect, since it was regarded as sufficiently ‘exotic’ to merit anthropological study at a time when anthropology was still firmly trapped in its essentially colonialist paradigm. The early anthropological studies of Ireland informed much of subsequent research,
keeping the focus of Irish ethnography on kinship and life-cycle patterns.

(1995:3)

In the late 1970s and early 1980s this emphasis on the rural in ethnography of Ireland came to be questioned and critiqued by both American and Irish ethnographers (Curtin, Donnan, and Wilson 1993). It perhaps comes as no surprise, then, that some prominent anthropologists subsequently working on and writing about urban anthropology began as ethnographers of Ireland (for example see Gmelch 1977, Gmelch and Zenner 1980, Gmelch, Kemper, and Zenner 2010).

Despite this trend toward the critique of ethnography of Ireland that focused on the rural areas of the country, others have (conditionally) supported this research emphasis. Lawrence Taylor, former chair of the department of anthropology at the National University of Ireland-Maynooth, does note the traditional rural focus of anthropology of Ireland, but at least in part defends the practice. Taylor suggests – in the context of the mid-1990s Ireland, a time when European Union money aimed at bringing Ireland’s economy up to the same level of those of other member states was making its way into rural Ireland – that ethnography in rural Ireland remained relevant and important. “In fact, development officers are sometimes desperate to find anthropological studies and/or methods they can employ themselves to penetrate the local social world” (Taylor 1996:214).
From there, however, Taylor goes on to suggest that an anthropological research strategy of concentrating on national discourses that contribute to the construction of the national self in Ireland would be complementary to locally focused studies and pertinent to both east and west, rural and urban (1996:214–15).

Rather than defend the continuing utility of community studies (when properly informed by a grasp of the wider context), I want to suggest another direction for anthropology in Ireland... This construction of the national self, in which anthropology sometimes plays a part—as interfering or naïve ‘other’ (Ireland through the looking glass)—is itself a proper anthropological subject and highly relevant to contemporary life, public and intellectual, as the Irish re-confront themselves in the context of the European Union. (Taylor 1996:214–215)

Taylor continues on to suggest that “concentrating on national rather than just local discourse may throw a specifically anthropological light on issues important to both public and academic discourse and debate in Ireland” as well as enabling Irish ethnography to contribute to both general anthropological theory and interdisciplinary Irish studies (1996:215).

Taylor’s suggestion that Irish Studies should focus on national discourses of self in the context of European unification is in line with a wide swath of contemporary academic work that emphasizes the necessity of exploring the constitution of cultures, ethnicities, and nations within the context of globalizing and regionalizing trends and transnationality (Appadurai 1996, Basch, Schiller, and Szanton Blanc 1993, Gupta 1992,
Sack 1992). Particularly relevant to my own project are more recent works that build on this literature and that explore television media’s effect on discourses of nation and nationality in the context of globalizing trends (Abu-Lughod 2005, Hourigan 2003, Mankekar 1999). Collectively, these works offer a reexamination of the relationship between mass media, social life, and identity and nation formation in the context of (media) globalization. My work is a further contribution to this literature.

It is common in this literature on media and nation to evoke the work of Arjun Appadurai to address questions parallel to those of my own research interests. For example, in her examination of television serials in Egypt, Lila Abu-Lughod suggests that “the effects of media on what Appadurai calls ‘the work of the imagination’ and ‘self-fabrication’ are worth tracing to particular configurations of power, education, age, and wealth in particular places” (2005:51, emphasis added). Perhaps more directly relevant to my project is the utilization of Appadurai’s work in Niamh Hourigan’s analysis of multiple indigenous minority language media campaigns, Escaping the Global Village. In her analysis of indigenous minority language television, Hourigan puts forward a model based on the work of both Appadurai and Michel Foucault (2003:8). The work of each of these researchers also plays a large part in my own research.

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1.2 Appadurai in my Project

The appeal to Appadurai’s theories in a large amount of media research is not the only reason I draw on his work in my own analysis. My attention was originally drawn to Appadurai’s concepts as a result of the ease with which my informants switched back and forth between discussion of what Appadurai characterizes as two major forces that “mark the world of the present not as technically new forces but as ones that seem to impel (and sometimes compel) the work of the imagination”: electronic media and migration (1996:4).

In an interview with two students at the community school, I was asking one of the students what they thought about Irish-language media. I suppose that I had hoped to get a personal evaluation of Irish-language printed material, radio, and television, claims regarding these media’s accessibility, content, and quality. Instead, the discussion was quickly funneled into one of the large number of non-Irish-national labor migrants perceived to be arriving to Ireland at the time of my research.

AT: So… What do you think about Irish-language programming generally, like TG4 and other….

C6: Have to keep the language.

AT: Hmmm?

C6: Have to keep the language.

AT: You think it’s important?

C6: Yeah….
C5: Yeah...
C6: Like when foreigners come over we have to speak Irish.
AT: Why?
C6: (Pause) So they don’t know what you’re talking about.
C5: (Laughs)
AT: (Laughs) Someone else said that earlier. They’re like, Ah, it’s fun when you’re in England, you can speak Irish and they won’t know what you’re talking about.
C6: No matter where you are.
C5: Yeah.
C6: There are all these foreigners coming over, like, and…
C5: It’s important with all the foreigners coming over to have your language as well.

The ease with which the students I spoke to slipped between discussion of Irish-language media and the perceived increasing number of non-Irish migrants, “foreigners” to use their favored term, reminded me of Appadurai’s emphasis on the (joint) effects of “a technological explosion, largely in the domain of transportation and information” (1996:29). Or, more concisely characterized, Appadurai proposes to offer a theory “that takes media and migration as the two major, and interconnected, diacritics and explores their joint effect on the work of the imagination as a constitutive feature of modern subjectivity” (1996:3). Given this, Appadurai’s theories seemed an appropriate
place⁹ to look for a way to think about what was going on with participants in my research in Ireland.

In his most-renowned work, *Modernity at Large*, and its sequel, *Fear of Small Numbers*, Appadurai provides a framework that offers interesting insight into the “renaissance” of Gaeilge that commentators have suggested is currently taking place in Ireland.¹⁰ Appadurai suggests that in nation-states throughout the world numerous threats to state sovereignty, including ever increasing control by supranational institutions, a perceived “flood” of mass immigration, and inability to control media from non-national sources, have led to the (re)creation of culturalist movements or ethnic projects based on the idea of national ethnosc (1996:156–157, 2006:3). Tellingly, the resurgence of national cultural symbols and sentiment of which Gaeilge is a part has come concurrent with the Republic of Ireland’s integration into the European Union. Given that this new membership has required abdication of the forms of state sovereignty to which Appadurai refers, his framework has been very helpful in characterizing the situation in the Republic of Ireland for my research.

Appadurai’s framework further explores the joint effects of media and migration “as a constitutive feature of modern subjectivity” (1996:3). He characterizes media and migration as “resources for experiments with self-making in all sorts of societies, for all

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⁹ Note the geographic metaphor of “a place” as a stand-in for a way of thinking. Or, please forgive the pun.

¹⁰ The “evidence taken to support this claim will be presented later in this work.
sorts of persons” (1996:3). This aspect of Appadurai’s framework is in line with my original investigative intent and has proven helpful in the analysis of ethnographic interviews and other data I collected during fieldwork.

Appadurai’s framework, however, seems to characterize the impetus of the two forces of media and migration on imaginations of people in any given place as relatively uniform and constitutive of what he has called “a ‘community of sentiment’… a group that begins to imagine and feel things together” (1996:8). I contend that this aspect of Appadurai’s work comes largely as a result of his methodological orientation; it results from the Cultural Studies-based global/macro/translocal ethnography that Appadurai advocates and practices (1996:51). This method focuses on analysis of discourses at a relatively high level of abstraction, leaving unattended to the complexity that (traditional) ethnographic fieldwork provides. In sum, the voices of people living in the nation-states of which Appadurai writes are almost never heard in Modernity at Large.

A telling example of this distance from (actual) informants’ voices comes directly out of Modernity at Large. In this work, Appadurai relates a story about a trip he and his family made to Meenaksi Temple in Madurai, “one of the great pilgrimage centers in South India” (1996:56). The trip to the temple had an added appeal for Appadurai’s wife, a historian of India, who had previously done work with priests at the temple. When they arrive at the temple they are informed that the priest with whom Appadurai’s wife had worked most closely is now residing in Houston; the informant is
gone. Appadurai’s point, of course, is about cosmopolitanism and easy flow of people from India to America (and elsewhere) and back again. My point is that there is no informant, and that is as close to a speaking voice as one gets in Appadurai’s “macroethnography” (1996:52).

Appadurai does fine-tuned and revealing analyses of literature, Julio Cortázar’s “Swimming in a Pool of Gray Grits,” and film, Mira Nair’s India Cabaret, in an attempt to illuminate the macronarratives behind “[t]he imagination—expressed in dreams, songs, fantasies, myths, and stories” (1996:53). And, as will be seen, my own methods of analysis owe much to Appadurai’s example in this regard. Yet, nowhere in Appadurai’s work do we see the voices of the individual people who are taken to comprise communities of sentiment.

The analyses of works of literature, film, and other texts can avail themselves of relatively consistent macronarratives. Interviews with research participants, on the other hand, can display a level of inconsistency, or heteroglossia, uncommon in more formal texts. As suggested by ethnographic interviewer Claudia Strauss, “when people are given the chance to express their views at length in the liminal social circumstances of an interview with someone they do not know, they often mix different points of view in odd combinations. At least, the combinations seem odd if the listener expects ideological or attitudinal consistency” (N.d.:1).
In line with the inconsistency of voiced statements collected by ethnographic and person-centered interviewers, those utilizing these methods have generated analytical approaches well-suited to dealing with the data collected. Strauss, for example, has written about “compartmentalization,” which she illustrates by way of interviews regarding social mobility that she undertook with a research participant she refers to as Jim Lovett. In the course of a series of interviews, Lovett made multiple contradictory statements (to the eye of the researcher with the benefit of transcriptions of their conversations). From this, Strauss suggests that “[i]t seems clear that Lovett has internalized conflicting social discourses, which he expresses in distinct voices” (1997:221, also see Strauss 1990 and Strauss 2005).

Perhaps in some ways similar to Strauss’s notion of compartmentalization, and perhaps in a way more readily applicable to my own analysis, is Katherine P. Ewing’s concept of “Illusions of Wholeness.” According to Ewing, “the anthropologist frequently discovers in the field that informants provide inconsistent accounts not only of their culture, but also of themselves” (1990:251). Giving an excerpt from an interview she did with a Pakistani woman she calls Shamim, Ewing highlights quick shifts in the stream of talk from this research participant and suggests they are indicative of a number of

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11 Strauss goes on to discuss the potential integration of compartmentalized discourses. An extension of my current project would be to address the conditions under which varying social discourses might come into conflict and/or be integrated. For now, I will “suppose that most people have no need to resolve any difference among these discourses” (Strauss, n.d.). This is in line with Strauss and Quinn’s earlier suggestion that there is “no constraint against the possibility of multiple, even contradictory, cultural themes” (1997:120).
cultural self-representations articulated by Shamim. The extract is an example, Ewing claims, of the ways in which “individuals are continuously reconstituting themselves into new selves in response to internal and external stimuli. They construct new selves from their available self-representations, which are based on cultural constructions” (1990:258).

Both Strauss’s and Ewing’s works highlight an insight emerging from an engagement with the words of people through in-depth interviews that complexity/inconsistency must be dealt with. The locality framework I propose here takes this inconsistency into account and builds on this line of academic research.

1.3 Locality Framework

The framework for analyzing the data I collected in the Republic of Ireland that I develop here is a result of my engagement with the work of Appadurai and Foucault. My engagement with Appadurai’s concept of locality starts where he ends his most-

12 I have reservations about, and later in this work argue against, certain theories of “self-representation” that suggest of “optional” personas put on or roles played. In Ewing’s articulation, however, the self-representations are not taken on glibly or as a (maximizing) strategy. Rather, they are evoked by contexts and the individuals who engage in these “self-representations” are unaware of the existence of alternate self-representations; when parallel self-representations are not engaged, they simply do not exist. Additionally, Ewing suggests “A particular self-representation, furthermore, coincided with representations of others that went together to constitute a symbolic whole. Her (Shamim’s) image of being a good, obedient daughter, for instance, was consistent with an image of her parents constructed in terms of a cultural ideal: they are parents who provide everything for their children and deserve perfect obedience. When her image of herself shifted, as when she saw herself as a politician, so did her image of her parents” (1990:264). This suggestion makes Ewing’s article conducive to my project’s emphasis on constitutions of place/space.

13 It will be noticed, as suggested earlier, that this is similar to Niamh Hourigan’s approach to her investigation of indigenous minority language media movements. However, the elements of Appadurai’s and Foucault’s work to which Hourigan and I appeal are different.
prominent work *Modernity at Large*, in the final chapter of that work entitled “The Production of Locality.”

At the start of this closing chapter of his book, Appadurai suggests that he is interested in examining locality as primarily relational and contextual as opposed to scalar or spatial. “I see it [locality] as a complex phenomenological quality…. This phenomenological quality, which expresses itself in certain kinds of agency, sociality, and reproducibility, is the main predicate of locality as a category (or subject) that I seek to explore” (1996:178). And, so, Appadurai begins his discussion of locality in terms of human experience and awareness of it, during which he talks of “a structure of feeling” that is shared by people in a place. This discussion does not get too far, however.

Appadurai’s discussion of locality in terms of human experience is cut short as he begins to focus upon those social factors that he suggests affect the locality: the entropy resulting from the variability of behaviors by individual social actors, the ravages of (hegemonic) locality-producing projects of other social formations (nation-states, neighbors, missionaries, capitalists), the changes that accompany diasporic flows of peoples in to/out of/through/back to a place, and the effects of (transnational) electronic media. In line with Appadurai’s propensity to focus on discourses as a relatively high level of abstraction just mentioned, there is hardly time in his articulation of locality to explore the phenomenological quality of place(s).
In order to build a locality framework suitable for exploring the ways the Irish people I met and spoke with experience the locality, the place, in which they live I have found some of the work by Michel Foucault useful. In particular, I focus upon the later work that Foucault did in the field of ethics. However, I do not, and I feel we cannot, parse Foucault’s work into a number of discreet works, as is often done in academic writing regarding Foucault.

By Foucault’s own account, he undertook a shift in his work late in his life.\textsuperscript{14} This change was introduced in Volume 2 of The History of Sexuality, in which Foucault states an alteration in his approach was called for, “in order to analyze what is termed ‘the subject.’ It seemed appropriate to look for the forms and modalities of the relation to self by which the individual constitutes and recognizes himself \textit{qua} subject” (1990:6).\textsuperscript{15}

A number of critics claimed that this “shift” in focus in Foucault’s work made it the antithesis of his earlier work. Some claimed that Volumes 2 and 3 of The History of Sexuality, in effect, undid the work of Foucault’s earlier investigations. In one particularly strong handed attack on Foucault’s new work, Leo Bersani made this claim:

I make these rather harsh remarks because nothing could be more at odds with both Foucault’s own erotically playful style as a teacher and the intellectual promises of his earlier work, than the implicit estheticized idealization of power

\textsuperscript{14} This was, in fact, the second major shift in the direction of Foucault’s work, as will be touched on later.

\textsuperscript{15} I take the similarity of this articulation of Foucault’s goals to Appadurai’s interest in the ways that social factors, primarily media and migration, affect processes of “self-fabrication” to be notable.
in his last two books. What happens in Volumes 2 and 3 of *The History of Sexuality* can perhaps best be understood in terms of the relation between writing and power. The move to antiquity, and the notion of history writing as an “ascesis,” as the possibility of shedding the cultural conditions of possibility of one’s own thought, are both aspects of a new kind of surrender to the very episteme which they presumably elude. The notion of history as an object of study, the view of the historian as distinct from the material, and finally, the image of the philosopher as someone capable of thinking himself out of his own thought: far from being premises which may allow us to move out of – or even to see critically, and therefore to begin to resist – the field within which our culture diagrams our thinking, are themselves among the fundamental assumptions of Western humanistic culture. (1985:19–20)

Foucault, however, claimed that the work embodied in Volume 2 of *The History of Sexuality* was consistent with (in) his overall project. In an interview held just several weeks before his death, Foucault discussed the differences and relations between his earlier and later work succinctly.

It seems to me that in *Madness and Civilization, The Order of Things*, and also in *Discipline and Punish* a lot of things which were implicit could not be rendered explicit due to the manner in which I posed the problems. I tried to locate three major types of problems: the problem of truth, the problem of power, and the problem of individual conduct. These three domains of experience can only be understood in relation to each other, not independently. What bothered me
about the previous books is that I considered the first two experiences without taking the third one into account. (1985:2)

Despite critical positions vis-à-vis Foucault’s work in ethics, and often in line with Foucault’s own rebuttals of these critics, a number of academic writers have found a wellspring of promise in the body of work. Among these academics is anthropologist James Faubion. Faubion begins a proposal for a line of anthropological research with the observation that, despite a preoccupation with and anxiety about ethical practice among anthropologists in the United States today, there has been a failure of those same anthropologists “to inquire into the social and cultural themes and variations of ethical discourse and ethical practice” (2001:83). After noting a few dated examples of anthropological works that could be considered anthropological approaches toward the subject of ethics, Faubion goes on to suggest that “a return to the ethical field would seem anthropologically timely, if not patently overdue” (2001:84). And, because of its potential to assist anthropologists in investigating the dynamics of both cultural homeostasis and cultural change within as well as across cultural and social boundaries, Faubion asserts that Foucault’s investigations into ethics “must be accorded anthropological pride of place” (2001:99). With this project, I propose to take up Faubion’s call to turn anthropological attention to the subject of ethics by utilizing and rearticulating Foucault’s approach in the development of a locality framework.
1.4 Foucault on Ethics

At the heart Foucault’s work on ethics is a distinction between “morality,” referring to established institutional and cultural codes of conduct enacted by people that adhere to them, on the one hand, and “ethics,” referring to the ways in which one ought to act in fulfilling the expectations of a given subject position, on the other. So, while there are accepted norms, rules, and laws (or ‘moral imperatives’) of conducting oneself in a particular role, this is distinct, in Foucault’s framework, from the ethical practice of constituting oneself as an ideal example within a particular subject position. While morality is more focused on concern about the negative infringement of explicit or implicit imperatives, ethics is related to the positive creation of self within a particular role (Foucault 1990:25–28, see also Faubion 2001:84–85).

This configuration of “ethics” and “ethical practice” led, or perhaps just justified, Foucault to seek “the forms and modalities of the relation to self by which the individual constitutes and recognizes himself qua subject” (1990:6), as he noted in the opening pages of volume 2 of The History of Sexuality (henceforth referenced by its subtitle The Use of Pleasure). In elaborating upon these “forms and modalities,” Foucault highlights four potential differences between ethics: the ethical substance, the mode of subjection, the ethical work involved, and the telos (Foucault 1990:26–28, also see Faubion 2001:90–91).
Foucault defines the “substance” of a given ethics as, “the way in which the individual has to constitute this or that part of himself (or herself) as the prime material of his (or her) moral conduct” (1990:26). Taking the example of the ethical obligation for sexual fidelity toward a single life partner, Foucault suggests that one might hold that the essence of maintaining behavior in line with fidelity consist in the mastery of one’s own desires, “in the strength with which one is able to resist temptations: what makes up the content of fidelity in this case is that vigilance and that struggle” (1990:26). Alternately, the maintenance of faithful behavior might “consist in the intensity, continuity, and reciprocity of feelings that are experienced vis-à-vis the partner, and in the quality of the relationship that permanently binds the two spouses” (1990:26). And, with this latter suggestion focusing on the interpersonal relations between two partners, perhaps Foucault begins to avoid the contention that the substance of ethics must be focused solely on the individual. Faubion goes further along this line in claiming:

Nor must an ethical substance always be “bodily.”.... Among the Hageners of highland New Guinea, the prima materia of subject-formation would appear to be the social relations that any particular individual establishes and maintains with others. (2001:90)\(^{16}\)

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\(^{16}\) Here Faubion cites anthropologist Marilyn Strathern (1991) in support of his contention regarding the Hageners.
I note this aspect of “ethical substance” solely in anticipation of later discussion. The takeaway suggestion is that ethical substance is the site of an ethics, the target that must be focused upon in effecting any given ethical standing.

The second potential axis of difference between one ethics and another is the “mode of subjection.” Defining this, Foucault claims it is “the way in which the individual establishes his relation to the rule and recognizes himself as obliged to put it into practice” (1990:27). Expanding upon this definition, Faubion elaborates upon Foucault’s use of the words “rule” and “obliged”:

Foucault plainly seeks to direct our attention to the historical, cultural, and social diversity of the avenues through which actors might assess or be directed to assess the personal applicability of any given ethical standard. But for any and every such standard that might be at issue, the concept of the rule (if not too vague) is too narrow; it at least seems to run the risk of excluding other sorts of ethical standards besides norms, and other sorts of ethical directives besides that of obligation. The ethical field is certainly a normative field. Yet—as Foucault, in subsequent discussion, reveals himself to be quite clearly aware—it is very often also a field of ideals that actors are less obliged than encouraged to realize. It is a domain of obedience. Yet it also a domain of more elective aspirations, of the “quest for excellence.” (2001:90)

Returning to his consistent exemplar of marital fidelity, Foucault suggests that one may exhibit behavior in line with this ethical practice because one counts him- or
herself among a group that accepts it, or because he or she regards his- or herself as heir (perhaps the last remaining heir) to a spiritual tradition whose responsibility it is to maintain or revive the ethic, or because one is seeking to give their own (singular) personal life a form that answers to particular criteria (brilliance, beauty, nobility, or perfection) (1990:27). In sum, the mode of subjection is the avenue of relation between the subject and ethical behavior.

The ethical work involved in an ethics are those efforts “one performs on oneself, not only in order to bring one’s conduct into compliance with a given rule, but to attempt to transform oneself into the ethical subject of one’s behavior” (Foucault 1990:27). Or, as Faubion questions, “what plan or plans of exercise lead to the attainment of its imago, its version or vision of ethical ‘graduation,’ of ethical maturity?” (2001:90–91). And of our theoretical faithful single life partner Foucault claims:

Thus, sexual austerity can be practiced through a long effort of learning, memorization, and assimilation of a systematic ensemble of precepts, and through a regular checking of conduct aimed at measuring the exactness with which one is applying these rules. It can be practiced in the form of a sudden, all-embracing, and definitive renunciation of pleasures; it can also be practiced in the form of a relentless combat whose vicissitudes—including momentary setbacks—can have meaning and value in themselves; and it can be practiced through a decipherment as painstaking, continuous, and detailed as possible, of
the movements of desire in all its hidden forms, including the most obscure.

(Foucault 1990:27)

The efforts and exercises one might put into achieving/maintaining their position as an ethical subject may, thus, be variable.

Finally, the telos of an ethics, which is the ultimate ends of ethical action that may, perhaps most often does, extend beyond the end of particular actions and/or actors themselves to the establishment of a “reality” in the world (or the next world). Foucault suggests that there are many potential differences that are possible in this regard, as well. Returning to his example of conjugal fidelity, he suggests that it can be taken to result in an increased mastery of the self, it can manifest a sudden and radical detachment from the world, it may result in a tranquility of soul and/or an insensitivity to the distraction of passions, or toward purification that ensures salvation after death (1990:28).

Having laid out these four aspects of ethics, another concept introduced by Foucault is that of problematization. Foucault suggests a given ethic will on occasion come to be problematized. And this idea is not at all unrelated to the four axes of difference outlined here. For, Faubion suggests that “ethical practices remain homeostatic so long as the contents of the Foucauldean fourfold—substance, mode of subjectivation, work, and telos—remain stable” (2001:98). In more general terms, it is
against a field of, at least minimally, consistent and relatively long-standing discursive coherence, that fissures appear. As explained by Faubion, problematization’s background conditions are those in which any particular system (or subsystem) of thought, crisply coherent or cognitively bedraggled, rests at any given moment. Against them, it commences as an aporia, a paradox, or puzzle, a surprise or anomaly…. Against a given mental fabric of the expectable, it thus commences in the experience of the unexpected, the odd, the baffling. (2001:98)

And, according to Faubion, problematization is the motor of change for ethics in Foucault’s framework. “Problematization also constitutes the dynamic interface between one discourse and another, one discursive formation and another, one putative historical period and another” (Faubion 2001:99). Problematization is, thus, at the heart of the alteration of any ethics into another, qualitatively different, one.

With this conceptual toolkit in place, Foucault completed a detailing of the ancient Greek texts on eroticism to demonstrate “the manner in which sexual activity was problematized by philosophers and doctors in classical Greek culture of the fourth century B.C.” (Foucault 1990:12). The third volume of the series, The Care of the Self, which was completed and published posthumously, continues the account on into in the Greek and Latin texts of the first two centuries A.D. A fourth volume, The Confessions of the Flesh, was planned to carry the genealogy on into the Christian era, to examine “the formation of the doctrine and ministry concerning the flesh” (Foucault 1990:12), but Foucault died before this volume was far enough along to be brought to publishable
form. In this manner, Foucault sought to detail the problematization of ethics and present a genealogy of the transformation from one ethical formation to another.

Throughout, however, Foucault is exceedingly vague on the question of what initiates problematization. While the genealogies of problematization are traced in *The Use of Pleasure* and *Care of the Self*, both touched upon by Faubion in his outline of Foucault’s work in the field of ethics, nowhere is there a clear suggestion of what might initiate an instance of problematization. Faubion goes so far as to suggest, “[t]he motors of problematization are heterogeneous” (2001:98).

Despite this apparent hole in Foucault’s concept of problematization, it is exactly this aspect of his work that Faubion has in mind when recommending Foucault’s work as a model for his proposed “Anthropology of Ethics.” Foucault’s investigations of the ethical field must be accorded anthropological pride of place—and not merely because of their illustrative clarity, not even merely because of their greater attention to continuity through change. They earn it instead because they reveal that the ethical field, in which power is fluid and problematization capable of being the catalyst of revisionary resolution, is the primary site of the active transformation at once of the parameters of subjectivation and of given views of the world. (2001:99)

At the end of his article, Faubion proposes a number of areas of anthropological research for which an Anthropology of Ethics might be particularly beneficial. Among these areas, he suggested that such a research orientation would “enrich the somewhat
fragmented anthropology of globalization and localization" (Faubion 2001:101). The relevance of this claim to my own work I hope to demonstrate in what follows. But, before that, I want to undertake a reevaluation and rearticulation of Foucault’s framework.

1.4.1 Reevaluation/Rearticulation of Foucault’s Framework on Ethics

In this section I want to introduce and highlight a couple of points with regard to Foucault’s overall framework in the field of ethics that will prove important to my project. The first of these has to do with its place in the ongoing debate between determinist and decisionist theories in the human/social sciences. The second regards the nature of subjection.

1.4.1.1 The Determinist/Decisionist Debate and its Implications

One of the things that seem to frustrate critics of Foucault’s post-*The Use of Pleasure* work is that they see it as situating Foucault on the other side of a determinist/decisionist divide. Determinists maintain that humans’ state of being is out of individual’s control and determined by environmental factors in line with their particular (disciplinary) orientations, biological, psychological, and sociological.

Decisionists, on the other hand, suggest that humans have agency in determining their own state of being, who they choose to be (Faubion 2000). This debate has alternately been called the structure/agency debate. It forms the background of the quote by Leo Bersani earlier in this chapter (see section 1.3). Bersani rails against the turncoat way in
which Foucault switched his arguments from one in which society, institutions, and
discourses determine human life to one in which a person (or some aspect thereof)
might be ‘outside’ or ‘other than’ these (pre-)determining factors.

What I first want to highlight about Foucault’s work in the field of ethics is the
bearing it has on this decisionist/determinist debate. Faubion comments on exactly this
point vis-à-vis Foucault’s work, claiming that the “quarrel” between determinists and
decisionists continues. “That antagonists on both sides of this quarrel have claimed
Foucault as an ally is, I think, indicative less of his ambiguity than of his belonging no
more to one side than to the other” (Faubion 2001:94).

To begin to get at the implications Foucault’s ethical framework has on the
determinist/decisionist debate I turn to a little known work by a professor of
Anthropological and Philosophical Studies, Nigel Rapport. In this work, Rapport
introduces a view of the experience of human being as an area of precariousness and
variability. In support of this contention he quotes an early work of Foucault
characterizing human experience as “‘a volume in perpetual disintegration’, where
desires, failings and errors engage and efface one another in insurmountable conflict
suggests:

In response, human being re-presents itself to itself in terms of more durable
external structures. It translates an entropic inside into a secure, objective
outside, and so becomes a centre of calculation and technique in a world of
material forms…. In short, human being and its objectified world prefigure each other. The orderliness of human life (such as it is) takes the form of networks of relations between supposedly distinct ‘subjects’ and ‘objects’ which in fact reflect and contain each other. (1999:189)

The description given here resonates strongly with much in Foucault’s framework (as presented by Faubion, at least). The strongest points of similarity surround Faubion’s assertion that within Foucault’s framework ethical trials and errors exhibit a particular complexity, requiring a coming to terms with the self, its natural and socio-cultural environment, and relations between the two. Thus, “‘Knowing oneself’ is impossible without reference to an environment” (Faubion 2001:100). And this is where my proposed locality framework connects with Foucault’s work in ethics. However, such knowledge of a self within a particular environment, a particular place, is constantly susceptible to alteration, with change ever possible in the self, its environment, or both. This leads Faubion to the suggestion that:

The ethical field is thus a field of the self at risk; and its pedagogies, as apparatuses for the production and reproduction of the self, must serve not—*per impossible*—to negate but rather to control, to manage, to cope with the self in its “riskiness.” (2001:100)

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17 It should be noted that this is not at all a controversial claim. Psychological anthropologists have for some time been interested to illuminate the co-constructedness of people and/in their sociocultural environments. A relevant treatment comes from John Ingham, who claims “We are, in effect, psychological beings. Yet we are social and cultural creatures also. We live in communities and in moral worlds of shared (and contested) symbols, beliefs, and values” (1996:1).
At another point in his article Faubion quotes from a 1984 interview with Foucault in which the latter discussed the “shift” in his overall project/work as embodied in *The Use of Pleasure*. In that interview Foucault claimed that, “[e]thos also implies a relationship with others, insofar as care of the self enables one to occupy his rightful position in the city, the community, or interpersonal relationships, whether as a magistrate or a friend” (1994:287). While in this instance Foucault was referring to a particular mode or instance of ethics, that of an ethic of care of the self in the Greco-Roman world, it bears extension to all ethical practice under Foucault’s framework. Faubion supports this view in suggesting that “[f]or Foucault, ethical practice requires not simply a repertoire of technologies but also an ‘open territory’ a social terrain in which a considered freedom might actually be exercised” (2001:88).

While it may seem that this discussion has strayed somewhat from its starting point of the determinist/decisionist debate, I suggest that it clarifies the very nature of this debate. For if this framework in which an ordering of the external is continually undertaken through processes of ethical practice in the dialectical manner described in response to the inherent “riskiness” (the ever-present potential for otherwiseness in the

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18 It is not at all hard to find this same idea in Appadurai’s articulation of locality. Mentioning a range of ceremonies, rites of passage, and rituals that Appadurai claims work to localize the subjects involved, he suggests that people everywhere seem to assume that “locality is ephemeral unless hard and regular work is undertaken to produce and maintain its materiality” (1996:181). Then, he suggests that “local knowledge is actually knowledge of how to produce and reproduce locality under conditions of anxiety and entropy, social wear and flux, ecological uncertainty and cosmic volatility, and the always present quirkiness of kinsmen, enemies, spirits, and quarks of all sorts” (1996:181).
experience of human being) is accepted, then the determinist/decisionist debate can be seen as largely irrelevant. In line with this, Faubion suggests that Foucault sees the practice of ethical self-making as “an activity neither passively determined nor entirely ‘up to us’” (2001:94). And, “[f]or Foucault, the indeterminate house of mirrors that thus permits of access is the house of ethical maturation” (Faubion 2001:94).

For application to my own ethnographic data from the Republic of Ireland, what is key is that ethical practice is always and everywhere both acting within and responding to (perhaps even in the service of) a ‘terrain’ of social relations and objects, a “world.” At the same exact time, it is the practice of (re)creating that very same field of social relations and objects. In sum, ethical practice is always and everywhere the practice of making and remaking place.

The places crafted by the practice of ethics are, again, comprised of social relations that are salient in the practice of any given ethics. I call these clusters of salient social subject positions social vistas. The phrase benefits from a double meaning of the term vista, which can simultaneously refers both to a view through an opening, viewing a landscape/terrain through a window for example, and “an extensive mental view (as over a stretch of time or a series of events)” (Merriam-Webster, Incorporated 2001:1317).

1.4.1.2 Multiple and Parallel Subjectivation

A second aspect of Foucault’s theories and an idea that I would like to highlight about Foucault’s framework is its potential to leave room in for the possibility that
individuals’ subjectivation might be multiple in their manifestations. Certainly, Foucault
was no stranger to the idea of varying behaviors and positions of people. Somewhat
renown are the closing lines of his Introduction to *The Archeology of Knowledge*.

I have tried (in the writing of *The Archeology of Knowledge*) to define this blank
space from which I speak, and which is slowly taking shape in the discourse that
I still feel to be so precarious and so unsure.

‘Aren’t you sure of what you’re saying? Are you going to change yet
again, shift your position according to the questions that are put to you, and say
that the objections are not really directed at the place from which you are
speaking? Are you going to declare yet again that you have never been what you
have been reproached with being? Are you already preparing the way out that
will enable you in your next book to spring up somewhere else and declare as
you’re now doing: no, no, I’m not where you are lying in wait for me, but over
here, laughing at you?’

‘What, do you imagine that I would take so much trouble and so much
pleasure in writing, do you think that I would keep so persistently to my task, if I
were not preparing – with a rather shaky hand – a labyrinth into which I can
venture, in which I can move my discourse, open up underground passages,
forcing it to go far from itself, finding overhangs that reduce and deform its
itinerary, in which I can lose myself and appear at last to eyes that I will never
have to meet again. I am no doubt not the only one who writes in order to have
no face. Do not ask who I am and do not ask me to remain the same: leave it to
our bureaucrats and our police to see that our papers are in order. At least spare us their morality when we write.’ (Foucault 1972:17)

In this instance, Foucault seems to be speaking about the types of changes in an argument or argument style that are commonly seen among academics and people in general. He seems to be talking about a person, academic or not, simply ‘changing their mind’ on a topic. He is here perhaps talking about a change made within a social discourse, rather than a change between social discourses. However, I do not find the words he chose, filled with reference to “places from which to speak” and disappearing from one place just to “spring up somewhere else” alongside talk of “bureaucrats and police” checking one’s papers, as entirely unrelated to my current point. I hope why this is will be made clear in what follows.

More on point, perhaps, is an exchange Foucault had in the same 1984 interview quoted in the previous subsection. In a long answer to a question, Foucault seems to be trying to reorient his interviewer regarding what he means when he says “power,” a word he claims he seldom uses. He suggests that rather than referring to macro instances of power like political structures, government, dominant social classes, and the like, which people so often think of when the word “power” is uttered, he uses the word as a shorthand for “relations of power” between humans at multiple levels. But, Foucault insists, these relations are not fixed. “For example,” he continues, “the fact that I may be older than you, and that you may initially have been intimidated, may be
turned around during the course of our conversation, and I may end up being intimidated before someone precisely because he is younger than I am” (1994:292).

Here we have an example that goes to the point I wish to highlight. Here we can see an instance in which the question might be raised: “What is the proper relation between the old and the young?” even “What does it mean to be old and what does it mean to be young?” or even “What is an ethical stance to take with regard to a younger (or older) interlocutor?” There is a familiar argument to be made that the older are less naïve, wiser, and should be accorded deference, the whole of a younger person’s attention given to them. Contradictorily, another line of argument claims that younger people are quicker, more adept at multi-tasking. Which place do you live in… and under what conditions?

This potential for multiple subjectivation is an advantage that Foucault’s framework has compared to that of Appadurai, which emphasizes relatively uniform effects of social discourses and institutions (as discussed earlier in 1.2). In this regard, I find an adapted framework coming out of Foucault’s work in the field of ethics a much more fruitful starting point for dealing with the interview data I collected.

Borrowing and adapting a framework coming out of Foucault’s work in ethics, I maintain that ethics are relatively cohesive and consistent discursive constructions, that they necessarily implicate a select collection of social relations (which I have termed social vistas), and that they are (at least potentially) multiple, being practiced in parallel,
represented throughout the daily lives of people living in a given place for a given period of time. An individual may draw upon the resources of two separate, perhaps even seemingly contradictory, ethics as they change from one subject positioning to another in a relatively short period of time without recognizing the contradiction. This may go on for some time. And, the ethical expectations of these multiple and various roles need not necessarily always, or even ever, be reconciled. One can continue on with daily life acting ‘ethically’ now as an academic professional, now as a spouse, now as a member of a nation, now as a cosmopolitan citizen of the world without awareness of the contradiction. These are the broad outlines of the analytical framework I hope to develop throughout this work.

1.5 Questions of generalizability/particularity

The question arises regarding the generalizability of the framework I propose in this work. Is this applicable to people everywhere and at all times? Or, rather, is the framework only useful in the analysis of people living in Ireland in the early twenty-first century? And, if it is only applicable to people currently living in Ireland, to which Irish people is it applicable?

As indicated earlier, it does seem that Irish Cultural Studies does have a prominent stream of work that emphasizes space, place, or locality. It is easy to attribute

\[Note this is in line with the discussion of psychological anthropologists Ewing’s and Strauss’ works earlier in this chapter.\]
this to the way in which movements of academic thought often seem to proceed. It is not uncommon for a novel work to be picked up and used as a model for future work, or even to ‘set the mold’ for what is expected of future work in any particular discipline. In fact, this trend is exactly the reason given for the arguably undue emphasis rural Ireland received by anthropologists up until at least the 1970s. However, an alternate explanation might be that analytics frameworks that emphasize place/space/locality hold a special purchase in Ireland.20

It has been suggested that “[a]ttraction to place is expressed in a wide range of literature in Irish (Gaeilge), from the Old Irish period down to the present day” (Hannan 1991:19). This attachment to place is often expressed in and through appeal to the concept of dinnshenchas.21 Some have suggested that this is represented in the everyday understandings of, at least some, Irish people. For example, speaking of an Irishman he interviewed, anthropologist Jamie Saris claimed that “[l]ike most of the locals, his sense of the past is located in complex ways in his relationship to named spots on the landscape, a preeminently ‘traditional’ Irish practice called dindsenches” (2000:27).

Given this, is it possible that the locality-based framework I offer in this work is particularly appropriate for research in Ireland, but less applicable in other locales

20 A strong sense of place has at times been claimed as one of the defining factors or the “Irish mind” or “Celtic Consciousness” (Herr 1995:276). Patrick Sheeran has gone so far as to suggest that “[i]t is well-nigh a truism that Irishness and a sense of place go together” (1988:191).
21 Hannan defines the term as “place-lore” (1991:19); Gaeilge-English dictionaries translate dinnseanchas as “topography” (Ó Dónaill 1977:408).
where the tradition of an emphasis on place might not be as strong? Having not (yet) done research in other locales, I cannot provide an informed answer to this question. Were I to venture a very tentative guess, however, I would claim that the processes of place-making that I identify in this work are more or less present in all places in the world and that they may be more prevalent or explicit in particular locales in which the historical trajectory was conducive to its development.

1.6 Chapter Conclusion and the Layout of this Work

In this chapter I have attempted to outline the events during my research that have led me to this project. I have detailed the works that are academic predecessors of my own research and laid out the broad concepts behind the locality framework that I propose. In rest of this work I will attempt to apply the locality framework to the case of Ireland and the people with whom I did my research.

The next two chapters will detail the separate and parallel historic-discursively constituted (ethical) localities that I have identified in my Irish project. This process will entail provision of different, but not entirely unrelated, histories for each of the localities. I will begin the next chapter with a brief consideration of the nature of these histories before going on to detail a locality resulting from the colonial projects in Ireland. Chapter 3 will detail, first, the history of nationalist projects in Ireland and, then, the history of Ireland’s involvement in the European Union, and the localities resulting from these two projects.
In Chapters 4 and 5, I focus on the media and how it works to support the processes of locality production I discuss in this work. Chapter 4 presents a framework for exploring the effects of media in this regard. Chapter 5 applies this framework to the students with whom I did my research. This chapter begins to introduce the ethnographic interview data I collected from these students.

In Chapter 6, I turn more directly to the ethnographic interview data I collected from the students, illustrating the ways in which the process of engaging in the localities I delineate is manifest in the daily lives of those with whom I did my research. I close this chapter with suggestions for future research.

In the end, I offer this work as an attempt to better understand the lived experience of the Irish people with whom I did my research. I also hope it will offer new concepts and approaches in social sciences that both do justice to the complexity of people’s lives and words and the ways in which they are affected, perhaps to a degree effected, by (social) representations.
2. The Production of (Colonial) Ireland

2.1 Introduction

Irish Literature Professor Declan Kiberd once famously claimed that “[i]f Ireland had never existed, the English would have invented it” (1996:9). Kiberd goes on to suggest that this is exactly what happened beginning from at least the late sixteenth century, in a very real sense.

With the mission to impose a central administration went the attempt to define a unitary Irish character…. The makers of Crown policy in Ireland made ever more strenuous attempts to define an English national character, and a countervailing Irish one. Ireland was soon patented as not-England, a place whose peoples were, in many important ways, the very antitheses of their new rulers from overseas. These rulers began to control the developing debate; and it was to be their version of things which would enter universal history. (1996:9)

Appadurai discusses at length the monopolization of locality production to which Kiberd refers at the end of this quotation. Appadurai suggests that the locality-producing activities of people/groups on the ground are “profoundly affected by the locality-producing capabilities of larger-scale social formations (nation-states, kingdoms, missionary empires, and trading cartels) to determine the general shape of all the neighborhoods within the reach of their powers” (1996:187). So it was in the case of Ireland. The colonization project of those who came from the British Isle to its east brought with it locality-producing effects that in some ways overwhelmed, at the very
least radically affected, those in Ireland even prior to concerted military colonization efforts by the British.

In order to begin to detail British-influence locality production of Ireland, I will lay out a history of the colonization of Ireland. At the outset, it is important to consider the very nature of the history I present, as no history is value-free. The history I present, as will quickly become apparent, is in some ways different from traditional histories of Ireland. There is much focused on in my histories that may not often be emphasized in histories of the island. Likewise, some of the topics of consideration that often figure prominently in Irish histories, such as The Famine, are relatively understated in my work. In short, the history I present here may differ from that contained in those by many historians of Ireland and the curriculum of the students with whom I did my research. Nevertheless, there is much in the histories I present here that I suspect would resonate with these students and other Irish people. The histories I present here are ones that I present self-consciously and tentatively, ones that I recognize as decidedly ‘at the service’ of my research project. And, I welcome opportunities to re-visit the histories I present here in line with the evaluation(s) of others.

One difference between the history of the colonization of Ireland that I present in this chapter and many other histories on this subject is that, while many such histories begin with the establishment of Norman fiefdoms in Ireland in the 12th century, in my own mini-history the Roman occupation of Britain will be used as a starting point. While
the Romans never integrated Ireland into the Empire, they did consolidate their civil administration in the southern Lowlands of Britain (Kearny 1989:20), and Rome’s imperialism in the British Isles had long-lasting influence on colonization projects in Ireland by way of the models it made available to British colonizers of Ireland long after the Roman Empire fell.

2.2 History

2.2.1 Romans

Roman occupation of Britain began in 55 B.C. (Hechter 1975:53). These campaigns were short, however, and resulted in “leaving Rome’s allies in possession of the field” (Kearny 1989:19). It was with the arrival of Roman forces under Claudius in A.D. 43 that the long term occupation was established. This occupation would last until the early fifth century. A justification behind the occupation of Britain may have been to utilize the lowlands to supply grain for Rome’s continental legions. “Before the invasion the native Britons had been mainly a pastoral people; after it Britain became a grain exporter which came to be known as the ‘granary of the North’” (Hechter 1975:54). This theory is supported by the fact that Romans maintained civil administration only in the agrarian lowland areas, maintaining a standing army there for defense and order, while restricting its occupation of the mountainous, and thus less fruitful, Highlands to numerous military campaigns to restore order.
How was Ireland affected by the Roman imperial project in the British Isles?

Intermittent contact between those living on the northern and eastern coasts of Ireland and Romans is a certainty.

Allowing for the fact that Irish raiders brought back silver and coins as booty, there does seem to have been some degree of peaceful contact during the first and second centuries A.D. and again, after a long unexplained interval in the third century, in the fourth and early fifth centuries. (Kearny 1989:25)

And, the presence of Christian missionaries late in and immediately following this period had a great and lasting effect on those living in Ireland during this period (Kearny 1989:25–26).

However, the civil-military complex – the Roman Empire – did not extend itself onto the island of Ireland. What did reach Ireland was a key element of the Roman Imperial occupation of Britain, the Romans’ perception of and relationship with the indigenous peoples conquered by Roman forces. It is clear that there was a perception of distinction, with the indigenous peoples seen as “barbarians” to be conquered, ruled, leading to a relationship of marginal inclusion. This perception is manifest in the works of numerous Greek and Roman writers (and would become central in British conceptions of Empire). James Muldoon touches on a number of these commentators including Julius Ceasar (102–44 B.C.), who encountered Britons as he expanded the Roman Empire, and Tacitus (55–118 A.D.). “Although these writers are always listed
among the founders of the study of history,” Muldoon claims, “they are the founders of anthropology as well” (2003:2).

A prime example of this with particular relevance to the Irish comes from Strabo’s *Geographica*, which was written in the first three decades A.D., perhaps as late as 23 A.D., within two decades before the beginning of Claudius’s extended campaign of colonization in Britain. Of Britons Strabo claimed, “[t]he men of Britain are taller than the Celti (Celts on the European Continent), and not so yellow-haired, although their bodies are of looser build…. Their habits are in part like those of the Celti, but in part more simple and barbaric” (1917:255).

With regard to Ireland and its inhabitants, Strabo suggests:

> Besides some small islands round about Britain, there is also a large island, Ierne (Ireland), which stretches parallel to Britain on the north, its breadth being greater than its length. Concerning this island I have nothing certain to tell, except that its inhabitants are more savage than the Britons, since they are man-eaters as well as heavy eaters, and since, further, they count it an honourable thing, when their fathers die, to devour them, and openly to have intercourse, not only with the other women, but also with their mothers and sisters.

(1917:259)

After making these shocking pronouncements regarding the inhabitants of Ireland, Strabo qualifies his statement, “but I am saying this only with the understanding that I have no trustworthy witnesses for it” (1917:259–261).
Distinguishing between citizen and barbarian is a tradition that went back to Greek Late Classical Period, as represented in the writings of Aristotle. In *Politics*, Aristotle presents the city-state as an association of people which includes all other associations and is aimed at the highest good (Aristotle, *Politics*, Book A, 1; 1986:16). According to Aristotle’s presentation, city-states are maintained by an ethical community that works to support the state. Aristotle utilizes the analogy of seamen having different capacities (roles; rower, pilot, lookout, etc.); they are all employing their capacities toward the goal of a safe voyage. “In a similar way citizens, although differing in their capacities, have as their function the safety of their association, which is their government” (Aristotle, *Politics*, Book Γ, 4; 1986:76).

A major aspect of Aristotle’s work is the comparative method it utilizes. Much of the work is concerned with the definition of the “ideal state.” As a result, multiple other political forms are comparatively reviewed, including Spartan, Cretan, and barbaric examples. It is the invocations of the barbarian that are particularly pertinent.

The Greek term which is most often translated as barbarian is *barbaros*. This term did not directly refer to the uncivilized, as does “barbarian,” but rather to “anyone who did not speak Greek, one who babbled, and who therefore lacked the one power by which the political life could be achieved and true humanity realized” (White 1972:19). In a classic article attempting to both define the concept of the barbarian and show the role that people categorized as barbarians played in history, Denis Sinor addresses the
etymology of the term. “The fact that in its earliest, Greek, application ‘barbarian’ simply meant ‘foreigner,’ together with some other considerations, would suggest that this pejorative flavor is due to chauvinism: County A tends to regard Country B as barbarous and vice versa” (1957:47–48). Indeed, even the Romans were considered barbarians by the Greeks (Sinor 1957:48).

In Aristotle’s *Politics*, there are many classes of people who could not, or should not, be allowed to participate in government of the city-state. However, it is those outside the frontier of the city against which the self as a virtuous *man* and citizen was defined.

Only those men who had attained to the condition of politicality could hope to realize a *full* humanity. Not *all* within the city could hope to become fully human: women, slaves, and businessmen are specifically denied that possibility by Aristotle in his *Ethics*. But *no one outside* the city had the slightest chance at all of *fully* realizing his humanity: the conditions of a life unregulated by law precluded it. Anyone who lived outside the human world might become an *object* of curiosity or a *subject* of study, but he could never serve as a model of *what* men ought to strive to be. (White 1972:24)

In *Politics*, then, the chauvinistic use of “barbarian” is already seen, even if the primitive connotation is not directly apparent. This discussion of barbarians makes room for the justification of their conquest. “It is meet that Greeks should rule barbarians” (*Aristotle, Politics*, Book A, 2; 1986:17). Thus, for the Greeks, the subjectivity that was constituted by
a care for the self related to political life was not only positively constituted as a virtuous actor in political activities, but as a member of a particular city-state governmental community and against the backdrop of other more or less like and unlike communities.

While this discrimination between those of and those outside the city-state is basic to the constitution of the individual as a political subject in Aristotelian thought, the distinction between civilized and barbaric would not be as clear cut as would be found in later forms. White suggests that the pantheon of Greek gods and goddesses diversified “on the basis of external attributes, functions, and powers” is reflective of a tendency toward the conception of an internally diversified humanity and that for Greeks (and Romans) “humanity is experienced as diversified in fact though unifiable in principle” (1972:9). For Aristotle, while it was at best unlikely (and probably impossible) for one who was not of the city-state to realize their humanity, it would not be, in theory, impossible for them to do so. There is in this rigid discrimination the potential for reform.

This discriminatory aspect of the political subjectivity would remain largely unchanged in the Hellenistic and Roman ages. Clearly, this sense of distinction between Roman citizen and barbarian was supported/reinforced by Roman laws. “Rome did not seek acculturation with the barbarians in any context. Roman jurisprudence maintained that no foreign people was worthy of Roman rights” (Burns 2003:123).
The Roman Empire retreated from Britain early in the fifth century, but the long term effects of Roman imperialism on the occupied region were many.

Some agricultural improvements might have been imported with the Roman colonization, although the evidence on this point is controversial. However, customs of Roman land tenure and estate management took root in Britain, and were more individualistic than the traditional Celtic practices. … Roman military roads stimulated internal trade, and provided an excellent basis for internal communications for the duration of the Middle Ages. Finally, the political connection with the Empire helped develop commercial links to the Continent.

(Hechter 1975:54)

These characteristics have long been seen as giving an advantage to England over other parts of the British Isles, including Ireland, which were not colonized by the Romans.

One of the greatest effects of the Roman Empire’s expansion to Britain, however, have been more indirect and yet possibly more powerful than these direct, economic, effects of contact and influence. The tradition of discrimination between conquering citizen and barbarian may have established a foundational perception that would be repeated in later times. As will be seen, the Roman model of conquest and rule of indigenous “barbarians” was appealed to in later projects of colonization.

2.2.2 Normans

“The victory of the Normans in 1066 brought revolutionary changes in its wake, not merely for southern Britain but in due course for the rest of the British Isles” (Kearny
1989:60). For six hundred years following the retreat of Roman administration from Britain, Scandinavian interests struggled back and forth with Anglo-Saxon feudal groups, primarily the kingdom of Wessex, for rule of the island. On Christmas Day, 1066, William II of Normandy was crowned the first Norman King of England and consolidated control over much the same territory that the Roman Empire had maintained.

As in Roman times, the defining differentiation after the arrival of Normans, however, was between the elite and the ruled. The nature of Norman rule in Britain was of a particular colonial nature. “The colonial nature of this society needs to be stressed if its true character is to be understood” (Kearny 1989:66). Distinctions were maintained between the French speaking rulers and those Britons they ruled.

The result of the Conquest was to create a two-class society. It is true that Richard FitzNeal spoke of the mingling of races at the end of the twelfth century, but he restricted his comment to freemen. What he had to say may well have been true of London, but over the great mass of rural England there is little doubt that, for a long time to come, conquerors and conquered remained separate. At the top of the social scale, it is clear that the powerful families married within the ranks of the baronage. At a somewhat lower social level, marriage between Norman and English took place but only as an exceptional event. (Kearny 1989:65)
The degree to which Norman conquerors of Britain appealed to discourses of the barbarity of Britons to justify their actions is unclear. This is due in large part to a lack of texts from the period and the fact of somewhat extensive familial connections between the British and Norman aristocracies through Edward the Confessor (Edward’s mother was William the Conqueror’s great aunt). The event was approached more as a matter of succession than of conquest.

It is clear, however, that language difference was (again) one of the major, perhaps the major, characteristics maintained by the Norman ascendancy ruling in Britain. The Normans utilized their speaking of French to differentiate themselves from the ruled (Anglo-Saxon) population to such a degree that Britons were considered incapable of learning and speaking the language. “The few snippets of evidence which may be cited to illustrate this point suggest that the ability of Englishmen to speak French was regarded as surprising, and even miraculous” (Green 1997:13). This persistent aspect of European elite rule in the Middle Ages goes a long way toward explaining the phenomenon of linguistic nationalism found in the British Isles, in particular, and Europe, more generally, to this day.

Indirect influence was established by the Norman ascendancy in Wales and Scotland, and later in Ireland, in the form of Norman lords and “modernizing” local monarchs who took control of these regions and ruled them with the support of the Norman king (Kearny 1989:60–62). As the establishment of these semi-autonomous
lordships would have lasting effects on the history of governance in the British Isles, Hechter addressed those established in Wales in some detail.

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries various Norman lords took their own private armies on expeditions to Wales, where they defeated certain of the Welsh rulers and seized their lands. The claim of these Normans, who came to be called Lords of the March, to their Welsh lands rested upon the right to conquest, rather than any grant by an English king. The Marcher Lords usurped the place of conquered chieftains, collecting rents and dues, and exercised rights which in England were the exclusive prerogative of the king…. The English king had no legal rights to encroach upon the internal affairs of these territories. (1975:56)

Beginning in the twelfth century, English rulers made moves to lessen the power of the Marcher Lords and like leaders in Scotland and Ireland, who, in turn, tried to maintain or increase their political autonomy. Moves by the English Crown to consolidate their power in these regions were often foiled by the fact that the monarchs required the support of these semi-autonomous lords to prevail in other internal power struggles (Hechter 1975:56–57).

2.2.2.1 Norman Overlords Arrive in Ireland

In 1155 Pope Adrian IV issued a papal bull, the Laudabiliter, which gave King of England Henry II the right to take control of and rule Ireland. Anglo-Normans under King Henry’s authority – though “[i]t might be more precise to describe them as Cambro-Normans” (Martin 1993a:67) – first arrived in Ireland to stay beginning in 1169
when Welsh Marcher Lords under the command of Richard fitz Gilebert, known as Strongbow in many accounts, came to the aid of a deposed and exiled lord Diamait Mac Murchada. In return for military expeditions in support of Mac Murchada the Normans were granted lands in Ireland. Strongbow married Mac Murchada’s daughter, Aífe, and became his heir, Mac Murchada’s sons having been lost in the struggles that deposed him. These events were the beginning of the establishment of a new order of governance in Ireland. “The prevalent Irish system of individual war-lords campaigning for particular prizes was ending. A new era was beginning, based on the Anglo-Norman way of life. Allies were becoming overlords” (Martin 1993a:78).

The distinction between Norman invaders and natives of Ireland were as, if not more, stringently adhered to as in Britain. In the 1180’s Giraldus Cambrensis gave this description of the inhabitants of Ireland to King Henry in the wake of Norman conquests in Ireland:

Gens igitur haec gens barbara, et vere barbara. Quia non tantum barbaro vestium ritu, verum etiam comis et barbis luxuriantibus, juxta modernas novitiatibus, incultissima; et omnes eorum mores barbarissimi sunt.

This people, then, is truly barbarous, being not only barbarous in their dress, but suffering their hair and beards to grow enormously in an uncouth manner, just like the modern fashion recently introduced; indeed, all their habits are barbarisms. (Curtis 1968:17 and 124)
It is clear, as well, that this was not Giraldus’s perspective alone. The Vatican itself weighed in regarding the (perceived) barbarity of the Irish:

Specific criticisms of the Irish way of life appeared in several ecclesiastical documents issued in 1172. In that year, the Irish clergy met at Cashel “assembled by the conqueror’s [Henry II] command” to reform the church in Ireland along the lines required by the Gregorian reform….In the same year, Pope Alexander III [1159–1181] issued three letters dealing with the Irish that provided further details about the situation in Ireland. He described the Irish as “lapsed from the fear of God and reverence for the Christian faith,” a people who are “barbarous… uncivilized and ignorant of the Divine law… that most undisciplined and untamed nation.” (Muldoon 2003:37)

It has been suggested that the situation surrounding the Norman conquest of Ireland, which included a limited number of power consolidating marriages between (Cambro-)Norman lords and daughters of Irish high-kings, provided an opportunity for the prevention of usual distinctions/differentiations that accompanied Norman rule. “Out of that relationship could have come a fusion of the two races, the emergence of a new breed” (Martin 1993b:lvi). However, this was not the case; the common distinctions of Norman rule took hold.

Instead of fusion, there came division. A recent authority has observed that ‘the uncompleted and faltering nature of the conquest impeded the acceptance of an ethos of assimilation and perpetuated an outlook of confrontation. The English
settlers in Ireland retained their links with England and paraded and exploited their Englishness as a badge of their uncertain superiority.’ (Martin 1993b:lvi)

By the mid-fifteenth century, however, there is some indication that some of the ancestors of these first transplants to Ireland, who would later come to be referred to as the “Old English,” had begun to assimilate with the Irish people they ruled. Audrey Smedley writes of Old English who, “intermingled with the Irish and increasingly ‘went native,’ that is, they assimilated to Irish culture and language” (2007:55–56). In some cases, these lords and their families were reputed to have become “Níos Gaeilí ná na Gaeil iad féin” (More Irish [Gaelic] than the Irish [Gaels] themselves). This situation came to be seen as a dire problem by those in power in England.

In reaction to the threat this assimilation was perceived to pose, the pre-established pattern of discrimination came to be supported by governmental doctrine. A prime example of this is the 1366 statute of Kilkenny. This legislation, coming in the wake of the 1349 (Black Death) plague that reduced England’s population by a third (Kearny 1989:90), had the express goal of remedying the growing ‘degeneracy’ of Anglo-Irish colonists into Gaelic ways, which was seen as responsible for the receding fortunes of the colonies in Ireland in the face of a Gaelic revival. The multiple clauses of the statute provided strict guidelines of dress, behavior, and language. “It is abundantly clear then that the first purpose of the new clauses in the statute was to preserve the
Englishness of the colonists, thereby shoring-up that loyalty to their mother country, enfeebled by their ‘degeneracy’” (Watt 1993:388).

In the continuing decline of influence of the English settlers and the Crown, distinctions between British and Irish people was reinforced and outward signs of loyalty (Englishness) were continually emphasized, mandated, and (at times) invented.

The parliament of 1447, faced with the problem that there was no difference in dress between the Gaelic and Anglo-Irish in the march areas, attempted to impose an alternative means of ready identification. Any man who wished to be accounted of English descent was to shave his upper lip at least once every two weeks so that he would not have a moustache. Those who failed to comply with this statute were liable to have their persons and goods seized and to be ransomed as ‘Irish enemies.’ (Cosgrove 1993:555)

The early imposition of disciplinary techniques of policing and self monitoring and improvement can clearly be seen developing in this period.

Apparently, these actions failed to turn the tide on a growing influence by Irish-speaking “natives” of Ireland. Beginning around 1300 British settlers, including both Old English and new English colonists, were progressively thwarted by a so-called “Gaelic revival.” As the influence of Gaelic rulers spread, British control and interests were increasingly restricted to the mid-eastern shore of the island in the area surrounding Dublin. This area came to be known as “The Pale” (Sheehan 1986:96).
According to Art Cosgrove, “[t]he earliest known use of the term ‘Pale’ occurs in 1446–7 when the Irish leader Aodh Ruadh Mac Mathghomhna promised ‘to carrie nothing owte of the inglishe pale contrarie to the statutes’” (1993:533). But, it is clear that the idea of a geographically defined area, roughly corresponding to the four counties of Dublin, Meath, Louth, and Kildare, in which English authority was predominant and, at times, and to which these English settlers were largely restricted, had persisted for some time before this. Orders to fortify the defenses of the Pale in the mid-fifteenth century perhaps best define its boundaries.

In 1454 commissioners were appointed to recruit ‘labourers and workmen… to make trenches and fortresses upon the borders and marches’ of the four Pale counties of Meath, Louth, Kildare, and Dublin. That further defences were necessary is clear from the threat presented to Dublin itself by the proximity of the colony’s enemies. In 1455 orders were issued for the building of barriers and towers on the bridges of Lucan and Kilmainham and beside the wall of St Mary’s abbey to repel the ‘Irish enemies’ and ‘English rebels’ who ‘enter into Fingal by night and there kill, rob, and destroy the liege people of the king.’ (Cosgrove 1993:563)

2.2.3 Reformation and Renaissance

The authority of the English Crown remained restricted to the Pale for almost 100 years prior to the beginning of the Reformation imposed by King Henry VIII in 1534.
With the Reformation, the Protestant Church of England was established and ties were broken with the Catholic Church of Rome (Hechter 1975:96).

Almost 50 years after the beginning of the Reformation, beginning under the reign of Elizabeth, attempts were made to extend the Crown’s power through the establishment of plantations to be farmed by New English and Scottish settlers on lands confiscated from natives of Ireland. This plantation policy was pursued more systematically under James I (Hechter 1975:76, 102–103). Interestingly, the Roman project in Briton was evoked in discourses of conquest and colonization in Ireland (and later America). “From the Renaissance onwards, indeed, the Roman model has been looked upon as one which the English should copy” (Kearny 1989:20). The language surrounding these moves revolved around barbarity and its correction. This is reflected in correspondence from Queen Elizabeth to then lord deputy of Ireland, Sir Henry Sidney, in 1568. “Thus she expected that the inhabitants of the country (Ireland) ‘now ruined and for lacke of lawe and justice leading a barbarous and sauvage lief, without knowledge of God or of us’ would be brought to civility” (Canny 1976:64). The most immediate plan to fulfill the queen’s objective was through the development of plantations in Gaelic areas of Ireland. Through containment, example, and education (in a word, discipline), the plan put forward by Sidney was geared to bring the barbarous natives of this part of Ireland to civility, creating a model that would be expanded in Ireland and America. “Thus a new chapter had opened in Irish history, and the ensuing
experience served as a precedent not only for future plantations in Ireland but for colonization also in the New World” (Canny 1976:65).

Many of the initial plantation schemes failed to get off the ground and there was a largely experimental time as organizers tried to find a program that worked. One Englishman who helped plan and sponsor several plantations, both successful and unsuccessful, was Sir Thomas Smith. Notable about his conceptions of the plantations was the analogy he so readily made between the English in Ireland and the Romans. “The scheme was based, almost entirely, on Roman methods of colonization, as were the provision for the constitutional life of the colony” (Canny 1976:88). And, “[i]n Smith’s view the English were the new Romans come to civilize the Irish, as the old Romans had once civilized the ancient Britons” (Canny 1976:128).

The reform to civilization of the natives of Ireland, of course, depended on the continued establishment of them as barbarians in the first place. Among those involved in the colonization of the island, this was done in a number of ways. One of the most prominent characteristics attributed to barbarity at this time was nomadism. In the travel literature that was read by sixteenth-century Englishmen nomadic people were considered to be at the opposite pole of civilization from themselves” (Canny 1976:126).

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1 With regard to the American context, Francis Jennings has suggested that “[w]hen colonists pretended that the Indians were mere nomads, the reason was to invoke international law doctrines applicable to vacant lands; such lands were available for seizure” (1975:71, fn40). Jennings cites Nicholas Canny (1973) to suggest that colonizers in Ireland, as in Native North America, took Irish practices of moving cattle as evidence that the Irish were nomadic and, thus, barbaric. “I presume that possession of land was also at issue there” (Jennings 1975:71, fn40).
The practice of transhumance, by which the natives of Ireland left their permanent settlements to follow herds to summer pastures, was taken by many Englishmen as a nomadic practice indicative of their barbarity that should be civilized out of the Irish.²

Another characteristic confirming the barbarity of the natives of Ireland was religion. Though the religious practice in the Gaelic areas of Ireland were often heavily influenced by pre-Christian tradition and custom, a situation common in Europe of the time, the Christianity of Irish natives was never questioned by the Normans or the Anglo-Irish. By contrast, Lord deputy Sidney and others associated with colonization efforts took pains to rebut the Christianity of the natives of Ireland.

The English adventurers of the 1560s and 1570s thus had little difficulty in satisfying themselves that the Gaelic Irish were pagans, and this became an accepted tenet of many Englishmen…. Once it was established that the Irish were pagans the first logical step has been taken towards declaring them barbarians.

(Canny 1976:125)

Of note, all of these efforts towards establishing the barbarism of the natives of Ireland constitute a practice of, or at least interest in, an early form of anthropology. “All were interested in travel and adventure, and they had, through their exploits and reading of travel literature, such as the English translation of Johan Boemus (1555),

² Relatedly, Foucault has claimed that “[t]he primary objects of discipline is to fix; it is an antinomadic technique” (1995:218).
familiarized themselves with the habits of peoples who were considered barbarians by

Boemus’s book, *Omnium gentium mores, leges, & ritus ex multis clarissimis rerum
scriptoribus*, was a collection of a large number of laws and customs from what the
author saw as the three major regions of the earth, Africa, Asia, and Europe. This work
was one of the earliest projects of armchair ethnography and had a profound effect on
this developing practice. It was first published in English as *The fardle of façions,
conteining the aunciente maners, customes, and lawes, of the peoples enhabiting the two partes of
the earth, called Affrike and Asie* in 1555. It had a number of retranslations and
republications in English, “the most complete of which was *The manners, lawes, and
customes of all nations* published in 1611” (Hodgen 1964:133). This interest in travel
literature and early ethnographies such as Boemus’s book represents the early
development of human sciences that accompanied development of modern political
rationalities.

In addition, those participating in plantation/colonization projects in Ireland may
have been familiar with translations of Strabo’s *Geographica*, an excerpt of which
pertaining to the Irish was quoted earlier (see 2.2.1). Reproductions of this work began
to appear in Western Europe in 1469 with a key edition published in 1587. In short, those
participating in the English colonization project in Ireland were well versed in
Renaissance conceptions of barbarity. It is no surprise that the natives of Ireland could
so easily be classified in this way. “What is significant is that many of the colonizers came to Ireland with a preconception of what a barbaric society was like, and they found features in Gaelic life to fit this model” (Canny 1976:126).

Two influential writers of this time that drew on discourses of barbarity are Sir John Davies and Edmund Spenser. Each of these writers served in the Dublin government and wrote about English governmental policy in Ireland among other things. Spenser’s A view of the present state of Ireland, written in 1596, criticizes English administration of Ireland as ineffectual and to blame for the continued barbaric state of the natives of Ireland. Davies is likewise critical of past administration, with verbiage reminiscent of claims of degeneracy on the part of English subjects in Ireland in his 1612 essay Discovery of the true causes why Ireland was never entirely subdued. “Davies charges that some of the English lords allied themselves with the Irish and ‘became degenerate and mere Irish’” (Noonan 1998:156). In end, both these authors blame the lack of civility in Ireland on poor administration of the island (Noonan 1998:153–154, 156).

Both of these authors note the potential of the natives of Ireland for reformation to civility. Each of them suggests that the inhabitants of Britain were once as uncivil as those of Ireland. Given the proper influence, Spenser and Davies claim, the Irish could not only be civilized but could become one with the English. “Spenser and Davies argue that with the right combination of government and culture (with heavy emphasis on
education) and guarantees that the Irish are included in and have the protections of English law the two people can become one” (Noonan 1998:157).

Lest one get the impression that these authors were entirely beneficent towards the people of Ireland, it should be noted that they viewed the reform of those in Ireland as a duty to be accomplished through any means, including war. As suggested by Davies, “a barbarous country must first be broken by a war, before it will be capable of good government; and when it is fully subdued and conquered, if it be not well planted and governed after the conquest, it will often return to the former barbarism” (Davies 1787: 3–4, quoted in Hechter 1975:76). This war would displace the current ruling group and leave the reformable masses open to English influence.

What Smith… really wanted to accomplish was to drive out the ruling elite and retain the majority of the population as docile cultivators. Smith, and afterwards Spenser and Davies, pointed to Roman precedent to justify this, and they considered the example to be pertinent because England was now the new Rome, the centre of civilization. (Canny 1976:130)

The Roman model was not the only one utilized during this period. In her review of Foucault’s 1976 lectures at the Collège de France, Stoler points to his discussion of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century histories of the Norman conquest to “illustrate how a discourse on conquest and the war of races took over new political fields and was reframed by them” (1995:73). In particular, she notes Foucault’s review of a 1581 text Apologia pro regibus by Adam Blackwood. In this work, “the Norman conquest of
England and the European conquest of the Americas were discursively constructed as similarly legitimized events, both confirming that early Normans and the contemporary English shared a right of colonization and a right to rule” (Stoler 1995:74). Relatedly, when seeking candidates to sponsor plantations in Ireland, Sidney concentrated his efforts on Englishmen whose Norman forebears had conquered land in Ireland which had subsequently been lost.

Plantations projects and other moves to solidify control over Ireland continued unabated up to (and ultimately beyond) the beginning of the English Civil War in 1641. In Ireland, a major event of significance occurred concurrent with the beginning of the English Civil War, the Irish Rebellion of 1641.

2.2.4 Irish Rebellion of 1641

The rising had an importance far beyond the events of the 1640s. Politically it confirmed in the minds of contemporaries the fear of Catholicism and it ensured that native Irishmen would never again be part of the political establishment as some had been in 1640. (Gillespie 1986:213)

A combination of the increasing disenfranchisement of Catholics, including the largely Catholic “Old English” ruling class, and economic hardship resulting from a series of harvest failures in 1629–33 (Gillespie 1986:195) led to provincial risings in which mostly Catholic natives of Ireland, sometimes under the command of Old English Catholics, dispossessed and attacked Protestant landowners. It is difficult to get a clear picture of the amount of violence visited on Protestants at this time. Reports through
correspondence back to London and depositions about the events suggest of a great deal of violence against English settlers; it is certain that some of these reports, though not all, are exaggerations. It has been suggested that this violence was not intended by the rising initiators. “The rising was not an attempt to overthrow the government but rather to reorganise the constitutional position thus ensuring that the natives would not be deprived of their rights under common law” (Gillespie 1986:203). However, the combination of economic hardship and exaggerated fears of actions English authorities would take as part of the Reformation led to a number of instances of violence against, and even massacres of, English settlers. “The kind of situation which existed in Ulster in 1640–41 was the nightmare of every military commander in early modern Europe: religious and political fears coupled with economic distress could make any body of men difficult to control” (Gillespie 1986:210).

Relative peace did not return to the island until the uprisings were suppressed by Oliver Cromwell’s army in 1649. However, the Rebellion had lasting effects on the politics and people of Ireland and Britain. Actions were taken against those who participated in the Rebellion and the Catholic clergy. The granting of confiscated lands to English subjects, New English settlers and Cromwell’s military lieutenants, was continued, if not accelerated, such that, by 1688, Englishmen and Scottish Protestants possessed 80% of lands in Ireland, up from 40% in 1641 (Hechter 1975:103). Catholics were excluded from political decision making and the way was paved for
implementation of a series of “Penal Laws” which forbade Irish Catholics to “serve in the army, to enter politics, to own land or practice a profession, to import or export, to send their children to a Catholic school in Ireland or abroad” (Lebow 1976:95).

With regard to characterizations of the Irish, the 1641 Rebellion marks a major alteration of the discourses of Irish barbarism in England. One of the major accounts widely read and evoked in the aftermath of the rebellion was John Temple’s *The Irish Rebellion*, first published in 1646. “Sir John Temple’s highly partisan account of the ‘massacre’ kept the memory of 1641 fresh in English (and Scottish) minds” (Kearny 1989:114). In this book-length work, Temple relays a litany of stories about the atrocities suffered by English Protestants in the wake of the rebellion. The work also contains details of the historical enmity between Ireland and England and the military specifics of the rebellion.

Much from Davies’s and Spenser’s work on Irish barbarity is recounted in Temple’s text (Noonan 1998:157). Despite this influence, there is a significant difference in Temple’s work with regard to the chance of reformation. “For all the stylistic and contextual similarities between Temple and his predecessors, the depiction of the Irish in Temple’s work represents a sharp break with that of Spenser and Davies” (Noonan 1998:158). The difference was that, for Temple, the natives of Ireland were unable to be civilized and incompatible with the English. “Temple viewed the 1641 revolt as a sign that the Irish were irredeemable and posed a deadly threat to England and its people”
Unlike Davies and Spenser, Temple takes pains to describe the Irish not only as uneducated and naïve, but as qualitatively different from the English. While Spenser and Davies argued for the eventual melding of the Irish and English into one people, Temple drops the link with the ancient Britons and demonstrates that the Irish could never be one with the English. His section on the atrocities is an attempt to prove this by demonstrating not just how barbaric the Irish are, but how they are unlike other humans. (Noonan 1998:161)

*The Irish Rebellion* set the tone of subsequent discussions on the rebellion and the Irish issue that “[o]n several occasions during the 1640s... acted as an obstacle to successful negotiations between Crown and parliament” (Kearny 1989:113–114). It was an immensely popular work that had more than ten editions published from 1646 to 1812. Interestingly, the release of many of these editions correspond to historical moments that seem “closely tied to British concerns about state security” (Noonan 1998:179).

Temple provided a new model for viewing those who lived across the Irish Sea. While it is impossible to know for certain if Temple was setting trends or merely giving voice to attitudes he noticed around him (Noonan 1998:168), it is clear that his book represents the final nail in the coffin of the concept “that all the kingdoms on the earth would be one day unified” (Foucault 1988:152). Temple’s depiction of the Irish as a population that was both qualitatively different from and irreconcilable with the English population, was a characterization that would persist in multiple manifestations for
some time to come. “Temple provided the vocabulary for an emerging Irish stereotype. Over the next two and a half centuries Temple’s image of the Irish remained the dominant one” (Noonan 1998:168–169). 3

2.2.5 The “Grand Tour” to Ireland and the Irish Landscape and Character

At the same time that Temple was crafting his enduring characterization of the Irish, a tradition of travel was developing among young educated English men that has come to be referred to as “the Grand Tour.” Young men, many just completing their studies at one of England’s elite universities, would travel to the continent for a time, theoretically to sharpen their skills in French, Italian, etc., and to make contacts in foreign courts. According to James Buzard:

The Grand Tour was, from start to finish, an ideological exercise. Its leading purpose was to round out the education of young men of the ruling classes by exposing them to the treasured artifacts and ennobling society of the Continent. Usually occurring just after completion of studies at Oxford or Cambridge University and running anywhere from one to five years in length, the Tour was a social ritual intended to prepare these young men to assume the leadership positions preordained for them at home. (2002:38)

This tradition went on for over a century. As travel itineraries of ‘must see’ sites in France and, perhaps especially, Italy, got a little more set, and means of transportation

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3 For more on the ways in which Temple’s book and characterizations of the Irish, with particular attention to representations of women, see Thornburg (2008).
got a little more efficient and comfortable, a wider range of people began to take part.

The sons, and eventually daughters, of the early English Entrepreneurial classes also started to make the venture to the Continent alongside England’s aristocratic male heirs. The idea of this travel as a learning venture was still at its heart.

The French Revolution and years of conflict between France and England that followed brought a quick end to this increasing pattern of travel to the Continent. However, a brand of travel within Britain, again with purported educative impetus, arose to fill the gap (Buzard 2002: 42). The timely publication of *Fragments of Ancient Poetry Collected in the Highlands of Scotland* by James Macpherson in 1760, sparked an interest in the bardic literary traditions of Scotland and other “Celtic Periphery” areas of the British islands and in travel to those regions. This burgeoning interest in travel to the rural, and Gaelic-speaking, regions of Britain was further fed by the publication of Samuel Johnson’s *A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland*, published in 1775, along with other ‘travelogues’ of trips to Scotland. All of this fed the flames of interest in travel to the rural Celtic Periphery of Britain, to which a number of Grand Tourists turned when their traditional routes to/through the Continent were cut off. One of the major draws of these new sites to this new wave of Grand Tourists was their roughness, even wildness.

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4 A number of critics questioned the authenticity of some of Macpherson’s supposed translations, suggesting they were in large part fictions of Macpherson’s creation. Of this debate Buzard suggests, “[c]ontroversy about the works’ authenticity raged for decades, but this only lent notoriety to Macpherson’s book” (2002:43).
[T]he barren, forbidding, and ominous character of the region (Scotland)…
became part of the attraction. Whereas the Continental Grand Tourist before this period had favoured fertile, gentle landscapes, the Ossianic pilgrims were drawn to mist, mountains, and waterfalls, and their new enthusiasm was beginning to be shared by travelers to other Celtic fringe regions of Britain. (Buzard 2002:43)

Initially Scotland was the key destination for these ‘domestic’ Grand Tourists.\(^5\)

Then, other areas of the island of Britain began to be the target(s) of these travelers, particularly North Wales. Ireland eventually took its place among the list of sites for this type of tourism. At this point, it shared its reputation for wild, picturesque beauty with regions of Britain, but this began to change in the 1800’s.

At this early stage, Ireland shared its reputation for rugged, uncultivated scenery with the Lake District of England – and, of course, with the more remote areas of Wales and the Scottish Highlands. At the turn of the nineteenth century, this situation was to change as the deteriorating political situation in Ireland, and the development of a new, assertive form of cultural nationalism helped to redefine and accentuate the differences between Ireland and the more temperate irregularities of the British landscape. By 1806, it was possible for the romantic Irish novelist Lady Morgan… to damn with faint praise the artificial décor of English scenery in her novel *The Wild Irish Girl*, all the more to contrast it with the wild intractable fastnesses of the Irish countryside. While the ‘glowing fancy’

\(^5\) For more detailed information regarding this turn toward the picturesque in (Grand) tourism, with particular attention on Scotland, see Withey 1997.
could dwell ‘enraptured on the paradisal charms of English landscape’, this is hardly comparable to ‘those scenes of mysterious sublimity, with which the wildly magnificent landscape of Ireland abounds’. (Gibbons 1988:204)

A particular concept that came to be associated with the romanticization of rurality entailed in this brand of (Grand) tourism is an association of landscapes, as views of physical topography imbued with (particular) sentiment(s) and meaning(s), and characterizations of people who populated those landscapes. In Ireland, this association was perhaps particularly pernicious, as the characterization of rural Irish as irrational, unpredictable, wild, and violent was further reinforced (in a manner that discounted the role of British imperialism in fomenting rebellion). What developed was “the view that political violence and ‘agrarian outrages’ were not a product of colonial misrule, or any social conditions, but emanated instead from the inexorable influence of landscape and climate on the Irish character” (Gibbons 1988:211). Building on and justifying earlier characterizations of the Irish as barbaric and qualitatively different from the English, the complex of picturesque wild scenery in this new vein of Grand Tourism was useful in supporting these well-worn notions. “The fact that Irish landscape was defined in terms of wilderness and disorder, and that the weather was gloomy, turbulent and subject to fitful changes, made any suggestion of a strange osmosis between climate and character all the more attractive” (Gibbons 1988:211).
2.2.6 Victorian Irish

England’s Victorian Era began at the end of the first third of the nineteenth century (1837). Notable with regard to characterizations of the Irish during this period was the publication of Charles Darwin’s *On the Origin of Species* in 1859, which brought an evolutionary emphasis on physiology to discussion of ‘races of man’. Among these social-Darwinian physiognomists that brought this influence to bear regarding the Irish one must consider the work of John Beddoe. Lewis Perry Curtis refers to Beddoe as “the most impressive of these Victorian ethnologists” (1971:19). Curtis outlines the most prominent of Beddoe’s works, *The Races of Britain: A Contribution to the Anthropology of Western Europe*, in which Beddoe offers up his “Index of Nigrescence” meant to quantify the melanin in the skin, eyes, and hair follicles of populations, thus providing a key to ethnic/racial origins. Of this Index of Nigrescence Curtis claims:

Beddoe’s index was not only a speciously scientific device, but it implied that one end of the scale was preferable to the other. The index of nigrescence was a carefully contrived formula for measuring the ratio of black, brown, and red, as well as fair-haired person in any given region. It served to confirm the impressions of many Victorians that the Celtic portions of the population in Wales, Cornwall, Scotland, and Ireland were considerably darker or more melanous than those descended from Saxon and Scandinavian forebears (1971:20).
Based on his Index of Nigrescence, as well as more traditional craniology and physiognomic measurements, Beddoe suggested a common ethnic/racial type he claims was common in Wales, the west of Great Britain, and the west of Ireland. He named this racial type “Africanoid.” Quoting Beddoe at length in this regard, he claimed:

I have notes of 34 persons with oblique eyes. Their heads include a wide range of relative breadth, from 72 to 86.6; and the average index of latitude is 78.9, which is not much greater than the average of England and Wales. But in other points the type stands out distinctly. The cheek-bones are almost always broad; the brows oblique, in the same direction as the eyes; the chin, as a rule, narrow or angular; the nose is often concave or flat, seldom arched; and the mouth is rather inclined to be prominent. The forehead usually recedes a little; the inion is placed high, and the naso-inial arc is rather short (13.8 inches), so as to lead one to suppose that the cerebellum is scarcely covered by the posterior lobes. The iris is usually hazel or brown. And the hair straight, dark brown, black, or reddish. This type seems to be common in Wales, in West Somerset, and especially in Cornwall…. No instance of this type has turned up among the (comparatively few) heads from the East of England which I have had opportunity for measuring, and very few from Ireland. I believe, however, that specimens of it might easily be found in the mountainous parts of Connaught, especially on the borders of Sligo and Roscommon (Ireland)…. While Ireland is apparently its present centre, most of its lineaments are such as lead us to think of Africa as its possible birthplace; and it may be well, provisionally, to call it Africanoid. (1885:9–11, italics in original)
In this way, Beddoe associated the Irish with African peoples who were widely assumed to be at a lower “evolutionary” stage than European populations. Despite this aspect of Beddoe’s work, Curtis claims, “Beddoe was no strident racist in the tradition of Gobineau, Knox, Hunt, Madison Grant, or H. S. Chamberlain. But he did inject a host of ethnocentric and elitist attitudes into his work on the racial makeup of the British Isles” (1971:20). Curtis suggests that Beddoe, “required an ethnographic imagination to find traces of an African genesis only in the Celtic core of South Wales and Munster.” And, “Beddoe’s index of nigrescence and his category of Africanoid Celts put the finishing touches on the later Victorian image of the Irish” (1971:20).

Another key anthropologist to do research in Ireland on the Beddoian model was Alfred Court Haddon. In a paper read to the Royal Irish Academy on December 12, 1892, and available in the Proceedings of that body, Haddon addresses the constitution of an Anthropometric Committee as calling for works that fall under two categories: work done in anthropometric laboratories and work undertaken in the field, “in country districts” (Haddon and Browne 1891–93:768). He suggests that an account of laboratory work would shortly be presented to the Academy; and, indeed, a paper that details measurements taken of eight crania reputed to be from the Aran islands but contained in different collections is present in the same volume of Proceedings (Haddon 1891–93). The larger, “Ethnographic,” paper represents work done in the field on two of the three Aran Islands in Galway Bay in the west of Ireland.
The content of their ethnographic study, by Haddon and Browne’s own admission, “exceeded the lines of research which the (Anthropometric) Committee at first proposed for itself” (1891–93:769). The study, instead, included sections on archaeology, clothing, customs, dwellings, family-life and customs, folklore, history, occupations, and other aspects of life on the islands studied over and above anthropometric data. This was intentional on the part of Haddon and Browne.

We have done so in the belief that the ethnical characteristics of a people are to be found in their arts, habits, language, and beliefs as well as in their physical characters. For various reason we do not now propose to enter into all these considerations; but we hope that the following account will give a fairly accurate, though somewhat imperfect, presentment of the anthropography and mode of life of the inhabitants of the most interesting group of islands round the Irish coast. (Haddon and Browne 1891–93:769)

Despite this holism, however, substantial anthropometric data is presented in the paper.

Per Beddoe’s example, pigment of the people of the islands is presented and taken to be particularly significant. “The anthropological data most readily obtainable are the colour of the hair and eyes: and they appear to possess very considerable importance” (Haddon and Browne 1891–93:771–772). In collecting this data they use the methods suggested by Beddoe, footnoting Beddoe’s The Races of Briain (sic), and utilizing marking cards that were designed by Beddoe for the specific purpose of recording pigment. Of these cards the authors state:
The marking cards introduced by Dr. Beddoe are in every way admirably adapted for field work, since they are small enough to fit in a waistcoat pocket. As the noting of an individual can be made by a single pencil mark, they admit of rapid and accurate use in situations where writing would be difficult. Each card is divided vertically into three main divisions for eye color: light, medium, and dark, respectively. Three spaces thus formed are further sub-divided vertically into five columns for the five hair colours: red, fair, brown, dark, and black. These are indicated by the letters R. F. B. D. and N.\(^6\) at the heads of the columns. The card is sub-divided by a horizontal line into two equal parts—the upper for the males, the lower for the females. It is convenient to leave a space at the end of the card for the name of the locality. The back of the card can be utilized for the date and further particulars. The initialing of the card by the observer indicates that the record is completed for that card. (1891–93:772)

Utilizing Beddoe’s marking cards, Haddon and Browne were able to record and present the results on 436 individuals (105 boys, 124 girls, 134 men, and 73 women) from Aranmore (Inis Mór) and 27 men from Inishmaan (Inis Meáin); they were unable to visit the third of the Aran islands Inisheer (Inis Óirr) because of the weather (Haddon and Browne 1891–93:791). This allowed them to calculate the Index of Nigrescence for these two islands, which they compared to find the index for the inhabitants of Inis Meáin to be much lower than that of the inhabitants of Inis Mór. They do not compare the Indexes

\(^6\) “N” stands for “Niger”
of Nigrescence they have presented with any other group/population, but presumably
their published data would permit other researchers to do this themselves.

Nor are Beddoe’s marking cards the only equipment Haddon and Browne took
to the Aran Islands. They also brought a large number of other devices that allowed
them to take multiple measurements of the islanders. Among these were a Flower’s
Craniometer for taking cranial circumference, a “compass d’épaisseur for face
measurements, a sliding rule for measuring cranial “span,” a Chesterman’s steel tape for
taking the horizontal circumference, and Dr. Cunningham’s modification of Busk’s
Craniometer for measuring the cranial height and auriculo-nasal and alveolar radii.
They also carried with them “The Traveller’s Anthropometer,” which would have
allowed them “to take all the requisite measurements…. except the cranial
circumference, but we preferred to use other instruments for the head measurements”
(Haddon and Browne 1891–93:776).

In addition to the measuring equipment, they brought along a camera with
which they took “[a] considerable number of photographs.” In most cases, the pictures
taken were of groups, but full-face and side-view portraits were taken of 13 of the
subjects they measured. A number of the photographs taken appear at the back of the
Proceedings in which the papers are published (Plates XXII through XXIV). Interestingly,
the authors suggest “[w]e found that the promise of a copy of their photograph was
usually a sufficient reward for undergoing the trouble of being measured and photographed” (Haddon and Browne 1891–93:778).

The amount of equipment utilized by Haddon during the Aran Islands Expedition is significant, given what has been claimed regarding Alfred Cort Haddon’s 1898 Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to the Torres Strait islands to the north of Australia. This expedition is considered by many to be an important moment in anthropology. Anna Grimshaw suggests it “marks the symbolic birth of modern anthropology” (2001:15), while Emilie de Brigard claims the Torre Strait Expedition is “[o]ne of the events marking the transformation of nineteenth-century speculative anthropology into a discipline with standards of evidence comparable to those of natural science” (1975:16). The natural sciences relied heavily on equipment, including cameras, as its practitioners strove toward rigorous objectivity.

In Beddoe, and arguably in Haddon and Browne through their utilization of Beddoe’s techniques, we see an articulation of a confluence of people of African heritage and the Irish. Truth be told, however, these anthropologists were hardly innovative in suggesting this connection. Historian Nadja Durbach has illustrated how the connection between people of Irish and African ancestry was widely accepted in England at the time of Beddoe’s and Haddon and Browne’s work, claiming that “it was relatively common knowledge in the late nineteenth century that freak show entrepreneurs who could not afford to import troupes of exotic foreigners regularly employed local, often
working-class Irishmen, to play the role of African ‘savages’” (2010:147). This tradition of using Irish actors to play Africans in the late nineteenth century itself followed a tradition of using “‘Paddy Murphy’ Indians” (Irishmen dressed as what audiences expected Native American Indians to look like) to play the parts of Indians that dominated freak show exhibits of the early nineteenth century. “The exhibition of Irishmen as ‘Red Indians’ signaled a long-held cultural understanding of savagery in which the Irish, as the first of Britain’s colonized natives, were paradigmatic” (Durbach 2010:159). When African characters began to populate the play bills of freak shows at mid century, in line with increased British colonial activity in Africa (Durbach 2010:149), Irish actors were, likewise, hired to play the role.

In the second half of the nineteenth century the African replaced the Native American in the Victorian mind as the quintessential savage. What seemed to remain constant, however, was the Irish reference point, for “Paddy Murphy” Indians were quickly superceded by “African Irishm[e]n.” (Durbach 2010:159–160)

So, just as they had for Native American Indians earlier in the century, “[a]s the first colonized ‘natives,’ it was thus the Irish that provided the model for mid- and late Victorian attitudes toward newly colonized African subjects” (Durbach 2010:160).

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7 Working class English audience were all too ready to accept these Irish “fakes” in the roles of non-European “others,” Durbach contends, because doing so “made it possible for working-class audiences to enjoy themselves alongside middle-class spectators precisely because these performances enabled ‘Anglo
Durbach notes the concern anthropologists had regarding representations of non-European “others” in freak shows. In 1855 the President of the Ethnological Society, John Conolly (a particularly Irish surname) encouraged colleagues to visit and report on freak show displays of Africans in order that the public might be informed and able to distinguish between authentic displays and fakes (Durbach 2010:149). “Anthropologists were thus concerned to distinguish the real from the fake because they believed that these shows were instrumental in shaping popular understandings of race” (Durbach 2010:149–150).

Associations between Irish and non-European colonized “others” present in the freak show representations in the early and mid-nineteenth century are recognizable in the anthropological works of Beddoe and Haddon and Browne produced later that century. The associations were popularly maintained prior to and contemporary with the formulation of these anthropological articulations of analogy between Irish and non-Europeans.

This parallel between popular and scientific views is evocative of Michel-Rolph Trouillot’s elaboration upon the discipline of anthropology within overall narrative trends found in much Western writing. In Trouillot’s articulation, it is not at all Saxons’ to distinguish themselves from the savage but subjugated ‘Africanoid Celt’ and imagine instead that they were members of an imperial ruling race” (2010:170).
productive to analyze the way(s) in which anthropology worked to reify the savagery/barbarity of particular peoples without acknowledging “a field of significance that the discipline inherited at birth” (1991:18). What all academic disciplines do, Trouillot claims, is to “filter and rank—and in that sense, they truly discipline—contested arguments and themes that often precede them” (1991:17). In that sense, “Anthropology came to fill the savage slot of a larger thematic field, performing a role played, in different ways, by literature and travel accounts” (Trouillot 1991:29), and, I would add, novels, drama, freak shows, and a multitude of other media spheres.8

On the whole, the narrative that Trouillot outlines is one of oppositional place-making. Based on “the trilogy of order-utopia-savagery, a trilogy which preceded anthropology’s institutionalization and gave it continuing coherence in spite of intradisciplinary shifts” (1991:40). Trouillot reconceptualizes most anthropological work as instances of a continual creation in and through texts/media of an unspecific (utopian) “West” against the (savage) elsewhere. It is in this sense that Trouillot claims, quoting Edouard Glissant that, “[t]he West is not in the West. It is a project, not a place” (1989:2,

8 Trouillot’s work is perhaps particularly pertinent to my own work, given Richard Fox’s contention that Trouillot’s and Appadurai’s contributions to Recapturing Anthropology share key themes. “What Trouillot uncovers from the past surfaces in Appadurai’s account of the present. When Appadurai urges anthropologists to recognize the ethnoscapes being created globally today, he acknowledges another world presently threatening to go beyond our scholarly capacities, a world that is remaking us whether or not we are willing. Both Trouillot and Appadurai portray an anthropology whose authority was (and will be) delegated by the world, rather than asserted in the profession” (Fox 1991:14). It bears noting that Appadurai’s contribution to Recapturing Anthropology is an earlier/adapted version of a chapter of his book Modernity at Large, which is central to my work here.
quoted in Trouillot 1991:32). Despite being a project rather than a place, however, it is a project of place making/locality production.

Appadurai, likewise, suggests that the practice of ethnography ran, and runs, parallel to the locality producing activities of those who are the subjects of such research, in that ethnography has the effect of locality production through a textualization of the rituals, rites, and ceremonies on which it focuses. “The ethnographic project is in a peculiar way isomorphic with the very knowledges it seeks to discover and document, as both the ethnographic project and the social projects it seeks to describe have the production of locality as their governing telos” (Appadurai 1996:182). Appadurai’s idea that ethnography and local social practices are both instances of place making is one with which I can, in principle, agree, as long as it is understood that the places being created by the two in any location might be drastically different.

2.3 Manifesting Colonial Ireland

Anthropological discourses regarding the Irish, along with discourses from countless other sites, supported a representation of the “people of Ireland” as barbaric, prone to violence, lazy, over procreative, etc., characterizations they largely share with stereotypes of other non-European “others” (especially people of African ancestry or, alternatively and at different times, Native Americans). In Trouillot’s terms, the Irish shared the “savage slot” with other non-European groupings of people. If these (racial)
representations were/are not “ever present,” they were and are, at least, consistently present enough in a range of spheres of life to reinforce stereotypes of “the Irish.”

While you would be hard pressed to find Irish individuals willing to “claim” these facile negative stereotypes or to attribute them to themselves personally, Irish people do at times themselves give voice to these characterizations. Like the pub worker who confided in me that he fears the day when Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland are unified because, as a result of the relative industriousness of Northern Irish Protestants, the Northern Irish would quickly come to “run the place.” Or, it can be found reified by the Irish actor who plays the brawling Irishman in a television program, movie, or play. It is this same sentiment that led Dublin-native and novelist Roddy Doyle to write:

Your music should be abou’ where you’re from an’ the sort o’ people yeh come from…. Say it once, say it loud, I’m black an’ I’m proud

They looked at him

James Brown. Did yis know… never mind. He sang tha’…. An’ made a fuckin’ bomb

They were stunned by what came next

The Irish are the niggers of Europe, lads.

They nearly gasped: it was so true. (1989[1987]:9)\textsuperscript{9}

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\textsuperscript{9} In Doyle’s the novel, The Commitments, a character makes a case for why the band he has been asked to manage should initiate a (political) “Dublin-Soul” revolution by playing Motown music. More
Lebow has commented elegantly on the colonial/economic pressures that might have led to self-fulfilling stereotypes being adopted by Irish people (which in turn might be behind this seeming complicity with the colonialist discourse).

By the nineteenth century the major characteristics attributed to the Irish—indolence, superstition, dishonesty and a propensity to violence—had remained prominent in the British image for over six hundred years.... If the Irish were indolent, the British had most assuredly encouraged them to be so. All too often, an Irishman who improved his land was either charged more rent or expelled to make room for another tenant who would pay a higher rent.... If the Irish were superstitious, once again British policy had helped to guarantee that they would be so. Under the Penal Laws the government forbade Irish Catholics from being educated outside of Ireland (and) outlawed Catholic education within Ireland....

Perhaps the most important self-validating aspect of the stereotype was the proverbial Irish hatred of Britain and the willingness of the population to rebel when given the opportunity. Since they were often treated like treacherous rebels, it should not be surprising that the Irish became more defiant over the years. (1976:78–79)

It is clear that the students I interviewed regarding Gaeilge were acutely aware of a colonial history of the British in Ireland. In one interview, I was discussing TG4’s contemporary examples of analogies between Irish and other people/groups of non-European ancestry from other media will be presented in later chapters.
propensity to include English-language subtitles in many of their Gaeilge-language programs. One of the students suggested that it would be better just to have the Gaeilge without subtitles. He then evokes English colonial history:

C6: It’d be better if we just spoke Irish.
AT: That, that, that, that, that they not have the subtitles or?....
C6: Yeah... Well, if it wasn’t for the English we’d be still speaking Ir, Irish.
AT: Uh huh.
C6: You know... It’d be all Irish stations.

And, in a later interview with a two-student group that also included C6, we were discussing whether immigrants coming to Ireland today should be encouraged to learn Gaeilge. The students suggested that newly arriving immigrants should not be encouraged to learn Gaeilge, but should, rather, concentrate on improving their English:

C10: But we speak English to them (recently arrived immigrants).
C6: Yeah.... Supposed to.... Because of those bloody Brits (laughs).

Each of these statements by this same student exhibit an anti-English/anti-British sentiment that results from a colonial history of the British in Ireland. This sentiment is taken as characteristic of Irish nationalism.

What is often missed, perhaps due to a naturalization of the idea of an Irish people (the Irish nation), is the suggestion that the solidarity that was a prerequisite for Irish nationalism came largely as a result of the Irish-as-a-group thinking instigated by British discourses that were presented to, perhaps forced on, people living on the island
to England’s western shore over a number of centuries. That is, the degree to which an Irish nation was an unintended consequence of the colonization of Ireland.

2.4 Chapter Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented a colonial history of Ireland. Particular attention was given to the primitivizing discourses that resulted from the historical contingency of British projects of colonization on the island (and farther abroad), marking the colonized Irish as barbaric.

What is most important for the purposes of the framework developed here is that the students and others with whom I did my research in modern day Dublin made comments that indicate a keen awareness of this colonial history and the primitivizing discourses it has produced. In making such comments, I will contend, people can be seen as engaging in a historic-discursively constituted Colonial Ireland locality. This locality, however, is not hegemonic. That is, it is not the only possible locality in which people might engage. The next chapter presents two alternative historic-discursively constituted localities also indicated in the discourse of those with whom I did my research.
3. The Production of (Alternate) Ireland(s)

3.1 Introduction

In the last chapter I presented a colonial history of Ireland. Particular ideas regarding what it means to be Irish (that is, certain productions of Ireland and the people that populate that locality) have resulted from this history and, I suggested at the end of the chapter, are manifest in the lives and words of the Irish people I spoke to while doing my research there.

In this chapter I will present two more different, but not altogether unrelated, histories of Ireland. As in the last chapter, the ultimate focus will be on how the localities produced in and by these histories are manifested in the lives of the Irish students with whom I did my research.

3.2 Degenerationism

Haddon and Browne’s ethnography of the Aran Islands discussed in the last chapter was not the only representation of Ireland/the Irish that was extant in the late nineteenth century. Another, quite different, representation of the Irish was also proliferating at the time. Historian Greta Jones writes about this juxtaposition of representations of Ireland/the Irish in an article entitled “Contested Territories: Alfred Cort Haddon, Progressive Evolutionism and Ireland” (1998).1 In this article, Jones

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1 This article’s title is derived from Jones’ claim that “Haddon’s ethnological raw material was contested territory” (Jones 1998:195). This claim highlights the “evidence” Haddon used in formulating his
suggests that “[t]he dominant paradigm of nineteenth century anthropology was exemplified by the idea that a primitive society gave way to increasingly complex and sophisticated social formations” (1998:196). This is the social-evolutionary standpoint that justifies the maintained differentiation of Irish and English/Anglo-Saxon races and the analogies between Irish and non-European “others” discussed in last chapter. However, Jones contends that this perspective, which she refers to as “progressive evolutionism” and claims characterizes Haddon’s work, was not the only one circulating in the late nineteenth century. There was, Jones contends, another history of human society available at the time. This “alternative history” might be called degenerationism, and this idea “denied progress and regarded human society as having fallen away into barbarism from an original state of civilization” (Jones 1998:196).

With possible origins in the story of original sin and Adam and Eve’s expulsion from the Garden of Eden, this concept/narrative was the effective inverse of the ideas behind characterizations of the Irish as exemplars of the state of barbarism that all humans once exhibited, embodied in progressive evolutionism. Rather, degenerationist sentiments “were built upon the concept of a golden past from which the present day conclusions regarding the nature of human (social) evolution rather than a world or locality that is entailed in/by his conclusions. Still, I find the fact that Jones’ title can be applied to the notion of oppositional narratives regarding the Irish as “Territories,” places, being contested telling.
was a derogation. They denied moral intellectual or spiritual progress had occurred in history” (Jones 1998:201).

Degenerationist ideas were developed and espoused by other professional academics who were at least as prominent as Beddoe, Haddon, and Browne, and as will be seen in what follows have had lasting effects on (some) Irish ways of thinking. Jones details the work of multiple academic writers such as George Petrie, who won the Royal Irish Academy’s prize in 1833 for an essay on ancient Irish lithic structures. Samuel Ferguson is another academic who, along with Petrie, collected, identified, and investigated early Christian and pre-Christian Irish artifacts. These charismatic academics did much to further the study of ancient Irish (material) culture, due in large part to their propensity to draw other prominent people into their project.

A group of enthusiastic antiquarians, drawn into this passion for investigating the remains of the Irish past, gathered around Petrie and Ferguson and their colleague the Irish language expert John O’Donovan (1809–1861). The group included the physician William Stokes, the surgeon William Wilde and the Trinity don Romney Robinson. (Jones 1998:199)

The overall theme of the writings that was produced by this group of antiquarians was degenerationist. “[T]hese writers had deeply ambiguous feelings about, and even open hostility to the ‘modern’ developments of their own time. They had romantic nostalgia for the past and questioned whether ‘progress’ had really been achieved in the nineteenth century” (Jones 1998:199).
Based largely on the prolific works of these authors in the early nineteenth century, degenerationist ideas were perhaps more widely accepted than progressive evolutionist ideas that would begin to dominate later in the century. According to Jones:

Progressive evolution had its proponents even then (in the early nineteenth century) but most people would have concurred with Isaac Butt, professor of political economy at Trinity College, Dublin. In 1843 he wrote of ‘the foolish dream that man has emerged from a state of barbarism through the gradual spread of civilisation to his present state’. This he believed was ‘contrary to Genesis’ ‘the facts of experience’ and the fiction of such a gradual progression inconsistent with our nature and opposed to our experience of the world’. (Jones 1998:196)

But the high regard in which degenerationism was held in academic spheres early in the nineteenth century began to give way later in the century.

According to Jones, degenerationism “has generally been regarded as losing out in the battle to construct a viable history of human social development in the nineteenth century, becoming, as it were outside the pale of respectable ethnological thought by the end of the nineteenth century” (1998:196). Despite losing favor in anthropological and other academic disciplines, the concept of degenerationism was carried on in a number of, perhaps, less academic arenas. Primary among these was Irish Nationalism

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2 This claim is indicative of the religious origin of degenerationist ideas.
3.3 Irish Nationalism

Locating an historic origin of Irish nationalist sentiment is problematic. One oft-quoted historian of Irish nationalism suggests the 1641 Rebellion, the way in which it was brutally put down by Cromwellian forces, and the Penal Laws that followed were a potential primary source. “The terrible suffering which Cromwell inflicted in the name of God on all Catholic rebels in Ireland, regardless of racial origin, forged for them something very like a single identity” (Kee 1972:15–16). Discussion of Sir John Temple’s *The Irish Rebellion*, which was published directly after the 1641 Rebellion, in the previous chapter suggests of how a long-lasting characterization of “the Irish” was articulated at this time.

However, it is not until the late nineteenth century that a particular brand of *cultural* nationalism appeared in Ireland.³ In line with the ideas of Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803), who asserted that the common language and shared cultural traditions of a people was at the core of national solidarity, that proliferated throughout Europe in the nineteenth century, Irish nationalism took on a particular cultural character later that century.⁴

³ Counter to this commonly cited time of origin, Mary Helen Thuente places the origins Irish “literary nationalism” at an earlier date, in the late eighteenth century (1994).
⁴ It is interesting that one of the works Herder appeals to in formulating his ideas of cultural nationalism is the work of James Macpherson, which helped to touch off domestic Grand Tourism to the Celtic periphery regions discussed in the last chapter.
Eric Hobsbawm puts much effort into showing the problems with Herder’s ideas of linguistic and cultural nationalism, demonstrating how “non-literate vernacular languages” had regional dialectical and other variations significant enough to prevent them from acting as “a ‘national language’” (1992:51–63). This is not to claim, however, that language did not come to play a significant role in nationalism in the modern era.

Hobsbawm claims:

Language in the Herderian sense of the language spoken by the Volk was therefore plainly not a central element in the formation of proto-nationalism directly…. However, indirectly it was to become central to the modern definition of nationality, and therefore also to the popular perception of it. For where an elite literary or administrative language exists, however small the number of its actual users, it can become an important element of proto-national cohesion.

(1992:59)

And so it was with Gaeilge in what would become the Republic of Ireland.

The research of Ferguson, Petrie, and (perhaps particularly) O’Donovan discussed here went far toward advancing Gaeilge learning and literature. The major milestone that began to bring Gaeilge to non-elite Irish people was the founding of the Conradh na Gaeilge (Gaelic League [Connradh na Gaedhilge in the old spelling]) with Douglas Hyde as its President in 1893. The express goals of the organization was “the preservation of Irish as the national language of Ireland and the extension of its use as a spoken tongue, together with the promotion of historic Gaelic literature and the
cultivation of a modern literature in Irish” (Hindley 1990:24). To this end, the Conradh organized Irish-language classes and social events and a program of book and periodical publication. At its founding, the organization was self-consciously apolitical, and Douglas Hyde struggled, ultimately in vain, to keep it this way until 1915.

The activities of the Conradh continued a trend of the propagation of Irish-language literature that was begun earlier in the century. And, those directly allied with the Conradh were not the only writers involved in this larger project. “The advent of the League nevertheless coincided with the great flowering of Anglo-Irish culture associated with the names of Yeats, Lady Gregory, Synge, and others who brought about a belated ‘Romantic Revival’ of public interest in traditional Irish myth and legend” (Hindley 1990:24). Thus, the Conradh played its part in supporting the “Irish Renaissance” of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.\(^5\)

Even before the founding of the Conradh, other organizations that still survive today to perpetuate non-linguistic Irish cultural practices were formed. Importantly, what is today called the Gaelic Athletics Association (GAA, Cumann Lúthchleas Gael [CLG]) was established in 1884. The association was originally named the Gaelic Athletic Association for the Preservation and Cultivation of National Pastimes, and in its early years association meetings emphasized track and field athletics, which were the most

\(^5\) For an interesting look at trans-Atlantic cross fertilizations between the “Harlem and Irish Renaissances” that approaches the issues of analogies drawn between Irish and other non-European “others,” see Mishkin 1998.
popular sports at the time (de Búrca 1999: 14, 15). Nevertheless, the association’s original charter named Gaelic Football, Hurling, Handball, and Rounders as those the association supported (Gaelic Athletics Association Rounders 2010).

The connections between organizations like the Conradh and the GAA that support various aspects of “Irish culture” are, and for a long time have been, strong. Historian Richard English suggests:

Cusack and others among the GAA’s early enthusiasts were themselves sympathetic to the Gaelic League venture, and supported the League when it was established in 1893. There emerged at local level considerable cooperation between the GAA and the Gaelic League. Nationalism could apparently do it all. (English 2006:230)

Both of these organizations met with broad support among everyday Irish people, and planted the seed of modern Irish (Cultural) Nationalism in that population. “By 1889 it (the GAA) had achieved a membership of over fifty thousand, spreading a simple pride in Irish-consciousness for its own sake over large areas of the countryside” (Kee 1972:426).

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6 The GAA website lists Gaelic Football (Peil Ghaelach), Hurling (Iománaíocht), Ladies’s Football (Peil na mBan), Camogie (Camógaíocht), Handball (Liatróid Láimhe), and Rounders (Cluiche Corr) as the current games of the Association (Gaelic Athletics Association 2010).
3.3.1 Degenerationism in Irish Nationalism

A key aspect of the discourse of Irish Cultural Nationalism is a reversal of the characterization of Ireland and the Irish in the nineteenth-century proponents of progressive evolutionism, which depicted the Irish as devoid of culture and barbaric. To the contrary, Irish Cultural Nationalist discourse often depicted the contemporary state of affairs as less desirable than the (mythical) society of the past that was more in tune with its natural surroundings.

For Irish Nationalists the past (that was the supposed source of the language, literature, and other cultural institutions that propagated Irish Cultural Nationalism) was one with an Irish society that rivaled Greece, Rome, and England at their cultural apogees.

Intertwined with these ideas was the conviction that the Irish past was a Celtic equivalent to Greece and Rome and able to play a similar role in the construction of an independent Ireland to that of classical civilisation during the European Renaissance. It could act as a symbol, reference point, store of culture to be drawn on. In 1912, the nationalist newspaper *Sinn Fein Weekly* talked about pre-Christian Ireland as a period when ‘Ireland, like Greece and England, had her golden age of life and letters. Long before the coming of Christianity, she had expressed it in a literature of amazing excellence for so early a period’. (Jones 1998:200)
It is perhaps worth noting that Ferguson and Petrie were not particularly pleased about this appropriation, popularization, and application of the ideas they had helped to propagate. They had always held that the learning of the Irish past, language, and folkways would serve to close the gap between supporters of British rule and other Irish people. They envisioned that the purpose of their academic enterprise “was to educate the gentry, the natural leaders of society, to an appreciation of the glories of Irish civilization and to encourage them to become the guardians and preservers of its traditions. This would, in turn, alleviate the conflicts within Irish society and unite the classes under their leadership” (Jones 1998:200). Counter to this dream, the appreciation of Irish language, literature, and other cultural performances was shunned by supporters of British rule and taken up as an in-group indicator of Nationalist, and (eventually) Republican, affiliation.

The arrival of the modern form of Irish nationalism in the latter half of the nineteenth century alarmed these writers. Ferguson, who died in 1886 during the controversy over the first home rule bill, was alienated by the middle class, demotic and anti-landlord character of this new nationalism. Nonetheless, Petrie’s and Ferguson’s view of Ireland’s pre-Christian history was passed on. (Jones 1998:200).

What is perhaps most striking, and relevant to this present project, is that speakers espousing both progressive evolutionist and degenerationist viewpoints were apt to speak at the same venues, with each receiving praise. For example, in 1893
Haddon gave a lecture on progress in transport to a sizable audience of 300 at the Belfast Naturalist’s Field Club, an institution that had by this time already become one of Haddon’s main resources for the collection of Irish data to support his work (Jones 1998:201). Only three weeks later, William Butler Yeats spoke at the field club:

It was not progress but loss to which Yeats drew the attention of his audience, redolent of the loss which students of the ‘antique’ in the 1840s had sought to repair by recovering the past. This loss could, however, be made good by the conscious recovery of the ancient oral tradition in contemporary literature. (Jones 1998:201)

In 1984 Douglas Hyde gave a lecture at the Field Club. Less than a year after founding of the Conradh, Hyde, like Yeats, spoke of the former glory of “Celtic Language and Literature” and the necessity for and the work towards its maintenance.

As the report recorded, ‘frequent bursts of applause greeted the lecturer at the salient and passionate parts of his address’. A number among the audience formed their own Celtic Class to study the Irish language. Then ‘having been nurtured under the sheltering care of the Club’ they split off from the Belfast Field Club in 1895 to form a branch of the Gaelic League in Belfast. (Jones 1998:201)

Here we see members of an institution at the heart of Haddon’s progressive evolutionist project receiving with “bursts of applause” a lecturer whose work depends on degenerationist ideas. Whether and how Field Club members reconciled the differences
between the underlying theories of these lectures is a question that should be investigated through future archival research, but I do find it interesting to think that at least some of the Field Club’s members could have attended and appreciated lectures by each of these speakers.

3.4 From Nationalism to Independence

In 1800, as a result of (at least in part) continuing fears that Ireland might be used by French or other anti-British forces as a foothold from which to attack Britain, the Acts of Union passed by the parliaments of both Great Britain and Ireland established the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Historian Richard English suggests that leadership of the Catholic majority in Ireland were initially supportive of the Acts of Union, as they believed an improvement of the lives of Catholics would shortly follow. This turned out not to be the case:

As things actually emerged during the nineteenth century, the Union was undoubtedly weakened by the authorities’ failure to accompany it at once with Catholic Emancipation. The early years of the Union saw the lingering of the communal grievance of Catholic disability – one of so many continuities across the 1800 divide – and this fed disaffection in ways which stimulated the growth of a powerful new form of Irish nationalism. (English 2006:118)
The dissatisfaction with the rule from England that Union entailed led to a growing political nationalism that voiced a desire for self government of Ireland.⁷

Out of a combination of this Home Rule nationalism and late-nineteenth century cultural nationalism came a group of militants that called for independence for Ireland and justified that call with the idea that there was an (organic?) Irish nation. That Irish nation was built on a common language (Gaeilge) and culture that was bequeathed to the nation from the Gaelic society of the past. In sum, they appealed to a locality called Ireland (Éire). These are the militants that would eventually usher in political independence for Ireland.

The Anglo-Irish War that ultimately led to Irish independence was a guerrilla war that (officially) ran from 1919 to 1921. A truce was called in the summer of 1921 and talks were initiated that led to the Anglo-Irish Treaty. The terms of the Treaty, officially called the Articles of Agreement for a Treaty between Great Britain and Ireland, provided for the formation of the Irish Free State. After the treaty was ratified by the Parliaments of both Ireland and Britain, The Irish Free State came into being in 1922.

The Free State was to have the same constitutional status as the (then) Dominion of Canada. However, the Articles of Agreement (and the Constitution of the Irish Free State that was drafted in line with these Articles) provided that a Governor-General of

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⁷ A key self-government advocate was Isaac Butt, who founded the Home Rule League in 1873. Butt is quoted earlier in this chapter arguing against progressive evolution.
The Irish Free State would be appointed as the representative of the Crown in the
country and that an oath containing a pledge of faith to King George V and his heirs
would be required of all elected Members of Parliament of the Irish Free State before
they could take their seats in that body. It also provided for the partition of Northern
Ireland from the Irish Free State, due to the fact that a Protestant majority living in the
region did not want to be citizens of a majority Catholic country that the all-Ireland Irish
Free State would constitute (Macardle 1999:953–955). These provisions fell short of those
envisioned by many, perhaps all, Irish Republicans.

As a result of disillusionment over these issues, and often justified by the claim
that the treaty was signed under a threat of an immediate return to war by British forces
otherwise, a number of militant republicans protested and split from those who voted
to ratify the treaty. A short civil war ensued between these pro- and anti-Treaty forces.
Supporters of the Free State were able to win this war in less than a year and governance
of the 26 counties that made up what would eventually become the Republic of Ireland
continued under the Free State.

Eventually, a number of the anti-treaty republican came to run in elections for
and take their seats in the Irish Parliament (Dáil Éireann) in order to work further
towards the formation of an Irish republic through non-violent political means. The

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8 This idea was inferred from comments made by one of Irish Treaty delegates, Robert Barton, during
debates about the treaty in the Irish Parliament (Dáil Éireann). TD Barton’s comments may be viewed at
former leader of the struggle for independence from the United Kingdom, Eamon de Valera, was the leader of these constitutional republicans.

Eamon de Valera’s constitutional republican party, Fianna Fáil, won a majority of seats in the Dáil in 1932. As a result, de Valera was sworn in as President of the Executive Council (the equivalent of Prime Minister in the Irish Free State). He immediately set about fulfilling his election promises to reconfigure the relationship between Great Britain and the Irish Free State, including doing away with the oath of allegiance required of those elected to the Dáil before they could take their seats and doing away with annual payments made by the Free State to the United Kingdom. This latter action initiated a trade war between the Irish Free State and the United Kingdom that persisted throughout most of the 1930s. This move was part of an overall protectionist and isolationist economic policy enacted by the de Valera-led Irish government.

This protectionism and isolationism extended beyond the economic sphere. Rather, isolationism of a “cultural” nature was also pursued. And, this cultural protectionism did not apply only to the former colonial neighbor directly off the east coast of Ireland; it included influences from any country that was “other” than “Ireland.” This included the United States of America. This is reflected in a statement made by Ireland’s first national film censor, James Montgomery, that “the greatest danger to Ireland came not from the Anglicization of Ireland but from the Los
Angelesation of Ireland” (Rockett 1991:18).\(^9\) Montgomery’s statement is based on the idea that foreign, particularly American, popular culture would distract Irish people from Irish cultural practices.\(^10\)

This program of favoring “native” Irish culture and cultural practices did not only apply to cinema. Restrictions were put in place on a range of consumer goods and popular culture. All this was part of an effort propagated by numerous cultural nationalist organizations to support “Irish” literature and culture.

The various national, cultural, sporting, religious, and political movements which were finally focused in a united front in 1918 carried into the new state agenda which sought to introduce through the state apparatus, especially through the school curriculum, the cultural policies of the pre-independence movements. (Rockett 1991:18)

All of this was part of a process of bringing a “Gaelic” Ireland into being, a process of locality production.

3.4.1 The Case of Language

Perhaps the clearest example of this process involves the post-independence Irish-Language policy enacted by the Irish government. Government action in favor of Gaeilge was spread over a wide range of policy actions. First of these was an attempt “to

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\(^9\) I find the terms in which this statement is made, the turning of Ireland into England or Los Angeles, significant.

\(^10\) For more on the history of censorship in Ireland see Rockett 2004.
establish procedures to recruit state servants with a good knowledge of Irish” (Mac Giolla Chriost 2005:118). This included requiring the examination of Gaeilge as part of civil service entrance examinations.

Given that those who ran the Irish Free State were as dedicated cultural nationalists as those republicans who opposed it, it should come as no surprise that Gaeilge was codified as an official language of Ireland. The constitution of the Irish Free State reads “[t]he National Language of the Irish Free State (Soarstát Éireann) is the Irish language, but the English language shall be equally recognised as an official language” (quoted in Mac Giolla Chriost 2005:119). While the prominence of Gaeilge as the official language of Ireland was further emphasized later in history, as will be discussed later, the language was given pride of place from the very beginnings of the state.

Gaeilge’s privileged position in the eyes of the state meant, of course, that it was used in many ways in state affairs. From the earliest days of the Free State, fluency in Gaeilge was helpful for or even required of those seeking jobs in civil service.

From the establishment of the Free State, Irish became compulsory for entry to the Civil Service except in the case of temporary staff serving before 1922 who were given the opportunity to become permanent. In this latter case Irish was an optional subject only for the transitional examination. From 1926 successful candidates for the Civil Service, in addition to securing the requisite qualifying percentage in the Irish examination, were obliged before the end of their
probationary period (usually two years) to pass a further oral test in Irish of a standard higher than that imposed on entry. (Kelly 2002:105)

There are indications, however, that policies along these lines were ever only half-heartedly implemented. A particularly interesting example of this is the fact that the use of Gaeilge by elected government officials in their practice of governmental business has always been relatively limited. According to Hindley, “Irish has never achieved more than ceremonial status in the Oireachtas (Parliament) and although the new state was quick to require Irish-language qualifications from new entrants to the general grades of the civil service there was never any suggestion that eligibility for election to the legislature should be made dependent on a command of Irish” (1990:37). Nevertheless, it was felt that the functioning of Gaeilge in State services would spill over into the lives of the Irish people. Thus, from the formation of the Free State, “[c]ompulsory Irish was introduced as a condition of entry into the Civil Service as a means of extending the use of Irish” (Kelly 2002:104).

Another major set of actions taken to perpetuate use of the language was aimed at keeping it the language of everyday use among Gaeilge speakers in the western, rural regions of Ireland. These Gaeilge-speaking regions, Gaeltachtáí as they came to be called, were established by the Gaeltacht Commission (Coimisiún na Gaeltachta) in 1926. It is not insignificant that the borders of the Gaeltachtáí correspond with the area of operation of an institution set up under British government to alleviate poverty.
The Congested Districts Board was set up in 1891 to bring special economic assistance to those areas where problems of rural poverty were at their most intense. This territorial definition coincided uncannily with the Fíor-Ghaeltacht (True Gaeltacht) identified by the (Gaeltacht) Commission of 1926. (Hindley 1990:28)

Under the assumption that decline of the language of these areas would result from impoverishment that would lead Gaeilge-speaking residents of these regions to emigrate out of the region(s) (to both domestic and international sites) to find work, a series of economic schemes have been enacted to develop the Gaeltachtaí.

As with the introduction of Gaeilge-speaking requirements into the Civil Service, one of the main reasons behind supporting the Gaeltachtaí in these ways was the idea that from these regions Gaeilge use would spread. Gaeltachtaí were taken by some to be a “‘tobar fíor-ghlan na Gaeilge’ (literally, “truly-clean well of Gaeilge”) – the uncontaminated well-spring of the national language, from which the rest of the country could continue to draw sustenance” (Ó Tuathaigh 1990:11, quoted in Mac Giolla Chríost 2005:113).

Outside of the Gaeltachtaí, it was thought that the education system was best suited to preserve and spread Irish-language use. “Education was to be the mainstay of government policy in the rest of Ireland, where English was the predominant language – termed by some at the time as the Galltacht” (Mac Giolla Chríost 2005:117). And, “[t]here is little doubt that the implications of the language revival effort from 1922 for
the Irish education system were enormous and enduring” (Kelly 2002:12). Beginning in 1922, Gaeilge was phased into the school system as a compulsory subject and/or subject of examination for the Intermediate and Leaving Certificates.\(^\text{11}\)

From St Patrick’s Day 1922, Irish was made compulsory in all standards in the national (primary) schools. From then at least one hour per day had to be spent teaching Irish. From the school year 1927–28 Irish became a necessary subject for the award of the Intermediate Certificate.\(^\text{11}\) From 1934 Irish became a necessary subject for the award of the Leaving Certificate examination. (Kelly 2002:18)

Unifying the Gaeilge education project in the English-speaking Galltacht regions of Ireland and efforts to support Gaeilge in the Irish-speaking Gaeltacht regions of the island has been the Coláistí Samhraidh (Summer Colleges). Since before independence it was suggested that learners of Gaeilge spend some time in what would become the Gaeltachtaí to work on their language skills and sharpen their fluency in speaking. This was extended to primary- and secondary-school students after independence. “The first official scheme, Sgéim na Roinne, was established in 1932 under the direction of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries” (Kelly 2002:33). Many schemes facilitating youths being sent to the Gaeltachtaí followed and the numbers of students going to these colleges quickly increased.\(^\text{12}\)

\(^{11}\) Examinations taken after the first few years and at the end of second-level education.

\(^{12}\) For more detail on the history of the Coláistí Samhraidh see Kelly 2002:33–36.
Finally, the state supported a range of Irish-language media projects. Building upon early trends in Irish-language book and periodical publication established by the Conradh, the Irish Free State government supported Irish-language publications. Largely in order to facilitate the education initiatives already been described through the provision of Irish-language textbooks, a state-sponsored publications agency under the direction of the Department of Education was set up in 1926. This Books Committee (Coiste na Leabhar), as it was called, “was the first sustained government approach to providing Irish language reading material” (Kelly 2002:88).

Support of broadcasting in Gaeilge was also part of the Irish Free State’s language policy in the form of Irish-language programming on the radio. In fact a speech in Gaeilge was the first thing broadcast on the Irish Free State’s radio station, RN2, when it first began transmitting at 7:45 p.m. on January 1, 1926 (Watson 2003:16). This speech was given by none other than Douglas Hyde, the former (founding) President of the Conradh. “Speaking in Irish, Hyde talks of his hope for radio as a unifying force for Irish listeners” (Raidió Teilifís Éireann 2010).13 Drawing on both early twentieth-century sources and more recent academic commentators, Iarfhlaith Watson has suggested, “radio was employed as a tool to assist in the construction of an Irish nation” (2003:14).

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13 A recording of an extract from Hyde’s speech can be accessed at http://www.rte.ie/laweb/brc/brc_1920s.html.
All of these language policies can be seen not merely as calculated moves to appease a political base or, alternatively, an effort to impose a common means of communication on those living in Ireland, but rather as a project of locality production, an attempt to create an Irish nation, a Gaelic space. In line with this contention, Adrian Kelly has suggested that “[i]t (the language revival campaign) was part of an attempt to revive not just a language but an imaginary early Irish Utopia” (2002:15).

3.5 From Free State to Republic

Over a number of years, aided by a general British trend of ceding greater and greater independence to Canada and other dominions by the United Kingdom, de Valera’s government was able to claim increased independence of/for the Irish Free State. In 1937, a new Constitution written largely under the authorship of de Valera himself was voted on and accepted by the Irish electorate. This constitution established a sovereign, democratic, and independent state called Éire. This is the constitution that continues to function for the Republic of Ireland to this day, with the exception of changes that have been passed by plebiscite since its initial ratification.

The constitution contains a number of controversial aspects. Of relevance for this work is the constitutions initial claim in Articles 2 and 3 that the entire island of Ireland constituted the “national territory” of Éire. This claim infuriated many residents in

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14 There was still some ambiguity as to whether Éire was a republic. The passage of the Republic of Ireland Act in 1948 eliminated this ambiguity. The state has been referred to as the Republic of Ireland (Poblacht na hÉireann) since.
Northern Ireland, who saw it as an illegal claim for the annexation of territory. In the framework adopted here, however, the claim can be seen as an attempt to produce locality in a territory in which the Irish state had no real ability to do so.\textsuperscript{15}

Additionally, Article 8 of the constitution claims that Gaeilge is the first official language, with English recognized as a second official language. This aspect of the constitution is, of course, in line with the government language policy discussed earlier. Notably, this provision was included in the constitution even at a time when the majority of Irish citizens were first-language English speakers.

These aspects of the constitution, in line with state policies and state supported censorship in support of regenerated Irish culture and cultural practices, can be viewed as an attempt to produce a particular Irish locality. This process went well beyond the revolutionary moment of forming the Republic. Famously, de Valera gave a speech on St. Patrick’s Day of 1943, entitled “The Ireland that We Dreamed Of,” that provides a vision of the intended locality.

The ideal Ireland that we would have, the Ireland that we dreamed of, would be the home of a people who valued material wealth only as a basis for right living, of a people who, satisfied with frugal comfort, devoted their leisure to the things of the spirit – a land whose countryside would be bright with cozy homesteads,

\textsuperscript{15} This aspect of the constitution was changed as part of acceptance of the Belfast Agreement in 1998. Mention of national territory is removed and it is explicitly stated that a united Ireland can only come about with the consent of majorities of citizens in both the Republic and Northern Ireland.
whose fields and villages would be joyous with the sounds of industry, with the romping of sturdy children, the contest of athletic youths and the laughter of happy maidens, whose firesides would be forums for the wisdom of serene old age. The home, in short, of a people living the life that God desires that men should live.16

This speech is reflective of the bucolic, anti-materialist/anti-industrialist vision of both the degenerationist picture of ancient Ireland and the “locality” de Valera and others tried to produce in Ireland.

Attempts to bring this project to fruition are far from a thing of the past. Gaeilge activist Aodán Mac Póilín has written eloquently, and recently, about a similar project of place making. Mac Póilín suggests:

Matthew Arnold once wrote that the Celts have difficulty in accepting the despotic fact. I’ve always taken that as a compliment. If you’re faced with a despotic fact—an unpalatable actuality—you have two choices. You can lie down, wave your legs in the air, and let actuality trundle over you. Or you can imagine a new and better actuality—and then will it into being. (2006:99)

The unpalatable actuality Mac Póilín refers to is the loss of Gaeilge and the Ireland de Valera (and others) dreamed of. This leads Mac Póilín to frame his argument in terms of a cultural ecology.

16 The entire speech may be accessed at http://www.rte.ie/laweb/ll/ll_t09b.html.
The Irish language is, I believe, the cultural and linguistic equivalent of a small to medium-sized rain forest. And it’s our very own rain forest. It is Ireland’s privilege to have the sole care of a unique bit of humanity’s heritage, and it is Ireland’s duty to ensure that this irretrievable civilization does not go down the toilet. (Mac Póilín 2006:100)

I have come to call this nationalistic de Valera Ireland, that is the hoped-for telos of these state policies, “Gaelic Ireland.” In 1950s Ireland, however, a project of creating another, different but related, Ireland arose among the power-holders of the state. This project of locality production was one of making a “European Ireland.”

3.6 European Ireland

Eamon de Valera was Prime Minister17 of Ireland between 1932 and 1959 (minus two three-year periods when Fianna Fáil failed to receive a majority or form a coalition government and was in opposition). And, one of the defining characteristics of Ireland under the government of de Valera was emigration. The emigration of Irish people to America, Australia, Britain and other locales was commonplace in Ireland well before independence and the formation of the Irish Free State. Since at least the Famine years of the 1840s a relatively steady flow Irish people left the island in search of a better life. As a result, “the population of the 26 counties of the Irish Republic declined continuously from the middle of the nineteenth century to 1961” (Fitzgerald and Lambkin 2008:218).

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17 He was initially the President of the Executive Council, in the government of Irish Free State, and then, after the new constitution was ratified, Taoiseach.
Within six months of de Valera leaving the office of Taoiseach in June 1959, however, the movie-going public of the lower 26 counties of Ireland was informed of cultural celebrations of non-Irish national populations living in Ireland. In November 1959, an Amhrac Éireann (View of Ireland) pre-movie newsreel segment entitled “Dublin: Malayans Celebrate Independence Anniversary” made Irish moviegoers aware of these non-Irish nationals in their midst (Pratschke 2005:30). October 1960, likewise, saw a newsreel segment entitled “Dublin: Nigerian Independence Ball” released to the Irish movie-going public (Pratschke 2005:30). Additionally, the movie-going public was exposed to pre-movie newsreels of dignitaries from non-European countries visiting Ireland, “Dr. Nkrumah in Dublin” in May 1960 and “President of Pakistan in Dublin” in July 1964 (Pratschke 2005:30). How is it that so soon after de Valera’s departure as head of Ireland’s government, and in the context of a continuing (if somewhat subsiding) trend of emigration of people out of Ireland, could these representations of non-Irish-national immigrants and visitors be found on the island?

In pre-1922, pre-Independence Ireland, nationalist politicians painted the outward flow of people as political exiles forced to leave as a result of Britain’s anti-Irish policies.

Involuntary exile had long been a standard metaphor in Irish nationalist memory since the Great Irish Famine (1845–52), both in Ireland itself and among Irish communities overseas, especially in the United States. Irish nationalist political leaders since the second half of the nineteenth century had drawn on such
emotive images to bolster arguments for self-government since ‘English tyranny’ had forced people to emigrate. (Delaney 2005:51)

An independent Irish government, it was argued, would end this outward flow of Irish people.¹⁸

By the 1950s, 25 plus years after independence, it became clear that the establishment of an Irish state had not led to an Ireland to which “involuntary exiles” would flock, nor had it even stopped the outward flow that was, at that point, over a century old. In the early 1950s, the crisis bell was beginning to be rung by a number of commentators. A key work in this regard was the publication in 1953 of a collection essays entitled *The Vanishing Irish* (O’Brien 1953). O’Brien’s essay, also entitled “The Vanishing Irish,” in this edited collection is overtly alarmist. Making use of census figures from 1841 to 1951, O’Brien purports to demonstrate that the population on the island of Ireland had shrunk to nearly half itself from 8,177,945 to 4,330,172. During this same period, he details, the drop in population in Northern Ireland (“the six counties in Ulster) equaled just 279,366 people. “Far more striking and even more appalling, however, was the decline of the population of the 26 counties, now constituting the Republic of Ireland, from 6,529,000 to 2,960,593—a loss of 3,568,407. This means that Ireland has shrunk to less than half its former size!” (O’Brien 1953:13–14). If this trend were to continue, O’Brien warns, “in another century the Irish race will have vanished”

¹⁸ Independence fighter Patrick Pearse declared in 1913 that “Ireland has resources to feed five times her population: a free Ireland would make those resources available” (quoted in Delaney 2005:49).
O’Brien populates his essay with numerous tables and charts to clarify his points (and to offer them scientific credibility). Referring to one chart illustrating the decline in the 26 counties’ population from 1841 to 1946, O’Brien suggests, “[l]et any Irishman or a descendant of Irish forebears look at that chart with its telltale line tracing the tragic path to near extinction, and he will see that his homeland has been bleeding to death for a hundred years” (1953:15–16).

The major cause of this depopulation, of course, was emigration. O’Brien details emigration starting with the Famine, but he notes how emigration continued long after famine had ended (1953:22). “Hence we can see that for more than a century emigration has been like huge open sore on the bosom of Ireland, robbing her of her lifeblood” (O’Brien 1953:22). This is a key example of critical commentaries regarding emigration of the Irish that began to appear in the early 1950s.

To make matters worse, emigration out of the 26 counties seemed to be picking up steam throughout the 1950s. As the post-World War II economic expansion began to take hold in Britain and America, even more Irish people left to fill labor shortages in those countries. “Between 1946 and 1951 total net migration amounted to 119,568 people…. For the following five years until 1956 this figure rose to nearly 200,000. In the late 1950s independent Ireland experienced the highest levels of emigration since the 1850s, with over 50,000 people emigrating each year” (Delaney 2005:53). This confluence of affairs accentuated emigration as a political issue and the economic moves the Irish
government might make to reverse the tide of emigration in the minds of Irish voters.

“Emigration and the economy dominated the general election of March 1957” (Delaney 2005:60).

Given the emphasis on emigration and economics in the air in 1957, the call for a general election was timely for de Valera’s political Party, Fianna Fáil. Though the party had been in opposition for the prior three years, it had just produced a policy document that criticized many of the protectionist economic policies in place in Ireland (many of which had been instituted by previous Fianna Fáil led governments). The party was able to make use of this document as a manifesto and, coupled with general disenchantment with the coalition government that had led the country for the previous three years, was able to gain a single-party majority of seats in the Dáil. The policy document was accepted by the newly formed government and published as the White Paper on Economic Development.

The White Paper was the work of an Irish economist by the name of Thomas Whitaker. It’s clear that Whitaker was attuned to concerns over emigration. Enda Delaney suggests that the depressing results of the census of 1956, in particular, had a significant effect on Whitaker’s thinking (2005:61). The introduction of the White Paper suggests:

The common talk among people in the towns, as in rural Ireland, is of their children having to emigrate as soon as their education is completed to be sure of a reasonable livelihood. To the children themselves and to many already in
employment the jobs available at home look unattractive by comparison with
those obtained in such variety and so readily elsewhere. (quoted in Delaney
2005:61).

It is the publication of the White Paper that I offer as the line separating the two
periods of recent Irish history, those being “Gaelic Ireland” and “European Ireland.”
Terrence Brown suggests that release of the 1958 White Paper on Economic
Development marks a crucial shift in Ireland. According to Brown, “most Irish people
would still identify 1958–63 as the period when a new Ireland began to come to life”

Whitaker’s White Paper on Economic Development was the basis of The First
Programme for Economic Expansion. The Fianna Fáil government carried out this
economic liberalization program beginning in late 1950s. At its outset this (domestic)
program for economic liberalization and growth, however, was not separate from either
anti-British nationalist tendencies or the process that would lead to Ireland’s accession
into the European Economic Community (EEC). The trade war initiated by de Valera’s
government, featuring the Irish Free State’s refusal to pay land annuities to the UK, that
lasted throughout most of the 1930s discussed earlier in this chapter was devastating to
the Irish economy while having little effect on that of the UK. This clearly demonstrated
an unequal relationship in which post-independence Ireland was economically
dependent upon its larger neighbor to the east. For some in post-World War II Ireland,
trends toward increased European integration and cooperation began to look like a
possible way out of the country’s uneasy economic relationship with the UK. Still, the idea of European unity was slow to develop among many in Ireland.

Any proposal for European unity would therefore fall on virgin soil. It would not have the historical pull such ideas exercised on the ‘mainland’, neither would it appear as a particular threat. Its appeal, where it was acknowledged, was as a means of getting out of the straight-jacket of British-Irish preoccupations and a relationship which, after three hundred years, had become stifling. (Hederman 1983:16)

In post-World War II Europe, there were multiple venues in which the idea of increased unity and economic cooperation was the prevailing theme. Behind the this widespread call for European cooperation and solidarity was an attempt to make certain another war, like the two world wars that had devastated the continent within a single generation, would not happen again. Ireland was an early participant at many of these venues. For example, Ireland became a founding member of the Council of Europe in 1949. “With European unity as its goal and the protection of human rights a priority, the Council of Europe subsequently acted as a direct link to later institutional developments such as the European Parliament through its embodiment and promotion of democratic European unity” (FitzGerald 2000:12).

As suggested in the quote by Herderman, however, reception of the idea of European unification was mixed in Ireland, with some wholly supporting it, others entirely unconcerned with the concept, and still others largely against the idea
throughout the 1950s. Even within the Irish government, the opinions voiced differed. For example, in July 1947, Irish Minister for Industry and Commerce and Tánaiste (Deputy Prime Minister) Seán Lemass suggested at the initial meeting of participants in the Marshall Plan in Paris that “Ireland would be very glad to participate in the work of the conference, which was seen as ‘essential’ to improving the economies of Europe” (FitzGerald 2000:11). It is clear that “[b]efore most others, Lemass recognized that Ireland’s membership in the European Community (EC) held great potential for industrial and agricultural growth” (O’Callaghan 1995:276).

Much more aware of the particular self interests of participating countries, however, Taoiseach de Valera suggested at a September 1947 meeting in Paris that Ireland “warmly welcomed the initiative of a ‘friend’, the US, in instigating this European self-help program, enabling all the participants to ‘provide for their own needs and preserve their traditional civilizations’” (FitzGerald 2000:11). de Valera himself was, as indicated in this quote, much more suspicious of unification. “Irish politicians, particularly crucial figures such as de Valera, did not consider European unity to be an end in itself, but only as a means to an end. Indeed, his own views on integration were gradualist, if not minimalist” (FitzGerald 2000:13). When de Valera left the office of the Taoiseach in 1959 the tide of support in government for European integration was set to change.
de Valera was succeeded by his long-time Tánaiste Seán Lemass who, as just suggested, was much more open to and enthusiastic about European integration and economic cooperation than most politicians at the time. Lemass’s long tenure as Minister for Industry and Commerce led him to support the idea that the key to improving life for the people of Ireland lay in the removal of Ireland’s protectionist economic policies and in increased integration of the countries of Europe in line with the ideas of T. K. Whitaker embodied in the White Paper on Economic Development/the First Programme for Economic Expansion. Immediately upon taking over the office of the Taoiseach in 1959, Lemass went about making drastic changes in Ireland politico-economic direction. Lemass embarked upon an economic odyssey in order to modernise the country and to adapt it to the new economic realities, a total contradiction to the enduring protectionist policies of high tariff walls and the exclusion of foreign capital, while supporting state backing of small-scale agriculture, that he had himself enshrined and masterminded in the 1930s. (FitzGerald 2000:22). Lemass’s “odyssey” would lead to the accession of the Republic of Ireland into the European Economic Community in 1973 and consequent long-lasting changes in Irish life.

With regard to migration, the period of reform started by Lemass was associated with an increase in (at least the visibility of) the numbers of non-Irish nationals in the country. And, it is in this context that the pre-movie newsreel segments representing non-Irish-national people living in or visiting Ireland ("Dublin: Malayans Celebrate
Independence Anniversary,” “Dublin: Nigerian Independence Ball,” “Dr. Nkrumah in Dublin,” “President of Pakistan in Dublin”) must be assessed.

What, perhaps, made the cultural celebrations of these non-European people living in Ireland and visits by these dignitaries noteworthy in Ireland in the 1950s and 1960s was the fact that they were related to states that had recently gained independence from the UK, the same colonial power from which Ireland had gained its own independence (perhaps leading the way for these other nascent nation-states).

Nevertheless, these representations depicted Ireland as an increasingly diverse place that held a place in international affairs beyond that of Anglo-Irish and Irish-American relations. 19

As the economic gains associated with the Programme for Economic Expansion and Ireland’s application for membership in the European Community took hold, emigration slowed.

As Ireland, along with the United Kingdom, joined the European Economic community (EEC) in 1973, the tipping point was reached with net immigration

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19 It should be noted that these were not the first groups of people of non-Irish ancestry to live on or visit the island of Ireland. In fact, Ireland had a long history of immigrants (voluntary or otherwise) from non-Western parts of the world. Irish people’s involvement in British colonial projects brought non-European people to Ireland, just as it did non-European people to Great Britain. In fact, based on a survey of parish records, contemporary newspaper articles, and other documentary sources, William Hart suggests that there were substantial numbers of African people in Ireland, and particularly Dublin, in the 1700s. “Dublin, in particular, almost certainly had, after London, a larger number of black residents than any other city in these islands – perhaps, again with the exception of London, the largest black population of any eighteenth-century European city” (Hart 2002:22). In sum, Hart presents a picture of an eighteenth-century Ireland with (perhaps per capita) one of the largest black populations of any European country (Garner 2004:141).
being recorded for the first time since the foundation of the state, and indeed since about 1700. (Fitzgerald and Lambkin 2008:226)

Moreover, the majority of those contributing to the net immigration were Irish people returning from abroad to take advantage of growing opportunities in the republic. Also arriving on the island, however, were continental Europeans. Fitzgerald and Lambkin describe these immigrants as:

A small flow of immigrants with an influence disproportionate to their numbers... arriving from continental Europe since the 1950s, seeking escape from land-locked Europe and attracted particularly by the natural beauty and slower pace of life on the west coast of Ireland, as described by Heinrich Böll in his *Irisches Tagebuch*. (2008:227)

The presence, and increasing entry, of people of non-Irish ancestry into the Republic of Ireland was further precipitated by Ireland’s participation in international political institutions. Anthropologist Mark Maguire’s ethnography of the Vietnamese-Irish community that began arriving in Ireland in 1979 in the wake of the Vietnam War touches on the newspaper and radio coverage that surrounded the arrival of these refugees (2004:23–27). Though only 212 Vietnamese people came at the invitation of the Republic of Ireland in response to what was taken to be a crisis of the post-Vietnam War environment, the press coverage was substantial. Noteworthy, perhaps, was the fact that

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These continental immigrants were, in a sense, similar to the domestic grand tourists discussed in the last chapter in their seeking of a primitive place, rather than trying to take advantage of Ireland’s rising economic opportunity.
the Republic of Ireland held the Presidency of the EEC in the year of the crisis, and this may have affected the number of refugees to which it offered invitations.

Ireland’s presidency of the EEC in 1979 made this country’s response (to the crises of Vietnamese refugees) uncomfortably visible. Many delegates at the Geneva conference announced dramatic increases in resettlement places in their countries, and a visibly naked Ireland offered to double its original offer. This sounded impressive until the press noticed that the combined figure was totaling just over 200 persons—little more than a fig leaf. (Maguire 2004:25)

As a “European” country, Ireland was obliged to accept a greater number of Vietnamese refugees than it otherwise would have. A desire to create a locality that was European, and ensconced in international affairs like other European countries, led ironically to a heightened acceptance of non-Irish, non-European “others.”

Concurrent with changes such as this increased ‘making visible’ of people of non-European origin in the Republic of Ireland were changes to the state Irish-language policy. Diarmait Mac Giolla Chriost outlines a number of the changes that make up what he characterizes as “a language policy retreat” concurrent with Ireland’s entry into the EEC in the early 1970s.

The [language] policy retreat has a number of significant markers – the withdrawal of the Irish language as a compulsory subject for Leaving Certificate (1973); accession to membership of the European Union (EU) under conditions whereby the Irish language became the only national and first official language.
of a nation-state member not to have the status of official working language of
the EU (1973); the withdrawal of the Irish language as a compulsory subject for

The first and third of these changes noted by Mac Giolla Chriost can be seen as justified
in terms of removing knowledge of Gaeilge as a restriction to upward mobility of non-
Irish-speaking people in Ireland. The fact that the Irish government did not request that
Gaeilge become a working language of the EEC made it unique among members. “On
entry to the EEC in 1973 Ireland became the only member which did not require
translation of all Community papers and documentation into what since 1937 had been
constitutionally its first official language” (Hindley 1990:37).

Despite these key events that ran counter to the goals of language revivalists,
there were also a number of other events that militated against a language policy retreat
in the 1960s and 1970s. For example, An Coimisiún um Athbheochan na Gaeilge (The
Commission on the Restoration of the Irish Language) was established in 1958, the same
year as the shift from the de Valera to the Lemass governments. The Commission issued
its final report, which (re)affirmed that “[t]he time has now come when the full weight
of State support must… be placed behind the second stage (of language revitalization)—
that of putting the great amount of Irish now known throughout the community to

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21 This would eventually become a particular complaint of Gaeilge advocates and would eventually be
reversed; see more on this later in the chapter.
Largely based on the recommendations in this final report, the Comhairle na Gaeilge (Irish Language Council) was formed in 1969. A perception that a greater amount of organized social scientific research pertaining to Gaeilge was needed led to the establishment of the Committee on Irish Language Attitudes Research (CILAR) in 1970 and the Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann (Irish Linguistics Institute) in 1972, both of which were products of the Comhairle na Gaeilge. Based on public demands beginning at least as early as 1968, the state run Irish-language radio station, Raidió na Gaeltachta, began broadcasting on April 3rd, 1972 (Watson 2003:62–67). In 1973, Gaelscoileanna Teo. was founded in order to facilitate the spread of Irish-language medium primary and second-level schools.

In 1973, CILAR conducted a survey of 2,985 people (2,443 respondents in a national survey augmented by a special sample of 542 respondents from the Gaeltacht) to inquire about public attitudes toward Gaeilge (Ó Riagáin 1997:45). The survey results were published in 1975 and suggested that “a clear majority of the population still believed the language to be an important aspect of national identity, and most, while not

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22 Diarmait Mac Giolla Chriost suggests “One of the more positive and practical steps taken in response to the report of An Coimisiún um Athbhheochan na Gaeilge was the establishment of Comhairle na Gaeilge (Irish Language Council) in 1969” (2005:127).

23 The Gaelscoil Movement is a movement to open Irish-language medium schools largely in urban centers outside the Gaeltachtai. The Gaelscoileanna Teo. website reports that the number of gaelscoileanna increased from 16 in 1972 to 210 in 2007 when I conducted my research. For more information see Gaelscoileanna Teo.’s website at http://www.gaelscoileanna.ie.
themselves Irish users, wished to see it survive and favored some government support for it for this reason” (Tovey 1988:56–57).

Perhaps, at least in part, as a result of these published survey results, the Bord na Gaeilge (Irish-Language Board), now Foras na Gaeilge, was established in 1975. This body was given legislative existence in 1978. The Bord na Gaeilge Bill, 1978, suggests that “Bord na Gaeilge is a statutory agency whose task is to promote the Irish language, in particular ‘extending its use by the public as a living language’” (quoted in Tovey 1988:53).

In sum, there were a great number of actions being taken in support of Gaeilge as others were being taken “against” the state’s language policy. Each of these actions can be seen as part of a larger project to produce a Gaelic Ireland. So, despite clearly visible social changes, and media representations of such changes, that ran counter to the Ireland that de Valera (and others) dreamed of, a large number of government policies and actions continued past trends in that regard.

It is perhaps as a result of this continuity of (Irish-language and other) government policies and actions that continued the production of “Gaelic Ireland,” that Hervé Varenne was able to conclude from his research in the suburbs of Dublin, Ireland, in the early 1990s that the process of Europe making in Ireland was unsuccessful or, at least, incomplete in terms of producing a sense of European solidarity among his informants. In a written piece published in 1993 Varenne suggests:
There is little evidence that the major political issues that have called for a response by local centers in the last ten years, say the reunification of Germany, the breakup of the Russian empire, the troubles in Northern Ireland, the civil wars in Yugoslavia, have produced any response specifically symbolized as a “European” one. The institutions that would allow for this to happen have precisely not been put in place. At the national level, this is equivalent to the almost complete absence of awareness of Europe in the suburbs of Dublin where I spent ten months. Europe was just not there. (Varenne 1993:236–237)

However, the publication of these words came at the very beginning of a recognizable period of economic and related social change in Ireland that cannot be dismissed so lightly.

The 1990s saw a greater number of perhaps more extreme social changes in the Republic of Ireland. Demographic change in the number of non-Irish nationals increasingly residing on the island since the early 1990s has been highly commented upon by the media. A potential labor shortage resulting from the economic growth that accompanied EU membership led to an increase in the number of work permits to workers from outside the European Economic Area (EEA). Steve Loyal reports that “[i]n 1993, 1,103 work permits were issued (to non-EEA applicants). By the end of the year 2000, this figure had risen to 18,017, and by the end of 2001 it stood at 36,431” (2003:80). These figures do not touch on the numbers of people from EU member states who are
permitted to live and work in (virtually) any other EU member state without the need to apply for a work permit.

The perceived labor shortage was connected with the growing economy of the Republic of Ireland, which rose quickly beginning in the mid-1990s until it surpassed that of most EU members by the early 2000s. Often attributed to the implementation of neoliberal economic policies in line with Lemass/Whitaker’s Programme for Economic Expansion and the benefits of membership in the European Union beginning to pay dividends, this economic growth led to particular attention by the world-wide financial industry. In the summer 1994, a Morgan Stanley investment banker by the name of Kevin Gardiner, looking to draw a comparison of the recent economic performance of Ireland and fast-growing “Tiger” economies in south-east Asia, coined the term “Celtic Tiger.” Gardiner’s comparison was based upon growth rates in the Irish economy well above the European average, sustained low inflation, growth of exports, and a favorable monetary exchange rate (O’Hearn 1998:1). The term stuck and found expanded usage through most of the 2000s. One of the predominant effects of this “Celtic Tiger” economy was a perceived need for laborers that Ireland, in and of itself, could not provide.

The resultant precipitous rise in the number of people coming to Ireland from abroad was quickly commented on by Irish politicians and reported on by Irish media sources. By November 1997, the Irish Times newspaper reported on opposition Teachta
Dála (Member of Parliament) Gay Mitchell’s call for the appointment of a Minister to coordinate planning of immigration policies. “Ireland’s new-found wealth was attracting immigrant workers, illegal immigrants and political refugees, he added. ‘Yet, despite this influx, this country has not yet developed strategies to deal with a wide variety of immigration issues in a planned and sensitive way’” (Cullen 1997:6). Indicative of a rising public sentiment of crisis, a political cartoon appeared in the (then) Cork Examiner, now the Irish Examiner, in 1997. The cartoon showed customs officials at Rosslare, Ireland, a major port and entry-point into Ireland, out to lunch as “grossly caricatural” representations of immigrants coming into Ireland gained immediate access to “passports, social security, etc.” (Garner 2007). Such representations both resulted from and fueled an anti-immigrant sentiment in Ireland.24

In the same lecture in which he discussed the political cartoon just described, Sociologist Steve Garner noted that it is important to recognize the ways that the racialization of the Irish under the British colonization overlap with later racializations of others by the Irish (2007). Relatedly, Paul Silverstein has written of “the construction of a new ‘savage slot’ (Trouillot 1991) through which immigrants are constructed as the European nation-state’s abjects” in many Western European countries (2005:365).

24 The role political/satirical cartoons play in perpetuating anti-immigrant sentiment in Ireland is ironic given the role such media had in spreading anti-Irish sentiments in 19th-century Britain. See Curtis (1971).
At the very same moment, however, statements by public officials and newspaper commentaries praised the contributions immigrants were making to Ireland and called for policies that would perpetuate the trend (for example see Coulter 1999). These different lines of commentary, anti- and pro-immigrant, both make apparent and significant the presence of non-Irish others on the island.

The increased number of non-Irish nationals living in the Republic is further highlighted by articles such as that by Pól Ó Conghaile entitled “Changing Faces.” The article begins:

Pol O Conghaile strolls down Moore Street and revels in the new faces and races of Dublin’s fair city. This traditionally boisterous street famous for salt-of-the-earth traders and their prams is today practically unrecognisable as it morphs into a mini China Town and budding Odessa. (2006:38)

Ó Conghaile’s article is both indicative of and productive of perceptions of the ongoing creation of a cosmopolitan European Ireland.25

As Ó Conghaile’s article was released in print (and I flew into Dublin to begin my research) in June of 2006, the Republic of Ireland’s Central Statistics Office (CSO) was just beginning to analyze the returns from their 2006 Census taken in April of that

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25 Striking about Ó Conghaile’s article, given the long history of non-Irish nationals on the island (see footnote 19 of this chapter), is its suggestion that this is an entirely new phenomenon. Linking the change to a multi-cultural (European) Ireland in 2001, Ó Conghaile’s article reflects “[t]he popular notion that Ireland’s homogeneous population has only started to interact with migrants since the mid 1990s” (Garner 2004:140). This idea, Garner suggests, “is a convenient get-out clause enabling denial and attributing the failure to deal with the rise in the numbers of migrants from the mid ‘90s to the surprise of it all happening so fast” (2004:141).
year. As a result the census returns, the CSO reported the state’s population was 4,239,848. In a press release providing “Principal Demographic Results” on the 2006 Census the first notation claims that “[n]early 420,000 (10%) persons who were usual residents in the state in April 2006 indicated that they had a nationality other than Irish. The corresponding figure in 2002 was 224,000 (5.8%)” (Central Statistics Office 2007a:1). Such results have been cited in the press as an indication of an increasing flood of immigrants.

A detailed assessment of the information gathered by the census does, in fact, show that approximately 419,733 respondents (roughly 10% of the total population) self reported as non-Irish nationals (Central Statistics Office 2007b:73). What has been less often trumpeted is that of this non-Irish-national population, the largest single non-Irish-national population is from the United Kingdom (112,548). In all, 275,775 respondents (roughly 66% of all non-Irish nationals) reported themselves to be nationals of EU-member states (excluding Ireland) (Central Statistics Office 2007b:73).

Yet, among the changes occurring in this “Celtic Tiger” era, this European Ireland, a number can be seen as productive of the “Gaelic Ireland” locality. With regard

26 Garner highlighted this little recognized fact in his lecture (2007).
27 For more detail on these census statistics, see Thornburg (2009).
28 In line with growing attention to the “races” present in Ireland, as indicated by Ó Conghaile’s article referenced earlier, the 2006 census was the first to include a question on “ethnic or cultural background.” Elaborating on the finding that resulted from this question the Central Statistic Office report “White was the predominant category accounting for nearly 95 per cent of the usually resident population. Persons of Asian or Asian Irish background accounted for a further 1.3 per cent, while those who ticked the African box in the Black or Black Irish section made up 1 per cent of usual residents” (Central Statistics Office 2007b:27).
to Gaeilge in particular, the number of Irish-medium primary and secondary schools
grew throughout the 1990s and into the twenty-first century, from 79 in 1990 to over 210
as of 2007 (Gaelscoileanna 2010). The Irish-language television station, TG4, went on the
air in 1996. The year 2003 saw the passage of the Official Languages Act, laying the
groundwork to assure all public services would be made available in both English and
Irish, the only languages covered in the act. And, as of January 2007, Gaeilge has become
a working language of the European Union, mandating the provision of interpretation
services and translation of many EU documents into Gaeilge. Each of these changes has
brought with it opportunities in the Irish-language industry for Irish-language media
producers, fluent Irish-speaking teachers (in all subjects of instruction), Irish-language
officers in public service provision offices, and interpreters/translators. To many, this is
indicative of a new “Gaelic Renaissance” of sorts

Le tamall de bhlianta anuas tá borradh nua faoin nGaeilge. Tá ag éirí thar cionn
le TG4, tá lón na ngaelscoileanna fós ag fás, agus anois le hAcht na dTeangacha
Oifigiúla agus le Stádas Oifigiúil don Ghaeilge san Aontas Eorpach tá sé soiléir go
bhfuil muinín nua i measc cainteoirí Gaeilge ar an oileán.

The Irish language has witnessed a new growth and development in recent
years. The success of TG4, the rise in the number of gaeelscoileanna, the Official
Language Act and the Official Status for Irish as a language in the European

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Union have all contributed to a new-found confidence amongst Irish speakers throughout the island. (Foras na Gaeilge 2005:3)

In the context of the locality-based framework proposed here, these political policies and actions constitute the production of Gaelic Ireland in the daily life experience of people living on the island.

### 3.7 Chapter Conclusion

What emerges from this, admittedly back-and-forth, historical review of twentieth-century political policies and actions in Ireland is a picture of a somewhat chaotic state with seemingly contradictory policies being implemented and actions being taken in the constitution of two very different Irelands. Different departments of the government of the Republic of Ireland are simultaneously making policy decisions and taking actions that, under the framework of this work, effect the constitution of different Irelands, “Gaelic Ireland” or “European Ireland.” This inconsistency of aims of state policy and actions are in line with current problematizations of the concept of “State.”

Thomas Blom Hansen and Finn Stepputat have pointed to this current questioning of the concept of a unified state agency that they claim underlied much political thinking of the past century:

The equations among state, economy, society, and nation that constituted the dominant idea of stateness in the twentieth century have been undermined from below by growing demands from decentralization and autonomy, and from above by the imperatives of supranational coordination of monetary
environmental, and military policies in new configurations after the cold war.

(2001:2)

While these authors suggest that this disharmonious, perhaps “schizophrenic,” characteristic of conglomerations of social institutions that might (all) be considered part of a state is a relatively new, post-cold-war phenomenon, I suspect a more detailed and long-ranging survey of Irish politics than is called for in this current project would reveal that this has been the case for a very long time indeed. This historical question lies outside the scope of my current project.

And the two “Irelands” detailed in this chapter are not the only ones available. Lest we forget, there is also the “Colonial Ireland” locality constituted by British primitivizing discourses that I suggested in the last chapter are still manifest today in evocations of the inherent primitivity of Ireland and its people.

What remains is to show how these multiple, different Ireland are manifest in the lives and words of my research participants. Before moving to that, however, I want to focus upon the second of Appadurai’s two major factors of modern life, media, to show how it both supports the constitution of these parallel Irelands and facilitates my informants’ abilities to engage in the different localities at different moments.
4. The Locality Framework and Film

4.1 Introduction

Throughout the previous two chapters, I have touched on a number instances in which media representations (literature, freak shows, pre-movie newsreels, etc.) have reflected and/or supported social institutions and discourses that constitute the histories I detailed. This brings media representations into view as a crucial element of my research project. Others involved in projects like my own have noted that, “media play a central role shaping popular imagination” (Ewing 2008:223). And, if Manuel Castells’ claim that the increasing dominance of television is making it “the cultural epicenter of our societies” (1997:361) is to be believed, televisual media must be given some pride of place in social analyses. In this chapter, and the next, I plan to do just this.

In this chapter I will present a framework. I will then apply this framework to cases of filmic media that have been addressed by academic writers. The chapter will close with a modest proposal that comes out of my framework. The next chapter will apply the framework outlined in this chapter to the media my informants watched (and didn’t watch).

4.2 A Locality Framework of Film

4.2.1 Frampton’s Filmosophy

To date, quite a lot of media analyses have focused on racial/ethnic representations in a fairly standard mode of textual content analysis. In order to expand
upon this relatively well-worn style of analysis, I would now like to elaborate an analytical framework that is an extension of the recently developed *Filmosophical* framework of Daniel Frampton. In his 2006 book, Frampton proposes that film be considered a type of thought, that films constitute their own modes of thinking through the sound-images of which they are comprised.

Frampton is careful to differentiate his proposed framework from other film studies writers who have attempted to draw a (direct) analogy between film and human thinking. He spends an entire chapter outlining works that have taken this approach of analogizing audio-visual media and human thought and highlighting how/where he finds them lacking. Frampton concludes that while film “thinks” moods and desires through filmic aspects such as movement, color, and framing, this is not in the same way that people experience moods and desires. He maintains that the way in which the film ‘thinks’ does not mirror human consciousness (2006:47). What Frampton proposes is that film be taken as a mode of thought on its own terms. To facilitate this he coins the term “filmind.” “Film cannot show us human thinking, it shows us ‘film-thinking’. Film is not a human-like mind, it is, uniquely, a ‘filmind’” (Frampton 2006:47).

What Frampton argues for is a view of film as an enclosed realm of thought that should be considered on its own terms. This is not to say that thought encompassed by a film is entirely divorced of ‘outside influence.’ Along these lines Frampton asks the (rhetorical) question “[i]f the filmind is enclosed in its own thinking, how can it
appropriate other films, make in-jokes about the actual creators or actors, or comment on real-world events?” (2006:74). The influence of filmmakers explains this characteristic of films and film thinking. “Film-thinking may be enclosed, but the filmind is conscious of external events because it is designed by real people, with real desires and motives. Film-thinking is always ‘created’ by filmmakers” (Frampton 2006:75). So, while films are liable to make reference to texts (other films, jokes, etc.) that lie in some sense outside of the film itself (and of which film viewers may or may not be aware), Frampton suggests that film should be considered as an enclosed mode of thought.

One of the aspects of Frampton’s framework that I find provocative in light of the theory I develop here is the common, repeated reference to the spaces, places, and/or worlds created in film. Films have a different space, a space that resembles reality, but flat and bordered. The frame of film makes for a rational space - a decided, intended space - with rational and non-rational thinksings. Film is another world, a new world, an organised world, a constructed world, a world thought-out” (Frampton 2006:6).

Frampton’s argument slips back and forth between reference to “thinking” of the filmind and reference to the “worlds” that films create. And, at a key moment, Frampton claims, “Filmosophy argues that the filmind and the film-world are one and the same:

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1 The media studies term “diegesis,” which can be used to refer to the fictional place or world in which the events narrated in a story or film occurs, may be applicable here.
the film-world does not organise itself independently of the filmind” (2006:75). Further defining the concept of filmind, Frampton continues,

There are two aspects to the filmind: the film-being that creates the basic film-world of recognisable people and objects, and the film-being that designs and refigures this film-world. We shall call these two aspects film-world creation and film-thinking. The filmind exists in its activities of film-world creation and film-thinking. (Frampton 2006: 76)

Throughout his book-length introduction to this filmosophical framework, Frampton concentrates on the stylistic forms of/in films and how they constitute the world (filmind/film-thinking) of filmic/video media. He suggests that this aspect of his book is a corrective to what he sees as a long-standing under-attention to the stylistic aspects of film. “Styles are so often seen as excess derivations, rather than thinkings in their own right” (2006:108). He notes how a past film theorist (Bordwell) “writes of ‘gratuitious’ movements and ‘unjustified’ colour shifts, calling these moments ‘unmotivated elements’, indicating that they are merely stylistic extravagances” (Frampton 2006:111). Counter to this, Frampton insists on a view of every stylistic alteration in film as motivated and part of the film-thinking of a film.

Frampton has been, by his own admission in an article in which he addresses eight different reviews of his book, taken to task on the resultant restricted nature of the analyses included in his book. He claims that his most general response to these reviewers is that they must understand that his book is concerned almost solely with
stylistic forms of cinema. “In the book I was most concerned with just getting to grips with how to describe certain cinematic moments via the concept of film-thinking…. And so I offer sketches of film-thinking – indications of how the concepts work with particular films” (Frampton 2008:370–371). Frampton clearly does not expect his examples to be restrictive of later analyses undertaken within the understanding of film as a form of thought. Rather, he suggests that this understanding can be fused into larger interpretive criteria (Frampton 2008:370). He invites experimentation that would forward the base understanding of his framework. “[T]he idea is that the book provides a starting point for others to attempt their own readings” (Frampton 2008:371). In the end he claims, “I would argue my sketches do illustrate filmosophy, but also the reader is obviously invited to try out the concepts themselves” (Frampton 2008:371). It is such an extension of Frampton’s framework that I undertake here.

4.2.2 The Para-social Framework of Horton and Wohl

In elaborating upon Frampton’s filmosophical framework, I (re)introduce the concept of para-social interaction of/between media audiences and the media to which they are exposed. The idea of para-social interaction goes back to a 1956 article by University of Chicago social scientists Donald Horton and R. Richard Wohl.

Though Horton and Wohl’s writings date from the 1950s, a number of more recent researchers have utilized and noted their importance. Martin Barker noted para-social interaction as an important concept in his analyses of media. After noting the
ways in which audience members seem to relate to media to which they frequently return, Barker claims:

The implications of this need pondering. They relate to an argument first put forward by Horton and Wohl who suggested that audiences have a ‘parasocial’ relation to the mass media, especially ones of a certain kind. If we are to understand the medias’ potential for influence, we need a theory that begins from this. This will be quite different from the usually-assumed view that the media work to ‘take us over’ and make us helpless in the face of their messages. (1989:60–61)

More recently, and perhaps more pertinent to my own research, Freda D. Lewis (1994) utilized the concept of para-social interaction in investigating viewers of television situation comedy.

Horton and Wohl base their concept of para-social interaction on the contention that the “new” mass media (radio, television, and the movies) provide an illusion of face-to-face relationship with the personas represented in the media in a way analogous to people viewer/listeners interact with in their daily lives.² “The most remote and illustrious men are met as if they were in the circle of one’s peers; the same is true of a character in a story who comes to life in these media” (Horton and Wohl 1956:215).

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² Horton and Wohl propose the term “ortho-social” for face to face interaction claiming “The crucial difference in experience obviously lies in the lack of effective reciprocity” (1956:215).
The authors focus on the “personality program” (talk shows, game shows, and the like), in their article. Personality programs, the authors contend, are especially efficient at creating an “illusion of intimacy” through a number of “strategies.” An effect of the major design elements of such programs is to blur the line which separates the formal performance that is the personality program from the studio and home audiences. This is accomplished through a process of familiarization not just with the primary persona of the show, but with a wide(r) cast of characters.

The most usual way of achieving this ambiguity (between the formal performance of the program and daily life of viewers) is for the persona to treat his supporting cast as a group of close intimates. Thus all the members of the cast will be addressed by their first names, or special nicknames, to emphasize intimacy. They very quickly develop, or have imputed to them, stylized character traits which, as members of the supporting cast, they will indulge in and exploit regularly in program after program. The member of the audience, therefore, not only accumulates an historical picture of “the kinds of people they really are,” but tends to believe that his fellowship includes him (or her) by extension. (Horton and Wohl 1956:217)

While emphasizing personality programs’ efficiency in establishing the illusion of intimacy in their article, Horton and Wohl also address this para-social interaction function in the “dramatic type of program,” soap operas and other types of fictional programs, as well. In both the “personality program” and fictional programs, the
establishment of an illusion of intimacy is accomplished through the explication/detailing of social relations between personas/supporting cast/characters into which program viewers are more or less successfully integrated through their engagement with the program. Through engagement with the program the viewer is provided a *social vista* in which they can observe the behavior and interaction of the characters within a (perhaps heretofore un-experienced) world. In the words of Horton and Wohl, “[t]he enactment of a para-social role may therefore constitute an exploration and development of new role possibilities” (1956:222).

This proposed aspect of para-social interaction with television programming leads Horton and Wohl to propose a general “function” of modern mass media:

> The function of the mass media, and of programs we have been discussing, is also the exemplification of the patterns of conduct one needs to understand and cope with in others as well as of those patterns which one must apply to one’s self. Thus the spectator is instructed variously in the behaviors of the opposite sex, of people of higher and lower status, of people in particular occupations and professions…. In this culture, it is evident that to be prepared to meet all the exigencies of a changing social situation, no matter how limited it may be, could—and often does—require a great stream of plays and stories, advice columns and social how-to-do-it books. What, after all, is soap opera but an interminable exploration of the contingencies to be met with in “home life?” (1956:222)
It is in this regard that I pursue this framework of interpreting audio-visual media(s).

4.2.3 Para-sociality in Frampton’s Filmosophical Framework

There are apparent difficulties in the integration of Frampton’s and Horton & Wohl’s frameworks. Frampton’s framework is in large part one that looks at audio-video media as the constitution of self-enclosed worlds (and the filmind they entail) apart from any viewer. Horton & Wohl’s framework is focused on the ‘point of contact’ between media, particularly the audio-video media of television, and (home) audience members, how audience members are addressed and integrated into the social vista(s) represented in/through particular programs. This contradiction may seem, at first, insurmountable. However, the divide between these two analytical frameworks is lessened when attention is given to passages in which Frampton addresses the ‘point of contact’ between cinema and the viewing audience (as he finds he must).

While careful to distinguish between film-thinking and thought in humans, Frampton ultimately concedes that the relationship between human thought and film-thought must at some level be addressed. He claims: “In the end any concept of film-thinking has to revolve around the thesis that the filmgoer is made to think, to create new thoughts, because of the film.” (Frampton 2006: 95).

Eventually, Frampton addresses the point/moment of ‘contact’ between film and filmgoer, and in this contact Frampton suggests a sort of mindmeld between the two.
[T]he film is ‘in’ the filmgoer’s mind – there is not an image and then our mental representation of that image. There is not an emotion in the image, and then an emotion in the filmgoer’s mind – they are one and the same. Though we mix ‘two thinkings’, our thinking with the film’s thinking, there is only ever one mix. There is no ‘intermediate’ thought or imagination. In order to simply understand the film we do not need to divert it through our imagination.

What we might do is contrast the imaginative leap we take at the beginning of the filmgoing experience, with the then non-imaginative engagement with the film. Filmgoers very quickly assess their situation when they enter the cinema – they understand that the emotions displayed are of a fictional nature, but decide to engage the film on that level. The filmgoer normally then assesses the characters and events on that fictional level. For instance, we might see an actor expressing an emotion, but we would understand that it is a person crying – it is true for us that a person is crying and grieving ‘in the fiction’. (Frampton 2006:154)

There is a suggestion in Frampton’s framework that as a result of this engagement filmgoers take something away from the experience. “It appears that film, in some of its forms, can rejig our encounter with life, and perhaps even heighten our perceptual powers. Cinema allows us to re-see reality, expanding our perceptions, and showing us a new reality” (Frampton 2006:3).

To integrate these two (at first apparently contradictory) frameworks, I contend that social thinking is an essential and important element of the film-mind that
constitutes film-worlds created in audio visual media such as cinema and television programs. The social relations represented in an instance of filmic media provide a “take” on (social) reality that is, at the moment of viewing, engaged in by the film goer/television viewer.

Horton & Wohl’s emphasis of the explication/detailing of social relations between personas/supporting cast/characters into which program viewers are more or less successfully integrated through their engagement with the program is essentially the creation and elaboration of (social) film-worlds. The elaboration of social relations between personas/supporting cast/characters are constitutive of ‘social thinking’ of the filmind that constitutes the created film world, in Frampton’s terms. That is, a social world constituted of a number of social positions/roles is created in/by the program. The opportunity to observe/engage with this (admittedly created and ‘thought-out’) social world and the social- (film-) thinking that constitutes it provides viewers with (ethical) resources to take away from the viewing experience.

A social world elaborated by an instance of filmic media provides an example of (discourses of) social roles and associated relations to viewers that may be engaged in at other times, in other contexts. This is (one of) the takeaway(s) of audio-visual/filmic media. This is not to say that viewers necessarily (re)engage in the social relations that
are represented in filmic media after they have viewed them. Rather, filmic media offer the resources (in Appadurai’s terms) of places comprised of social vistas that may be utilized in viewing roles and relations and one’s place within them.

4.2.4 de Zengotita’s Mediated

Another theorist’s work that bears on and contributes to this discussion is that of Thomas de Zengotita. In his 2005 book entitled Mediated: How the Media Shapes Your World and the Way You Live in It, de Zengotita makes the argument that these days, more than at any other time in history, “representation technologies have colonized our minds” (196). Technological advances, de Zengotita contends, have brought a greater breadth of audio-visual media before audiences on a daily basis and this inundation of media has affected the way we perceive the world. As summarized by John L. Jackson, “We live through most of our days negotiating incessant and omnipresent mass mediation. Media theorists (sic) Thomas de Zengotita describes this as living an inescapably mediated life, each one of us a ‘mediated person’ awash in a broadcast-saturated world” (2008:167).

There are multiple aspects of de Zengotita’s work with which I do not agree. Throughout Mediated, de Zengotita works from an assumption of a unified and consistent consciousness (against which I see this work as an intervention). This leads to a questionable stance vis-à-vis the sincerity of the ‘mediate persons’ about which he

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3 This is what might be suggested by a Frankfurt School view of media effects
writes. For example, early in his book de Zengotita suggests that people are more than ever before and increasingly aware that ‘cultural representations’ come between them and anything that might be called “reality.” “Awareness of ‘culture,’” de Zengotita suggests, “was once the prerogative of a very few reflective individuals. In the post modern world it is common sense. In that awareness, the ethos of mediation is established” (2005:14). He continues on to state that “mediated people everywhere know that identity and lifestyle are constructs, something to have” (de Zengotita 2005:14). This is where I disagree with de Zengotita. In fact, I contend, even for the “very few reflective individuals” in the modern day of which de Zengotita speaks, identity/lifestyles are incredibly thick/robust and people are unaware of them as “constructs” unless and until this is brought out through introspection or (recognized) contradiction.

Again, at the end of the book de Zengotita characterizes peoples’ identities as so many clothes that they put on for effect…… “your personality becomes an extensive and adaptable toolkit of postures…. You become an elaborate apparatus of evolving shtick that you deploy improvisationally as circumstances warrant” (de Zengotita 2005:187).

In the midst of that same discussion, however, de Zengotita elaborates upon an element/aspect that has bearing to and use for the framework/theory I am proposing here; the element of “optionality.” “[I]n a mediated world, the opposite of real isn’t phony or illusional or fictional – it’s optional” (de Zengotita 2005:14). And if this concept of optionality is divorced of the consciousness of itself that de Zengotita’s appears to
attribute in his work, if awareness of the optionality is seen as being in the subconscious (or entirely absent until brought out through processes of introspection), then this base of de Zengotita’s framework is useful for the purposes of my own work.

Most important about de Zengotita’s work is that he, more than any other theorist, attempts to address the effect of modern-day media on the psychology of its audience(s), the ways in which people become/are mediated. That is, in fact, the focus of his book. “In this book, mediation refers to arts and artifacts that represent, that communicate – but also, and especially, to their effect on the way we experience the world, and ourselves in it” (de Zengotita 2005:8).

Especially, de Zengotita concentrates on how the increasing number of media outlets affects the perception and conception of those exposed to them in heretofore unseen ways. He takes particular aim at those who would suggest that the increased, and seemingly ever-increasing, amount of media to which people in industrialized countries, and to a perhaps only slightly lesser degree unindustrialized countries, are exposed has few implications regarding the way those people approach “reality.” Those who refuse to acknowledge the effect of the increasing amount of media in our lives, de Zangotita states, “never fail to remind us that there have always been representations and choices and etc., etc., and isn’t what’s going on now just more of the same?” (2005:19). Of such stances de Zengotita suggests, “[b]eliefs like that are crude denials of the psychological processes that actually determine how we function” (2005:19).
Following the lead of de Zengotita in this regard, it is important to consider the effect(s) of the wide proliferation of media outlets on those exposed to them. This, of course, should be considered in the context of modern-day life in particular places.

4.2.5 The Locality Framework and What It Offers

What results from this integration of Frampton, Horton & Wohl, and de Zengotita and what does it offer us in the analysis of filmic and other media to which my Irish student informants were/are exposed? I envision the locality framework that I propose here as one in which viewers engage in the (social) worlds or places, constituted by/in/through the filmind of the video/cinematic media. The social vista of that “world” becomes a resource that might be engaged in by the viewers in another context. In an attempt to demonstrate the potential benefits of such a framework, I now proceed to an illustration of the framework through cinematic examples that have been addressed by other academic writers.

4.3 Hall and La Haine (Hatred)

4.3.1 Hall

One of Birmingham School Cultural Studies theorist Stuart Hall’s classic works that furthered discussion along these lines is a book chapter entitled “New Ethnicities.” Early in this piece, Hall elaborates a concept that is present throughout this chapter: the idea of the constitutive aspect of representations of cultural identity.
We all now use the word “representation,” but, as we know, it is an extremely slippery customer. It can be used, on the one hand, simply as another way of talking about how one images a reality that exists “outside” the means by which things are represented: a conception grounded in a mimetic theory of representation. On the other hand, the term can also stand for a very radical displacement of that unproblematic notion of the concept of representation. My own view is that event, relations, structures do have conditions of existence and real effects outside the sphere of the discursive; but only within the discursive, and subject to its specific conditions, limits, and modalities, do they have or can they be constructed within meaning. Thus, while not wanting to expand the territorial claims of the discursive infinitely, how things are represented and the “machineries” and regimes of representation in a culture do play a constitutive, and not merely a reflexive, after-the-event role. (Hall 1996b:165)

After laying out this key idea, much of the rest of Hall’s chapter is spent addressing a number of (at the time) recent cinematic examples. Among them is *My Beautiful Laundrette*, a 1985 film written by Hanif Kureishi.

*My Beautiful Laundrette* is set in London. It focuses primarily on the relationship between two characters. The first character, Omar is a young man of Pakistani heritage. Omar goes to work for his uncle, an affluent business man who is morally questionable in his business dealings and personal life. Omar is eventually given the responsibility of operating a run-down laundromat. Early in the film, Omar is heckled by a group of
rough-looking Anglo youths shouting racist slogans. Among them he recognizes the second main character Johnny played by Daniel Day-Lewis, who is an old friend of Omar’s. Omar approaches Johnny and asks him to get in touch with him. Johnny subsequently begins to work for Omar’s uncle along with Omar, which includes acting as a sort of strong arm in evicting poor (ethnic) tenants from their apartments. At the same time, Omar and Johnny initiate a romantic relationship.

Hall calls *My Beautiful Laundrette*, “one of the most riveting and important films produced by a black writer in recent years” (1996b:171). The reason for this is that the film refuses to represent the lives of ethnic British people as being (uniformly) one of a righteous (in some stereotyped way) underclass struggling to construct the best life they can in a difficult and oppressive, situation. Hall refers to the film’s “refusal to represent the black experience in Britain as monolithic, self-contained, sexually stabilized, and always ‘right-on’—in a word, always and only ‘positive’” (1996b:171).

Applying the conceptual framework described here to *My Beautiful Laundrette*, the film creates (a representation of) a world in which viewers engage. The created world is one that was atypical of those produced by minority filmmakers prior to its release; it creates a (represented) world in which race and ethnicity are not the only categories of importance. The categories of gender, sexuality, and solidarity are brought into question in ways counter to depictions of heterosexual minorities unified within an oppressive situation typical of previous “minority” films. This re-representation of the
world is accomplished through the relations between Omar and Johnny (and, perhaps to a lesser degree, Omar’s uncle). *My Beautiful Laundrette* creates a world and a concurrent mode of thinking by presenting a social vista that attends to the potential messiness of (some) lives with regard to class, ethnicity, race, gender, sexuality, and solidarity. As a result of watching the film, viewers are provided resources with which to attend to (perceived) situations in their ortho-social (and other para-social) relations.

Another work of Hall’s works relevant to the current discussion is “Cultural Identity and Cinematic Representation” (1996a), which appears reprinted in the same volume as “New Ethnicities.” In this work, as in “New Ethnicities,” Hall addresses the constitutive function of representations. Hall suggests, “I have been trying to speak of identity as constituted, not outside but within representation; and hence of cinema, not as a second-order mirror held up to reflect what already exists, but as that form of representation which is able to constitute us as new kinds of subjects, and thereby enable us to discover who we are” (1996a). This articulation goes further than heralding the constitutive role of cinema to express the idea that audio-visual filmic representations, specifically cinema in Hall’s articulation, provide resources with which viewers can (however fleetingly in my own articulation) construct their own identities.

“Cultural Identity and Cinematic Representation” is a popular piece and one that has been at times revised, reworked. In a version of the work entitled “Cultural Identity and Diaspora” (2000), Hall expresses largely the same sentiment in a slightly different
way. In this piece Hall suggests, “We have been trying to theorize identity as constituted, not outside but within representation; and hence of cinema, not as a second-order mirror held up to reflect what already exists, but as that form of representation which is able to constitute us as new kinds of subjects, and thereby enable us to discover places from which to speak” (2000:32, emphasis mine). I find this alteration to the passage telling. The change from discovering “who we are” to discovering “places from which to speak” is not so different, as who we are is always dependent upon the (social) world, the social vista, we inhabit (at any moment). However, the shift of verbiage from individual centered to a geographic metaphor hints as the locality framework elaborated in this chapter and dissertation as a whole.

4.3.2 La Haine (Hatred)

Another film (and associated academic commentary about it) that is illustrative of the framework proposed in this chapter is the French film, La Haine (Hatred). This film follows three main characters who live in an impoverished suburb (banlieue) of Paris through a single day following a night of riots between police and banlieue youths. The riots were initiated by the beating and hospitalization of an Arab (Beur) youth from the same banlieue as the film’s main characters. During the riots, a police officer lost his gun. The police are, as a result, visibly numerous and aggressive as they attempt to recover the lost pistol.
The film’s three main characters, Hubert, Saïd, Vinz, are diverse ethnically, racially, and religiously. Hubert, played by actor Hubert Koundé, is of African heritage. And, according to Ginette Vincendeau, “(e)verything about Hubert… celebrates his blackness” (2005:60). Hubert is a boxer, and former owner of a boxing gym that was gutted by fire as a result of riots that occurred the night before the day on which the film is set. The dark skin of the actor that plays Hubert is prominently displayed as he works a punching bag in his burned out gym when the character is introduced. Hubert is soft-spoken and contemplative throughout most of the film. Throughout the film Hubert wears a Christian cross.

Saïd is of Northern African Arab (Beur) heritage. The olive skin and dark curly hair of Saïd Taghmaoui, the actor who plays the character, gives testament to Saïd’s race/ethnicity. Lest the viewer miss the name and phenotypic markers, the character wears a Fatma’s hand throughout the film. Saïd is verbose, a joker.

The third main character Vinz, played by Vincent Cassel, is Jewish, as viewers are reminded by the Star of David around his neck. Of the three main characters, it might be argued that Vinz is most central. “Vinz attracts most attention as the most full-fledged character” (Vincendeau 2005:58). The centrality of the Vinz character is reinforced when it is revealed that it is Vinz that possesses the pistol lost by a police officer. Further, Vinz declares that if Abdel, the banlieue youth that the police have put
in the hospital, dies he is going to shoot a policeman. It is with this declaration as a backdrop that the three friends continue their day together.

Despite the differences between the three main characters, there are a number of aspects that unite them under a single identity as impoverished youth from a particular banlieue. According to Vincendeau, “despite their contrasting skin colour and religious signs (a Muslim Fatma’s hand for Saïd, a Jewish Star of David for Vinz, a Catholic cross for Hubert), their shared habitat, clothing and language reinforce their identity as banlieue boys” (2005:58). And the solidarity between these diverse neighbors goes beyond just the three friends. Throughout the film, banlieue residents of diverse ethnicities interact freely.

Perhaps the most pronounced indicators of a supposed solidarity between banlieue youths come from Vinz. Throughout the film, Vinz makes multiple statements that suggest solidarity between himself and Abdel, and by extension between all the banlieue’s youth. The first of these come in a scene in which the trio, having just picked up Hubert at his burnt out gymnasium, walk to a roof party. The following triologue occurs

Vinz: You guys should have been there (at the riot the previous night). It was intense.

Saïd: Tear gas in your face, two nights in the can, all the fists you can eat, and then you catch hell at home! I don’t see the fuckin’ point.
Vinz: Gimme a break! It was war against the pigs, man, in living color! I was trying to score some cash.

Saïd: Your bogus riot fucked it all up!

Vinz: When a brother goes down, I stand up!

Saïd: What brother? Do I know the guy? I don’t take a hit for some homeboy gangster I don’t know.

Hubert: Let’s go.

Saïd: I mean it!

Vinz: Abdel’s no gangster.

Saïd: All I know is I can’t outrun bullets.

In this scene Vinz, a Jew, voices solidarity with a Muslim banlieue youth, referring to Abdel as “a brother,” even when Saïd, a Muslim himself, does not agree with Vinz’s motivations.

The scene is reinforced, indeed almost repeated, a little later in the film when the trio visit the banlieue’s local fence, called Wal-Mart. Wal-Mart points out his car, which was burned out during the riots the previous night, to the trio. Understandably, Wal-Mart is angry.

Hubert: Wal-Mart, it’s just a car.


Vinz: Cut it out!

Wal-Mart: Gimme that! (pulling food that Vinz is eating out of his hands)

Vinz: One of our guys is dying. Fuck your car.
Wal-Mart: One of our guys? This is what I’m dealing with! (pointing to his car)

Vinz: You make me sick.

Wal-Mart: That car was all I had!

Here, again, we see Jewish Vinz making statements of solidarity with Muslim Abdel in the face of others refutation of that solidarity.

Finally, there is a third scene in which Vinz indicates solidarity with Abdel, in this instance coming dangerously close to switching to Islam. The scene occurs in Vinz’s family’s apartment as Vinz gives Saïd a haircut. As Vinz prepares an electric clipper, Saïd fondles and admires the policeman’s gun that Vinz found.

Saïd: It’s hot, Vinz.

Vinz: What?

Saïd: This cop’s piece.

Vinz: You said that already. Sit still and stop fuckin’ around!

Saïd: Easy or I’ll shoot.

Vinz: Sit still!

Saïd: You really gonna kill a cop if Abdel dies?

Vinz: You wanna be the next Arab iced by the pigs?

Saïd: No (not in subtitles)

Vinz: Well, me neither.

Saïd: So now you’re an Arab?

Vinz: They think we’re full of shit, but I’m not bullshitting about this!
The conversation then turns back to the haircut as Vinz makes a mistake. But here again we can see Vinz express solidarity toward Abdel in opposition to the police and the state system they represent.

Applying the locality framework articulated here to this film, La Haine creates a place or a world, a social vista in which solidarities of residence and class trump those of religion and ethnicity. This place entails a type of thinking in which banlieue youths are seen as united in their opposition to police/the state in their rioting. The film could have just as easily focused upon the divisions of race and ethnicity that have the effect of keeping banlieue residents in conditions of poverty. But, this would have been an entirely different film, a different place created. Instead, the filmic representation is of a place in which divisions of ethnicity, race, and religion among banlieue boys are downplayed.

Vincendeau’s analysis of the ideology of La Haine supports the locality framework I propose. In discussing the differences between La Haine and other somewhat similar films, including other French films such as Le Thé au harem d’Archiméde, Hexagone, and Raï as well as American films like Do The Right Thing and Clockers, Vincendeau suggests that La Haine fails to offer the “social depth” that these other films do. The film never situated the social space of the protagonists’ home neighborhood among the other areas of Paris, nor does it situate the three protagonists among society in general.
It (*La Haine*) presents a self-enclosed world, in which the relentless focus on young men means few spaces of social interaction are presented to the viewer....

The heroes of *La Haine* thus exist in a social vacuum where there are no possibilities of exchange or encounters. (Vincendeau 2005:68)

It is in fact the “social vacuum,” in which some social aspects are restricted from the representation, that allows the space in *La Haine*, in which solidarity based on banlieue residence and class struggle against state authority trumps that based on race/ethnicity/religion/etc., to be represented. If a wider range of social relations beyond these three friends and a small number of their associates were presented, it may have become less tenable to maintain the representation of a place in which banlieue residents did not express racist sentiments and/or clash along racial, ethnic, or religious lines.

In the above claim by Vincendeau we can see reflected, in surprisingly similar language, an idea in accordance with the locality framework proposed in this work. While Vincendeau seems to claim that other films do a better job of situating characters and their homes vis-à-vis other social groups and areas, I argue against this proposal. As Hall suggests, there is no film, indeed no representation, that mirrors objective reality. All filmic representations are necessarily partial and selective of what they present. And, in this regard, they create places or worlds to be engaged in/attended to by viewers.

**4.4 Blue Man Movies: A Modest Proposal**

The discussion to this point raises the interesting contention that a film, or perhaps a genre of film, might be produced that creates a place or world (and a
concomitant mode of thought) devoid of racial, ethnic, gender, sexual, (etc., etc.) differences that might be drawn upon by viewers in their daily (social) lives. Films in such a genre would have to be carefully crafted to be made up of representations devoid of the phenotypic, linguistic, and socio-interactive indicators of racial, gender, and other axes of difference. I propose that such films be called Blue Man Movies (perhaps more appropriately Blue Person Movies).\(^5\)

The coining of this genre title has multiple motivations. First, it borrows from name of the entertainment troupe Blue Man Group. This entertainment group is primarily a multi-media stage performance act, “best known for their wildly popular theatrical shows and concerts which combine music, comedy and multimedia theatrics” (Blue Man Productions 2009). The key figures in a Blue Man Group performance are homologues, characters only approximating humans, with blue grease paint on their hands and heads, which are hairless and earless. The rest of their bodies are covered in all black, un-ornate and genderless, clothing. A group of these homologues will interact on stage using no words, largely deadpan expressions, and simple body language. “These characteristics (of Blue Man Group homologues) provide a character free of stereotypes or race and allow all members of the audience to identify with them equally” (Wikimedia Foundation 2009). While the homologue characters are largely

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\(^5\) I developed this proposal before of the 2009 release of James Cameron’s film, Avatar, which includes blue-skinned (alien) characters. While this movie arguably has a part in a discussion of racial representation (see, for example, Milloy 2009), it is most certainly not an example of the type of movie I propose here.
taken to be male, Blue MEN, their largely androgynous characteristics leave the possibility that they are female open and allows the audience to identify with them equally along gendered lines as well. I contend that this act is innovative in its approach to the axes of difference (race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, etc.) and might be used as a loose, very loose, model for the genre of film that I propose here.

A second reason I like the “Blue Man Movies” genre title is based on the Irish context of my research. In Gaeilge, the phrase “fear gorm,” literally ‘blue man,’ refers to black people, negroes (Ó Dónaill 1977:660). The general explanation for this fact is that “Fear Dubh,” literally ‘black man,’ is a phrase reserved to refer to the devil. As a result, the phrase to refer to dark-skinned people is “fear gorm.” As a result of this terminological coincidence, I find the propose genre title to be warranted.

Finally, I like the fact that “Blue Man Movies” as a genre title is exceptionally close to the phrase “Blue Movies,” which is a phrase that has been used to refer to films that are indecent or profane, usually with reference to the sexual content of the film. While I do not contend that Blue Men Movies should be “blue” in this sense – very far from it – I do like the association of this term with films that are out of the mainstream and profane in a different sense.

A film in the genre of cinema that I envision would be one that attempts to mute the indicators of difference (in terms of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, immigration status, etc.) between its characters. Indicators of these axes of difference
including multiple dimensions of appearance (voice, language, dress, hair style, stature, comportment, etc.) would have to be carefully accounted for and controlled. Skin color of the actors would, of course, also have to be contended with. As making any or all of the characters a melanin hue of any of the identifiable racial/ethnic groups would undo the intent of the project, I can think of no better way to deal with this aspect than for all characters to be covered in a pigment that is inhuman; blue like the homologues in the Blue Man Group would work, but any equally inhuman color would do.

One of the major questions that arises with regard to this proposed genre of film is whether or not gripping plots can be forwarded in absence of the indicators of the axes of difference described so far. It is often the case in films that it is exactly these axes of difference that give gravity to behaviors and actions by the characters. Will the audience still be gripped by a story of a relationship between two characters, say of one character giving shelter to another character, if viewers do not have an idea of multiple axes of difference? How will viewers react to a love scene between two homologues without knowing whether each of the characters are male or female; are they witnessing a heterosexual, male-homosexual, or lesbian love scene? In both instances, the workload on the viewer may be increased as they have to fill in the blanks with all the possibilities they can think of and discern the “meaning” of the representation. Through these multi-
dimensional mental acrobatics the audience member may in instances come to the question/conclusion, ‘Does it (really) matter?’

The resulting cinematic form would be a truly critical art form, refusing to reify the accepted sociological terms with which people attend their daily lives and that are present in filmic representations. By so doing, Blue Man (Person) Movies would, in accordance with the framework forwarded in this chapter, provide a space for people to engage in where they might think in terms other than the common racialized, ethnicized, gendered, sexualized, classed ones that are so common. And, if the framework proposed here is correct, they may bring these worlds and concomitant modes of thinking about in other (ortho-social) aspects of their lives.

4.5 Chapter Conclusion

Throughout this chapter I have worked to develop an interpretive framework that is appropriate for highlighting the locality mode of thinking I am proposing in this dissertation as a whole. I suggest that audio-visual filmic media effect the temporary creation of spaces/places complete with social vistas of characters/personas. Each instance of filmic media constitutes a mode of (social) thinking. These modes of thinking

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*I do not offer this proposed film genre as one that is reflective of a (cosmopolitan) color-blindness that is prevalent among any significant portion of people today. With regard to the concept of color-blindness I can do no better to echo Patricia J. Williams when she claims “I embrace color-blindness as a legitimate hope for the future” (1997:4) But, I agree with Williams that in its common instanciation today “the very notion of blindness about color constitutes an ideological confusion at best, and denial at its very worst” (1997:4). I make this proposal in hopes it might provide people with resources to imagine a world of color-, class-, gender-, and other “blindnesses.”*
are then available as resources for viewers at other times in their daily experience. At the end of this chapter, I have been led to propose ways in which an uncommon place or world, and associated mode of social thinking, might be produced and made available to viewers as resources to self-making within a constituted space. In the chapter to follow, I detail a range of audio-visual media available to Irish second-level-education students with whom I did research.
5. Irish-language Media, *Lost* in *Skins* and *The Simpsons*?

5.1 Introduction

Having laid out a framework for approaching filmic media representations, I now turn to applying this framework to the media that my informants told me they were (and weren’t) watching.

At the beginning of the first set of interviews I conducted with the transition year students, I asked them, in very general terms about the media they used. My thinking was to grease the wheels and get them talking about whatever they wanted to before launching in to a detailed discussion of their experiences with Irish-language media. Looking back, I did not really expect that the information attained would be very substantial or consequential for my research. While transcribing one of the interviews I conducted, however, I made a notation that both of the two students to whom I was speaking noted *Lost* as a show they regularly watched. As I continued transcription and review of my interviews, I was struck by the relative frequency of *Lost* as a show watched by those I interviewed. Of the students that I interviewed at the two schools, 42.9% noted *Lost* as a show they watched. While this is not even a majority, this total is still above that of the two next closest contenders that share “second place,” *The
Simpsons and Desperate Housewives, with 28.6% claiming to be viewers of each of these shows.¹

In a review of media as an Appaduraian resource in this chapter, I will undertake an analysis of a few of these significant television programs. My analysis may at first seem like a fairly standard analysis of (racial/ethnic) representations along relatively well-worn lines. After completing this initial analysis, however, I offer an analysis using the locality framework developed earlier in this work. I contend that this type of analysis offers both insight into these media and potential to situate them in their relativity to other media that were available to the students with whom I worked. I will then focus on the position of Irish-language media relative to the various English-language media addressed.

5.2 Lost

The first instance of filmic media I want to analyze is the American drama series Lost. Beyond the frequency with which Lost was named as a show that is regularly viewed by my Irish informants, I note a bit of irony in that this show is about a cast of diverse characters trapped on an island. This storyline may, at some unconscious level, make the series particularly interesting to television viewers in this island nation with a population that is itself taken to be increasingly diverse. The storyline of the show

¹ I will be addressing The Simpsons in the discussion to follow, but that I will be leaving Desperate Housewives uncommented on.
follows the happenings to the ill-fated passengers of Flight 815 from Sydney to Los Angeles who are marooned on an island when the flight crashes.

One of the characteristics of *Lost* is that many of the constituent episodes emphasize the personal histories of one of the characters. These personal histories are expected to explicate their actions on the island. So, many of the episodes, especially the early episodes, primarily address the life history of one of the show’s main characters. One of the ways this is represented is that the opening of scene of many of the episodes begins with a shot of one of the eyes of the character that that episode primarily addresses. This characteristic of the show is so prevalent that a plot summary for the episode entitled “Outlaws” (#116, appearing approximately two-thirds of the way through Season 1) on ABC’s official website for *Lost* begins, “we begin with our now familiar eye opening” (American Broadcasting Company 2009). Opening scenes of this kind are more prevalent in the first season of the show and become less prevalent as the series continues. However, they continue to appear at least into the third season, the season being aired in the Republic of Ireland when I was doing my research.

In the episode entitled “Par Avion” (#312, appearing just over half way through the Season 3) viewers get a double instance of the opening eye shot. The episode opens with the opening eye of the Australian female, Claire. Claire is coming to after a bad auto accident that occurred at some time prior to Flight 815. The female in the passenger seat of the car had been thrown through the windshield and is lying in the road in front
of the car. After trying the doors and finding she cannot open them, Claire climbs through the hole left in the windshield by the passenger. She takes the injured passenger in her arms trying to wake her and crying. Then, we get another shot of Claire’s eye opening, which quickly changes to Claire’s perspective showing her to be in her tent on the island on which the cast is marooned. She was remembering the car accident in her dreams.

It might be suggested that the eye (I?) shot at the beginning of each episode indicates that the relevant episode is to be taken ‘from the perspective’ of the character whose eye is framed. Indeed, as stated earlier, each episode beginning with the eye shot of a constituent character deals primarily with that character through a series of flashbacks of life before they crashed on the island. In sum, these flashbacks attempt to explain the characters, their motivations resulting from past hardships or life events and how they came to be on Flight 815. However, in arguing for a film to be taken as a form of thinking (in its own right), Frampton argues against viewing film(s) as representing filmic (diegetic) events from the perspective of characters. “Film is always thinking from itself, even in the case, and it is often the case, when it portrays things as if it is thinking from a character’s point of view” (Frampton 2006:85).

The cast of main characters in the first season of *Lost* was relatively ethnically and nationally diverse, including two African-American characters (father and son), a pregnant Australian female, a male English musician, a male Hispanic character, and
two Koreans (husband and wife), in addition to a larger number of male and female Anglo-American main characters.\(^2\) There were additional secondary characters that were likewise ethnically diverse. The format of *Lost* allows an opportunity for viewers to engage in the social thinking encompassed in the film-world created through the show. In line with the claims of Horton and Wohl’s concept of para-social interaction, *Lost* provides its viewers opportunities to be “instructed variously in the behaviors” of a relatively large collection of (stereotypes of) person(a)s, highlighting types of difference along axes of gender, nationality/race, etc., and representing the interaction between these person(a)s. At times, these person(a)s represent types that viewers may seldom come into contact in their day-to-day (ortho-social) lives (again see Horton and Wohl [1956:222] on the “function” of modern media).

In order to elaborate upon this point, I want to analyze the filmic representation of a couple of the show’s characters and those characters’ interaction with others. I will focus on two adult male black characters, Michael Dawson and Mr. Eko.

### 5.2.1 Michael Dawson

Beginning with the Michael Dawson character, the foundation of Michael’s back story is revealed slightly over half way through the first season in the episode entitled “Special” (#114). This episode begins with a shot of Michael’s eye as he searches the

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\(^2\) The Executive Producer of *Lost*, Carlton Cuse, is quoted as having said “We pride ourselves on having a very racially diverse cast” (Malcolm 2008).
jungle for his son, Walt. Through a series of flashbacks throughout the episode viewers learn that Michael was estranged from his son.

Upon finding out that Walt’s mother Susan was pregnant, Michael was elated at the idea of being a father. He put his aspirations of being an artist on hold, working construction to support his son and Susan, whom he never married, as she completed law school. In time, Walt’s mother completed law school and left Michael to take a job in Amsterdam. Michael protested her taking his son with her to Europe, but unmarried and with little income (the construction business was down at the time) he had little grounds or means to fight the separation. During a phone call that Michael made to Amsterdam, so that 21-month-old Walt could hear his father’s voice, it is revealed that Susan is seeing another man. Michael suggests he is coming to Amsterdam to retrieve his son, slams down the payphone on which he made the call, and stomps off across a road, only to get hit by a car. Michael ends up in the hospital for several months, requiring a year of physical therapy in order to recuperate from the accident. While in the hospital, Susan visits Michael and explains that she is marrying the other man and that her future husband wants to adopt Walt. She implores Michael to agree to give up custody, for Walt’s best interests, which he does. In time, Susan, Walt, and Susan’s husband end up in Australia. When Walt is ten years old, Susan dies suddenly of a blood disease. Susan’s husband turns up at Michael’s apartment in the United States to tell Michael that he cannot take care of Walt and that Michael should take custody of the
boy. Michael flies to Sydney in order to pick up the son he has not seen in nine years. It is on their return to the United States from Australia that Michael and Walt ended up on ill-fated Flight 815.

This back story makes Michael's relationship with his son the primary motivating factor in his behavior throughout the series. In the end, Walt is kidnapped by a group that inhabited the island before the crash of Flight 815. Michael betrays a number of his fellow survivors, turning them over to this group in order to get Walt back. His betrayal includes killing one of the crash survivors.

The elaboration of the Michael character is done in such a way so as to highlight his social role as a low-income African-American, his 'blackness.' A major way in which this is accomplished is through the emphasis on Michael's estrangement from Walt. Absentee fatherhood among African-Americans has been a major subject of coverage in the public sphere in this country for at least the last decade. It was a major theme to come out of the Million Man March held in October of 1995. Since that time, at least, the subject has gotten a large amount of attention. Recently, highly reported-on speeches by celebrities and politicians like Bill Cosby and Barack Obama have put the public spotlight on the subject of absentee fatherhood among African-Americans (see Bosman 2008).

It can be argued that the perpetuation of these discourses is, at least in part, a continuation of long-standing stereotypes of black people, and especially black men, as
particularly (sexually) potent and fertile, resulting in more progeny than they can (appropriately) take care of. The sentiment behind this discourse was classically put forth by Frantz Fanon in the 1950s. “For the majority of white men the Negro represents the sexual instinct (in its raw state). The Negro is the incarnation of a genital potency beyond all moralities and prohibitions” (Fanon 1967:177; see also Hunt 2005:5). “We have shown that reality destroys all these beliefs,” Fanon continues, “But they all rest on the level of the imagined” (1967:177). Likewise, discourses about black absentee fathers can be questioned.

Less than three years after the Million Man March, a story announcing a study on absentee African-American fathers appeared in the University of Chicago Chronicle. The story begins: “More than 70 percent of African-American children are born out of wedlock, with the majority raised by single mothers. Where are the fathers? Waldo Johnson, Jr., Assistant Professor in the School of Social Service Administration, intends to find out” (Behan 1998). Professor Johnson suggests of a common belief that the absentee fathers are just “deadbeat dads,” fully capable of participating in the lives of their children but unwilling to do so. Counter to this “general perception,” Johnson claims a number of unstudied factors account for the failure of many African-American dads from involving themselves in the lives of their children.

The relationship can be dramatically affected by a multitude of issues, Johnson said, such as the father’s ability to provide financial support, the relationship between the mother and father, and the relationship between the unwed parents’
families. According to preliminary findings, the mothers of unmarried parents may be particularly influential in whether a young unmarried couple continues their relationship and the degree to which a father is involved with his children. (Behan 1998)

As part of the Fragile Families and Child Well-being Study, a “first of its kind” national longitudinal study on unmarried parents and their children, Johnson proposed a study focusing on unmarried, low-income, African-American non-resident fathers (Behan 1998). This study can be taken as an intervention in common stereotypes regarding African-American males.

Regardless of such critiques of this common stereotype/media representation of black men, through the evocation of the character’s status as an absentee father, a status associated with the low-income African-American males, the Michael Dawson character’s status as a black man is highlighted and placed center stage.³ Further, the narrative trajectory of Michael arguably paints the character in a negative light. Michael’s ultimate betrayal of his supposed friends may, arguably, reflect badly on the virtue of this character.

³ Harold Perrineau, Jr., the actor that played the Michael Dawson character, had reservations regarding this aspect of the character. After the character was ‘killed off’ on the show, effectively making Walt an orphan, an interviewer asked Perrineau if he was disappointed that Michael and Walt did not reconnect before the Michael character died. Perrineau responded, “Listen, if I’m being really candid, there are all these questions about how they respond to black people on the show. Sayid gets to meet Nadia again, and Desmond and Penny hook up again, but a little black boy and his father hooking up, that wasn’t interesting? Instead, Walt just winds up being another fatherless child. It plays into a really big, weird stereotype and, being a black person myself, that wasn’t so interesting” (Malcolm 2008)
The dark complexion of Harold Perrineau, Jr., the actor who plays Michael, and the relative frequency with which the character utters slang words such as “dude” and “man,” especially in ‘heated’ moments of conflict, are also apparent. These aspects of the Michael Dawson character are also characteristics of the common media representations of African-Americans.

Not only do the phenotypic, linguistic, and other characteristics of the character itself construct the character as a low-income African-American male, but his interactions with other characters likewise evoke stereotypical race-based interactions between Michael and others. Early in the first season, in an episode entitled “House of the Rising Sun” (# 106), there is a scene in which the male Korean character, Jin, viciously attacks Michael, who at the time was just walking down the beach with his son Walt. Jin tackles Michael into the surf, hitting him and holding him under the waves as they advance and recede, apparently intent on drowning Michael. The fight is broken up by two other male characters, Sayid and Sawyer, who finally put a stop to Jin’s attacks by handcuffing Jin to a piece of the airplane wreckage. Sayid goes about trying to determine what caused the altercation, a process complicated by the fact that Jin does not speak English.  

It is revealed later in the episode that Jin attacked Michael because he was wearing a watch that Jin was transporting for his employer/father-in-law. Michael found the watch after the plane crash.
maintains that he had not done anything that would have offended Jin. The following
dialogue ensues:

Sayid: Surely, there must be something you’re not telling us.

Michael: Surely?! Where you from man?

Sayid: Tikrit…. Iraq.

Michael: OK. I don’t know how it is in Iraq. But in the United States of America, where
I’m from, Korean people don’t like Black people. Did you know that?!

[Sayid shakes his head, no]

Later in the episode, Michael finds himself in the uncomfortable position of explaining
this comment to his son:

Walt: How come he doesn’t like us?

Michael: What?

Walt: You said people like him don’t like people like us.

Michael: Oh man… No… Uh… Look. That’s, that’s not true and, you know what? I don’t
think like that anyway. I was… I was angry.

These interactive moments, in addition to character-building aspects of the Michael
Dawson character, constitute a social- (film-) thinking encompassed in the place created
in and through the show. In accordance with Horton and Wohl’s concept of para-social
interaction, this constitutes learnable moments in/through which viewers are provided
an “exemplification of the patterns of conduct one needs to understand and cope with in
others as well as of those patterns which one must apply to one’s self” (1956:222). Thus,
viewers are given an opportunity to be “instructed” regarding the characteristics that make up relevant groups of difference and the interaction between individuals in these groups.

5.2.2 Mr. Eko

Mr. Eko is another black character on the show that makes his appearance three episodes into the second season in the episode entitled “Orientation” (# 203). Sometime after this introduction it is revealed that he was, also, a passenger on Flight 815 sitting in the rear of the plane. Mr. Eko and a number of other passengers from the tail section survived the crash and set up their own camp before learning that the main characters, from the front of the plane, had also survived. While 23 passengers from the tail section had originally survived the crash, only five are still alive by the time Michael, Sawyer, and Jin came across them.

The Mr. Eko character is Nigerian. He is a big man who acts as protector and enforcer among, though he is not the leader of, the tail-section survivors. He continually proves his abilities in fighting, tracking, and other skills that help the marooned passengers to survive on the island.

The episode that most concerns Mr. Eko’s comes almost half way through the second season in an episode entitled “The 23rd Psalm” (# 210). At the beginning of this

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5 Mr. Eko’s appearance is in truly primitive style, beating Michael, Jin, and Sawyer unconscious with a club. Later, after the three unconscious main characters are dragged through the jungle and imprisoned in a tiger pit Mr. Eko is reintroduced as he jams a makeshift spear through the cage at the top of the pit before tossing an unconscious woman into the pit.
episode viewers see Mr. Eko as a boy, playing soccer with his friends in his boyhood home in Nigeria until the game is interrupted by the arrival a pickup truck with armed men. As the armed men collect up all the children, one small boy clings to his slightly older brother, Eko. After the children are gathered, the leader of the armed men brings an old man from among the village’s adults in front of the group of children. The leader of armed men then peels Eko’s younger brother from his arms, putting a pistol in his hands, and ordering him to kill the old man. Eko’s brother, Yemi, stands in front of the old man, pointing the gun at him, trembling. The leader repeats his order. As Yemi stands there trembling, near crying, and is visibly about to break down, Eko runs up behind his brother, grabs the pistol from his hand, and quickly shoots the old man. The leader quickly grabs the pistol from Eko, before addressing him:

Leader: What’s your name boy? [Then grabbing his face and speaking louder] What’s your name boy?

Eko: Eko.

Leader: [Laughing] Look at Mr. Eko…. No hesitation…. A born killer…. Come. [Pulling a cross necklace that hangs around the boys neck off and tossing it to the ground] You won’t need that anymore. [Yemi picks up the cross.]

As the pickup truck drives off with the boy in the back viewers are given a face closeup of the boy that transitions to a close up of the face a grown-up Mr. Eko on the island. The top frame of the shot cuts across Mr. Eko’s forehead, the bottom frame right across his top lip. It is a version of the eye shot discussed earlier.
Through the rest of the episode viewers learn that Mr. Eko became a warlord and drug dealer of some renown after that faithful day depicted in the opening scenes. Yemi, meanwhile, became a priest. In time, Mr. Eko comes to Yemi in order to facilitate the smuggling of heroine out of the country under the guise of church missionaries. Yemi at first agrees to assist, under threat of having his church burned down, but later informs the military and shows up at a plane set to fly out with the drugs. Yemi is mistakenly shot by the military as they arrive and is pulled onto the plane as it flies off. Mr. Eko is left on the landing strip as the soldiers approach, but, as he is (also) dressed as a priest as part of the smuggling ruse, he is mistaken as the priest that called the military. He takes on the identity of his (priestly) brother, which he maintains while on the island.

In this filmic representation of the Mr. Eko character can be seen another common representation of black men, one that is hyper masculine and violent. This representation is not unrelated to the hypersexual stereotype outlined in the discussion regarding the Michael Dawson character. The connection between these discourses was discussed at some length by Darnell Hunt in his introduction to *Channeling Blackness*:

bell hooks has argued, for example, that some black men embrace a “phallocentric” masculinity based, in part, on fetishized representations of the hypersexual black male. Black male consumption and affirmation of these representations amount to a form of identity negotiation; they constitute an ongoing performance ritual, usually rebellious, that provides the men with a measure of respect and self-esteem often denied black men because of their
disadvantaged status in the racial order. Not surprisingly, these self-representations are legion in hip-hop culture and certain competitive sports (e.g., basketball and football), televised expressive realms that feature the bodies of black men and attract large white audiences. The commodification of an exoticized and dangerous black masculinity within these arenas, it seems, is but a contemporary manifestation of the black “buck” stereotype that has long titillated the white imagination. (Hunt 2005:6)

So, in this way, we see in the Mr. Eko character can be seen an extension of the hypersexual black male discussed earlier with reference to the Michael Dawson character.

The Mr. Eko character was played by the actor, Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje. Born in England of Nigerian immigrant parents, Akinnuoye-Agbaje is a big man with dark complexion. He specializes in playing characters that are supposed to have African origins, and speaks in an appropriately accented voice when doing so. “He usually employs a deep, Nigerian timber while acting, while off-screen he has a very British, somewhat Cockney accent” (Internet Movie Database 2009).

Thus, as in the case of the Michael Dawson character outlined earlier, through phenotypic, linguistic, and other aspects of the character and through interactive situations with other of the show’s characters Lost (re)creates depictions that echo common stereotypes regarding black men. These filmic representations constitute the creation of a world and associated (social) film-thinking. Again, viewers are given an
opportunity to be “instructed” regarding the characteristics that make up relevant
groups of difference and the interaction between individuals in the groups in the created
world.

5.3 Skins

Having reviewed filmic representations in the most commonly watched show
among my student informants, Lost, I would now like to analyze an episode the British
teen-drama series entitled Skins. This show was in its first season at the time I did my
research in the Republic of Ireland. Unlike Lost, relatively few of the students I
interviewed noted Skins as a show they regularly watched. A mere 14.3% of the students
I interviewed suggested they were regular viewers of Skins. However, I have some
reason to believe viewership may have been wider than these low numbers indicate.
After one student mentioned the show, the other student in the two-student pair I was
interviewing at that time, who had already listed his favorite shows and failed to
mention Skins among them, showed that he was indeed familiar with the show. Note the
following triologue:

C7: .... I watch Skins.
C8: Oh yeah.
AT: Yeah, someone else talked about it. That’s a British show.
C8: Yeah.
AT: And what, what, what, what’s the, what’s the plot? It’s about these teenagers
growin’ up.
C7: Does it have a plot? (laughs)

C8: There’s no plot it’s, kind of, just, teenage life in England, like. There’s like sex, drugs, drink.

C7: There’s a lot of, the, the, the group are, (inaudible) they’re VERY different people.

AT: Uh huh…. What’s the, what’s the title refer to…. Skins?

C7: Their different, where they come from. Their different….

AT: OH…. I’ll have to take a look at, what channel is that on.

C7: Channel 4.

C8: Channel 4, yeah. E4.6

As can be seen in this bit of talk, C8’s ability to elaborate on the content of *Skins* shows that he was indeed familiar with the program, perhaps even a regular viewer. Yet, he failed to mention it among shows he watched. I attribute the failure of students to claim *Skins* as a show they regularly watched to the fact that the show had premiered less than two months prior to the date on which these interviews were conducted. I believe the show was too new for the students I interviewed to consider themselves regular watchers/fans.

As indicated earlier, the show follows the lives of a diverse group of young friends living and attending school together in a city in England, Bristol. The cohort of

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6 “Skins” is also a British slang term for papers used to roll joints, which are plentiful in the show. As noted by C8, there is also plenty of sex in the show. Therefore, “skins” may also be a reference to sex, as in the slang term “slapping skins,” which means ‘having sex.’ Regardless, I find C7’s misattribution, or perhaps the double/triple entendre, revealing.
friends is somewhat diverse along racial/ethnic, religious, and other axes. The cast of main characters in the first season included Jal Frazer (a girl of Afro-Caribbean ancestry), Anwar Kharral (a boy of Pakistani ancestry and a Muslim), Maxxie Oliver (a homosexual boy), and Cassie Ainsworth (an Anorexic girl), among other characters. This decided diversity of the cast makes it an appropriate object of analysis.

Other factors that make me think analysis of this show is important for the purpose of my research are aspects that make the show strikingly similar to Lost. Each of the episodes in the series concentrates primarily on one of the constituent main characters. This aspect of the show is perhaps even more explicit than it is in Lost, in that each of the episodes in the first season actually bears the name of one of the characters in the group of friends.

Interestingly, in a manner similar to Lost’s eye shots, each episode of the first season of Skins begins with a face shot of the character who is most addressed by that constituent episode. Following the signature face shot, each episode follows the occurrences in the life in the cohort of main characters with particular emphasis on life of the character after which the episode is named.

The episode on which I focus is the third episode in the first series, entitled “Jal.” Jal is an abbreviated version of the name of one of main characters, Jalandra Frazer. The episode begins with a shot of Jal’s face, with the bottom of the frame just below her nose and the top of the frame cutting across her forehead; it is generally an eye shot (similar
to those found in Lost). As the eye shot commands the screen, viewers hear someone say “Jal, OK…. No repeats…. Don’t get ahead.” Then, a rising tone of horn music ensues and the camera pulls back to reveal that Jal is playing the clarinet. After Jal’s introductory flourish, a ragtag and clearly disinterested orchestra of young musicians joins in. While their music teacher/conductor, Claire, tries desperately to hold the orchestra into some semblance of order, shouting curse words at the students in her attempt to do so, Jal continues playing apparently oblivious to the collection of awful musicians accompanying her. Despite her best efforts, Claire finally gives up her attempt to conduct the orchestra, holding her head and repeating “Bollocks, bollocks.” This scene marks out one of Jalanda’s most defining characteristics of being a strong musician, a clarinet player.

In the following scene, Jal and Claire discuss a concerto piece that, if Jal could pull it off, is sure to win a Britain-wide Young Musician of the Year Competition in which she is a finalist. Jal’s preparation for the competition gives structure to the rest of the episode as she goes about preparing for the competition and circumventing obstacles that get in the way of her preparations.

In explaining Jal’s behaviors, problems, and motivations in her march toward the competition, the episode necessarily addresses her home life. As a result, the issue of race/ethnicity comes to the fore. In a manner that is markedly absent from the first two episodes that preceded “Jal,” the Jal character is highlighted as being African-Caribbean.
Jal’s father, Ronny Frazer, is a hip-hop musician of some renown. Her brothers, Ace and Lynton, have attempted to take up the musical mantel as aspiring rappers, though they are notably unpracticed (that is, bad) in their performances. The group of them live above a bar/music club that is ever populated by an entourage of Caribbean dialect voiced black men.

When open, the club door is guarded by two large black men. In one particularly “othering” scene a group of the show’s (underage) main cast are trying to gain entry into the club. In order to do this, they have to get past the bouncers. The following scene ensues:

Bouncer: Sorry mate. Record company showcase. Over 21s tonight.

Chris: Well, I’m 21. We’re all 21, aren’t we lads?

Tony: Definitely.

Chris: He’s an old one, he is.

Bouncer: ID?

Chris: Here you go…. Check it out.

[Chris gives the bouncer a clearly fake ID containing a picture of himself with a clearly fake mustache and the name “Dr. C. Mapplethewaithe, Ph.D.”]

Chris: I know…. It takes years off me. But, I had to cut it off ‘cause it kept getting caught in the girlfriend’s piercing.

Tony: Anyway…. Should we go in?
[The group move to walk past the bouncer who pulls Chris up to eye level by his shirt collar]

Bouncer: Fuck off before I stick this (ID) so far up your ass your teeth come out your eyeballs.... Alright?

Chris: OK.

Tony: Look, I just don't want to disappoint my colleague, Dr. Makarvi. [He motions towards (Pakistani) Anwar.] He’s visiting from Senegal.

Anwar: Katinga.

Tony: I’ve got to warn you. He’s got some serious voodoo shit going on.

[The bouncer raises his hands to reveal a crucifix in one hand and a small albino snake wrapped around the other.]

Bouncer: You mean like this?

[The group backs up in horror]

Anwar: Fuck man!... Shit.

Tony: Yeah.... Like that.... A bit more subtle.

Bouncer: Fuck off!

In this scene we see a propensity for violence in the Bouncer character that is common in representations of black men. This representation is later, perhaps ultimately, reinforced in the final scenes of the episode when Ronny Frazer, Jal’s dad, and the bouncer from the scene described earlier abduct a drug dealer that had manhandled Jal in the process of collecting money he was owed by one of Jal’s friends, Sid. The drug dealer, who had been pursuing Sid since the first episode, is not seen again in later episodes.
The Jal character decidedly lacks the Caribbean dialect so prevalent in her family members and their colleagues. Her status as a minority is perhaps most explicitly highlighted through a scene in which Jal is called to the office of the college which she attends in order to speak to the Director of the school. Having learned that Jal has qualified as a finalist in the Young Musician of the Year Competition, the Director asks Jal to assist her in bringing some much desired publicity to the College.

Director: We’re just delighted that we have produced such a talented pupil.

Jal: Right, it was Claire, really.

Director: So, we’d like you to do a couple of interviews. We want to celebrate this amazing achievement for a girl of your background.

Jal: Pardon?

Director: And, uh, I’ve prepared a checklist of ways in which we’ve helped you to overcome your handicaps. A sort of aide-mémoire, so to speak.

Jal: Sorry, handicaps?

Director: And, when you talk to the television, I’d like you to mention the College’s upcoming bid for working towards sustaining excellence, under the everything’s getting better initiative. It’s all terribly important…. It’s for people like you, OK Jal.

Later, when Jal and a friend watch one of the television-news interviews Jal did following her talk with her school’s Director, Jal’s answers to the interviewers questions are terse, one-word when possible. More strikingly, the subtitle appearing under Jal’s picture in the news program reads “Jalander Frazer, Ethnic Clarinetist.”
What is perhaps more interesting about the episode, however, is that references to race/ethnicity/nationality are prevalent in aspects of the show other than those relating to the African-Caribbean ancestry/blackness of the focus character, Jal. Indeed, the entire episode appears to have a particularly ‘racial’ undertone. However, many of the additional “racial” references are presented in ways that may not be apparent to many American viewers, in that they focus on people of Welsh nationality. For example, in one scene, Claire is lying in bed with Doug, Assistant Director of the college at which she is the music teacher and orchestra director. They are discussing how to get Jal a new clarinet in time for the competition. As Doug disappears under the covers Claire continues the conversation, until her train of thought is interrupted by Doug’s advances.

   Claire: I’ll make some phone calls…. Maybe we can borrow one…. Oh, holy shit! Take me you fucking Welsh stud monkey!

In this scene, through Claire’s expletives, the (hyper) sexuality of the Welsh is marked.

At another point in the same (“Jal”) episode another reference to Welsh (hyper) sexuality is made. In this scene two of Jal’s friends, Sid and Michele, sit by themselves in a club/bar having drinks and chatting. Michele is the girlfriend of Sid’s best friend, Tony. The following dialogue occurs.

   Michele: I know you fancy me.
   
   Sid: …. Oh, Christ!
   
   Michele: I love you Sid. But, more like a…
   
   Sid: Please…
Michele: brother, sister thing.

Sid: .... Oh, fuck.

[Michele leans in and lightly kisses Sid on the lips]

Michele: One for luck.

Sid: Yeah... Yeah... We could be like a Welsh brother and sister. You know, locked up in the farmhouse with nothing but the sheep and our pissed (drunk) father, yeah?

Michele: Funny, Sid. [Michele walks away]

So, here again, we have reference to the hyper, and often inappropriate, sexuality attributed to people of Welsh decent.?

The stereotype of the Welsh as having an accentuated and inappropriate sexuality has a long history in Britain. It may have its origins, or at least an influential instantiation, in a report entitled the Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales, published in 1847. Through these reports, three English and non-Welsh-speaking commissioners detail what they clearly see as the terrible state of education in Wales. In summarizing the reports Jo Pryke suggests:

Three main points were made.... A key element of their analysis of Wales’ benighted state was the role of the Welsh language, its prevalence being held

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7 What is also interesting is that this trend of blatant commenting on the supposed hypersexuality of the Welsh does not continue in other episodes of the first season. However, there is an inappropriate (at first) flirtation and (later) sexual relationship between the female Psychology teacher of the College, Angie, and one of the 17-year-old main characters, Chris, that extends throughout the first season. Angie is of Welsh ancestry. In one episode, “Anwar and Maxxie,” during a class field trip to Russia, Anwar runs into a room to tell his classmates that he has seen a beautiful Russian girl with big breasts through his window. All the characters run off to check out this beauty, but Chris. “I prefer Welsh women,” he says to Angie in explanation. Angie blushes.
responsible for the widespread backwardness and ignorance caused by the
cultural isolation it produced…. However the most purple of passages in the
Report concern the third element in the general depravity: the ‘disgraceful state
of the common people in Wales in the intercourse of the sexes’, and in particular
‘the barbarous practices which precede the rite of marriage’. The Report received
sensationalist coverage in the English press, confirming derogatory stereotypes
of the Welsh. (Pryke 1999:7–8)

These Blue Book Reports, as they came to be called as a result of their distinctive
blue covers, continue to anger some that claim Welsh ethnicity/nationality to this day.

The Welsh historian Gwyn Williams suggests:

Accurate enough in its merciless exposure of educational deficiencies in Wales,
the Report moved on to a ferociously sectarian attack on Nonconformity and to a
biliously racist onslaught…. Anglo-Welsh relations have never really recovered
from this poisonous ego-trip by three arrogant and ignorant lawyers; its
immediate effect was to sting a form of Welsh nationalism into life. (1982: 169,
quoted in part in Pryke 1999:7)

Going further along these same lines the historian Gwyneth Tyson Roberts
suggests:

[I]ts (the Report’s) publication marked a watershed in officially recognized
images of the Welsh people and language, and Welsh peoples’ images of
themselves which they might wish to reject but could not ignore. It has, directly
or indirectly, made a major contribution in the shaping of such images and
attitudes towards what it meant and what it means to be Welsh, and as such has played a significant role in the process of construction of a modern Welsh identity. (Roberts 1998:3, also see Roberts 2003:1)

Thus, the Blue Book Reports mark a key moment in the establishment of long lasting stereotypes of the Welsh among the British. These stereotypes survive into the present, and can be read in the representations of Skins.

What is perhaps more interesting is that, taken as a whole, the “Jal” episode of the first season series of Skins seems to have a “racial” undertone that is less prevalent in the other episodes of the season. To tie this show to the framework laid out in the previous chapter, the “Jal” episode embodies a racialized social thinking, through the construction of a place or world complete with a social vista of (racial) position(ing)s, that instructs its viewers, offering them resources that may be drawn upon at later points in their (ortho- or other) social interactions.

One aspect that may be surprising about racial/national/ethnic representations in Skins is the decided lack of reference to the Irish and/or people of Irish ancestry. It might be argued that the “Chris” character, which is romantically involved with his (Welsh) Psychology teacher as described in footnote 7 of this chapter, is a stand-in for a characterization of the Irish in the show. While the character’s surname is “Miles,” not a name with particular connotation to Irish ancestry, the actor that played the part of Chris is Joseph (Joe) Dempsey. Dempsey is a decidedly Irish surname, an Anglicization of the Irish name O’Diomasaigh. The defining characteristic of the Chris character is his propensity for heavy drinking and drug taking. According to the show’s official website, “Always game for

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8: In a fashion that is evocative of what Herman Gray has termed assimilationist television discourses, in which “the worlds (that shows) construct are distinguished by the complete elimination or, at best, marginalization of social and cultural difference in the interest of shared and universal similarity” (2005:166), the majority of episodes of the first season elide mention of Jal’s African-Caribbean ancestry/ethnicity.

9: It might be argued that the “Chris” character, which is romantically involved with his (Welsh) Psychology teacher as described in footnote 7 of this chapter, is a stand-in for a characterization of the Irish in the show. While the character’s surname is “Miles,” not a name with particular connotation to Irish ancestry, the actor that played the part of Chris is Joseph (Joe) Dempsey. Dempsey is a decidedly Irish surname, an Anglicization of the Irish name O’Diomasaigh. The defining characteristic of the Chris character is his propensity for heavy drinking and drug taking. According to the show’s official website, “Always game for
targeting of the Welsh may have much to do with the proximity of Bristol (the city in which *Skins* is set and shot) to Wales; Wales is just across the Bristol Channel from the city. Also, given the United Kingdom’s particular history vis-à-vis Ireland, it might be suggested that it is somewhat taboo for UK television writers and production companies to produce representations of the Irish in the vein of those of the Welsh outlined earlier. However, another show that is a favorite of the students I interviewed and that has no qualms about making, potentially questionable, representations of the Irish is the American animated comedy *The Simpsons*.

### 5.4 The Simpsons

The American animated comedy *The Simpsons* was named as a show consistently watched by 28.6% of students I interviewed, putting it in second place behind *Lost*. In counter distinction to the reason so few students named *Skins* as a show they watched (because it was such a new show), it can be argued that the reported viewership of *The Simpsons* may be lower than *Lost* because *The Simpsons* is such an old show. Debuting in the United States in December of 1989, *The Simpsons* has held the distinction of being the longest-running comedy in television history. The show’s official website suggests “THE SIMPSONS immediately struck a chord with viewers across the country (the United

a laugh, Chris will smoke/screw/rob/snort anything” (E4 2009). As will be suggested later, intemperance in drink, and by extension recreational drugs, is a common stereotype of the Irish.
States) as it poked fun of itself and everything in its wake. With its subversive humor and delightful wit, THE SIMPSONS has made an indelible imprint on American pop culture and has become one of television’s most iconic families” (Fox Broadcasting Company 2009). This statement could be expanded to also include many countries other than the United States. The show was picked up by satellite television service Sky One in September 1990, and thus made it into the British market. In 2000, a dedicated feed of the channel for the Republic of Ireland was established, thus beginning wide access of the show by Irish viewers. Thomas de Zengotita claims The Simpsons to be “the single most ironic (and long-running, and widely disseminated) account of family life in history” (2005:36).

The show, and other similar American animated comedies, seems to offer something unique that is unavailable from other sources. This sentiment was expressed to me by one of the students I interviewed:

AT: Like, what do you like to watch at home?
C3: Action... Comedy.
AT: Uh huh. What, what are some of the shows that you watch?
C3: Uhhhhh.... I watch The Simpsons and stuff like that.... Family Guy.
AT: Uh huh... So, comedy cartoons.
C3: Sport is probably one of the main things I watch.

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10 Sky One, now Sky 1, has been owned by Rupert Murdoch since 1984. The satellite station’s lineup has long been largely populated by American programs from the Fox Network, which is also part of Murdoch’s “media empire.”
AT: What kind of sport do you watch?

C3: Football, I watch nearly anything sport, football, tennis, golf.

AT: Uh huh... but, uh... soccer, football you mean? (laughs)

C3: Yeah, yeah, soccer, yeah. I don’t watch Gaelic football or American football at all.

AT: No?

C3: No. But any other sport really, yeah.

AT: Uh huh.

C3: That’d be it really, mostly.

AT: So that was, that, that’s the action part. Do you watch other like action dramas, or?

C3: Yeah.... Eh, not really. Not really, no I don’t.

AT: So, like sport and comedy. In particular, cartoons.

C3: Yeah.... Yeah.

AT: Yeah. Um, American cartoons like The Simpsons and The Family Guy.

C3: Yeah.... Yeah. There’s no other really. (laughs)

AT: Really? (laughs) There’s no British...

C3: Yeah.... No, not really.

AT: Animation’s an American...an American thing.

C3: Yeah.

As indicated in the description from The Simpsons' official website quoted above, it is the subversive, often bordering on distasteful, humor that most characterizes The Simpsons, and The Family Guy. And the focus of this humor is very often race/ethnicity.
The Simpsons has never been shy about taking Irishness as a target of its rapier-like humor. Some of the show’s shticks regarding the Irish are discussed in the opening of a research pamphlet authored by Aoife Monks:

In a Simpsons episode from 2001, the show’s hero, Homer Simpson, and his born-again Christian neighbor, Ned Flanders, take a trip to Las Vegas, and accidentally marry showgirls. In a later episode, their new wives turn up in Springfield. Ned Flanders reluctantly brings his new wife a cup of coffee. She says: ‘Could you Irish that up for me honey?’ Flanders replies: ‘We don’t like to use the “I” word in our house.’ This joke is one in a long line of Irish jokes in The Simpsons, such as the ‘Drunken Irish Novelists of Springfield’ float at the St Patrick’s Day parade; and Homer Simpson disguising himself as ‘the potato man’ in order to sneak into an U2 concert (the security guards say to him: ‘Where were you? You’re late…’). The showgirl’s coffee cleverly draws on the associations of Irishness with alcohol; the reversal of politically correct racial language; and an implicit, well-worn (and problematic) connection between Irishness and blackness. (Monks 2007:1)

Above and beyond those touched on by Monks, my personal favorite instance has Marge going to the bathroom medicine cabinet to retrieve a can of “Irish Strength Shiner Spray” in order to get rid of black eye she received in a fight with a female TV news personality over her daughter, Lisa’s, attention and respect.\footnote{This is an example of an association between Irishness and violence.}

\footnotetext[11]{This is an example of an association between Irishness and violence.}
In March of 2009, after the publication of Monks’s pamphlet, an episode of *The Simpsons* featured a family trip to Ireland. In this episode entitled “In the Name of the Grandfather,” Homer Simpson asks his father, Abraham, what he could do to make up for a particularly bad instance of neglect. Grandpa Simpson suggests he would like to travel to Ireland and go to Tom O’Flanagan’s Pub, where he once spent “the best night of his life.” So, the entire family (including Marge, Bart, Lisa, and Maggie) fly off to Ireland. The family vacation offers an episode-long opportunity to target Irishness in the shows typical humorous (?) stylings.

According to Irish columnist Fintan O’Toole, “[t]he episode was a stampede of clichés – potatoes, drink, leprechauns, diddly-eydle music, *Riverdance*, drink, stupid Irish-American cops, the Giant’s Causeway, the Guinness brewery, drink and more drink” (2009). Above and beyond the typical/classic caricatures, O’Toole finds a reflexive reversal permeating the episode, in that it is the American characters (rather than the Irish) that took on the classic “Oirish” role. “The underlying gag was that the Irish have become disastrously sober and hard-working, while it was the Americans (Homer and Grandpa) who wanted to indulge in ‘Irish behaviour’” (O’Toole 2009). However, O’Toole continues, “this cleverness doesn’t explain our refusal to be insulted,” before naming off his own list of jabs at the Irish that have appeared in past episodes of the

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12 The title is a play on *In the Name of the Father*, which is the title of a film that was based on the book by Irish author Gerry Conlon entitled *Proved Innocent* (1991). The book, and the film, chronicles the story of Conlon’s conviction for terrorist acts in Northern Ireland and the subsequent reversal his verdict. In the film, Daniel Day-Lewis plays the part of Gerry Conlon.
show (only some of which are commented on by Aoife Monk or me in this work). These past examples did not have the clever reversal found in the “In the Name of the Grandfather” episode O’Toole claims; “We laughed at them anyway” (O’Toole 2009).

All of these instances of representations are examples of classic/well-worn discourses regarding the Irish. Representations of the Irish as belligerent and inexplicably violent that have been touched on in Chapter 2 have a long history. The depiction of the Irish as heavy drinkers is also well-worn.

In more recent times, the traditional “pub culture” depiction of Ireland has given way to a decided “club culture” depiction, with the Irish adding recreational drugs to their supposed drinking ability. “Ireland is in the grip of ‘a really devastating drug epidemic,’” Emergency Medical Consultant Dr. Chris Luke is reported to have said in an article outlining the (perceived) problem of drug use in Ireland (Healy and Roche 2009). Interestingly, the supposed bellicose nature of the Irish I have outlined is tied to recreational drug use in this article. After commenting on the large amount of cocaine reportedly being openly consumed at an annual summer concert in Slane, Ireland, the story continues “[t]he aggression, brawls and ‘utter savagery’ that ensued bore all the hallmarks of cocaine use” (Healy and Roche 2009). This is in line with older representations of the Irish that tie their supposed propensity for over-consumption of alcohol with violent behavior.
Applying the framework laid out in the previous chapters to *The Simpsons*, I contend that the audio-visual representation presented by the show’s episodes can be usefully seen as presenting a place or world that includes a social vista of characters that can educate viewers so as to provide them resources that might be called upon in later (ortho- or other) social relations. Taken as a whole, the analyses of these programs coming from the United States and United Kingdom highlight a particular racialized/ethnic thinking that is manifest in the social vista of/in the worlds presented.

### 5.5 Irish-Language Media Among the Other Medias

So, *Lost, Skins, The Simpsons* and other English-language programs produced in the United States or the United Kingdom are the primary shows that my Irish student informants told me they *watched*. Very few of the students with whom I worked suggested that they regularly watched Irish-language programming. There were a few exceptions. A single student suggested that she watched *Paisean Faisean* (Passion Fashion), a show in which three male contestants pick out separate outfits for a single target female, who then decides which of the males she will go out on a date with based on the outfit he picked.

**AT:** What about Irish-language television? Do you watch any Irish-language television?

**C12:** I only watch one program.

**AT:** What’s that?

**C12:** Paisean Faisean.
AT: You watch Paisean Faisean? You watch it regularly?
C12: Yeah…. Um…. I just, I like it.
AT: What do you like about it?
C12: The fashion and…. I, it’s easier to understand the Irish, cause the Irish they use is pretty basic.
AT: Uh huh.
C12: And…. I just like the kind of the match making…. as well.
AT: Yeah, that kind of (inaudible). Kind of the game show element of it?
C12: But, it’s in Irish… Yeah….. Yeah……. But there’s just no, there’s no shows really like that in English.

In its mixing of fashion and a ‘dating game’ kind of match making, the student suggests, it is unique among programs, in Gaeilge or English.

Another student suggested that he was a regular watcher of a show entitled Bean an Tí (Woman of the House/Landlady). According to a story that appeared on RTÉ’s website:

RTÉ a rinne “Bean an Tí” a choimisiúnú agus craoladh an tsraith ar TG4. Tugtar léargas sna sé chlár ar shaol seisear ban as Gaeltachtaí éagsúla sa tír a thógann ról bhean an tí orthu féin agus a bhíonn mar mháthair ionaid ag na déagóirí a bhíonn ag freastal ar chúrsaí teanga ina gceantar i gcaitheamh an tsamhráidh.

“Bean an Tí” was commissioned by RTÉ and broadcast on TG4. This six-part docussoap gives an insight into the lives of 6 women from different Irish speaking
areas around the country as they take on the role of “bean an tí” and become surrogate mothers to teenagers who attend language courses in their locality over the summer. (Raidió Teilifís Éireann 2009)\textsuperscript{13}

The male student who suggested he regularly watched *Bean an Tí* also suggested he watched *Cruinneas*, a youth-oriented game show that would pit two young people against each other in answering questions on a variety of topics, all through the medium of Gaeilge.

A few instances of students suggesting that they regularly watched Irish-language programming aside, the vast majority of students I spoke to, when asked in the early stages of our interviews, suggested they did not watch Irish-language programming. These claims must be taken at face value. However, outside of my direct questioning of what Irish-language programs they watched, my informants suggested that they did see Irish-language programs.

Indication of one such instance comes from an interview I had with two students. Having already discussed the television that they watched in general, during which neither respondent suggested they watched any Irish-language programs, and discussing Irish-language media they had been exposed to in school, I began to probe about particular Irish-language shows they might have seen and/or been aware of. I

\textsuperscript{13} The story on the RTÉ website focused on a RTÉ project in which *Bean an Tí* was put on DVD and sent to approximately 4,500 schools throughout Ireland. A quiz based on the programs in the series was then made available online for use by teachers in teaching Gaeilge. The project was done as part of Seachtain na Gaeilge.
inquired about a four-part mini-series show entitled *No Béarla* (No English). In this four part miniseries, which had aired once-a-week between January 7 and January 28, 2007, host Manchán Magan traveled through a different Irish city each week refusing to speak anything but Gaeilge and, in effect, testing the local population on their ability to speak Gaeilge. The following conversation occurred.

AT: Um, No Béarla. Have you ever seen that?

C6: I watched that one... once, yeah.

AT: Yeah?

C6: Yeah.

AT: Were they, in class or at home?

C6: It was in class, yeah.

AT: Yeah.

C6: But I watched a bit of it at home, but... I turned it off.

C5: (small laugh)

AT: You, you didn’t, it didn’t keep your interest.

C6: No, I was probably watching something else then.

AT: I'm sorry?

C6: I was probably watching something else so I just flicked through.

AT: Uh huh.

In this can be seen an “admission” that he had watched TG4 for a brief time when *No Bearla* was on. This was not the only instance in which it was suggested to me that a
student had “flicked through” Gaeilge-language programming. The following conversation expresses the same general sentiment in more general terms.

AT: Since our last interview, … have you guys watched Nuacht TG4? Have you turned on TG4?

C11: Uhhhh, I would have to say I haven’t (laughs).

AT: No?

C11: No.

C3: No.

C11: Eh, I wouldn’t turn on the TV to watch it, but you know when your, sometimes when you’re going through the channels…

AT: Uh huh.

C11: you’ll watch a couple minutes.

AT: You’ll be flicking through…

C11: Yeah.

Here, again, can be seen the concept of “flicking through” Irish-language programming and stopping for a minute or two while commercial sessions, which are less frequent but a bit longer on Irish television than on American television, temporarily replace Lost, or Skins, or whatever show one is (primarily) watching.

Another example of this comes from the fact that TG4 airs some English-language, American programming throughout their schedule. One of the reasons this is

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14 Here you can see that I use the language introduced to me by a different informant during an earlier interview
justified, over and above the immense popularity of such shows, is exactly because it is argued that they will attract younger viewers to the station who might then stay on to watch an Irish-language show. This “piggy-backing” effect is widely debated in Ireland. My interviews do indicate that it is in fact the case that the young people I spoke with will occasionally watch a bit of Irish-language programming adjacent to English-language programming they are tuning in to see.

AT: What do, there’s English language programming on, on TG4 as well. What do you think about that? Like having the OC and Without a Trace (laughs) and all this American programming on the, on the Irish language program, uhhhh, station?

C8: (laughs)... I don’t really watch it.¹⁵

AT: You don’t watch it, so it’s not, not an issue for you.

C8: Nah.

AT: Are you watching those shows on TG4? Are you watching the OC or Without a Trace or anything?

C8: No.

C1: Sometimes watch the OC on it... That’s it.

AT: Yeah?

C1: Yeah.

¹⁵ It should be noted that this respondent suggested in an earlier interview that he was a regular watcher of Bean an Tí and Cruinneas. So, this statement should be taken to mean he does not watch American programming on TG4, not that he does not watch TG4 at all.
AT: Do you watch, do you watch any Irish language programming on either side of it? Like, do you watch the last five minutes of a show leading up to the OC or…?

C1: Yeah. Well, news is usually on TG4 before the OC, so I watch that.

AT: So you watch, so you WILL watch the, the Nuachta, or the last few minutes of it?

C1: (inaudible)

AT: How often do you, like, since, since, uh, we interviewed last time?

C1: Oh yeah. It’s, it’s been a few weeks since I think I watched the, it.

AT: Since you watched the OC, so? But you will, you’ll watch the last few minutes of the news? Do you watch the whole news report? It’s like a half hour news, from seven to seven thirty, right?

C1: Uh… No. Like ten minutes.

So, here, again, we see a moment in which Gaeilge is made present in the life of an Irish youth.

Another instance in which the students I interviewed came across Gaeilge in their everyday existence is when someone else is watching an Irish-language program when they come into the room. This situation is reflected in this interview segment in which I asked two students about the Irish-language television they watch.

C7: [M]y grandmother is sometimes watching it when I go over to visit her and I’ll sit down to watch it with her. She’s usually watching a nature program.

AT: Uh huh. On TG4, like the documentaries that they have and stuff.

C7: Yeah, and she, she likes those. So, if I’m there with her while, when she’s watching one I’ll sit down and watch it with her.
Here again we see an instance in which an Irish student will catch a short amount of Irish-language programming, not seeking it out, per se, but having it appear in their lives as they go about their daily activities.

5.5.1 What (Most) Irish-language Programming Is Not, What It Is, and What Else It Is Not

I have suggested that the Irish students with whom I worked did, in fact, see Irish-language television programming. In truth, they saw more of it than they would perhaps initially claim they did, even if the Irish-language programming they saw came in relatively small snippets as they “flicked through,” or waited for their ‘target’ program to begin, or sat visiting with family and/or friends. But, what is it exactly that they do see in these stolen moments of Gaeilge medium television?

In her survey of campaigns conducted by Welsh, Scots Gaelic, Irish, Basque, Catalan, and Galician language movements for electronic media, Sociologist Niamh Hourigan suggests that, “[m]edia activists from European indigenous linguistic minorities are seeking to remove themselves from national discursive space of television and create their own alternative discursive space” (2003:51). And, in her coverage of development of TG4, Hourigan suggests that this was also the case in Ireland. But was this goal effectively accomplished in the case of Gaeilge-medium television in the Republic of Ireland?

The push for an Irish-language television station, though perhaps most effectively initiated and pursued by Gaeilge activists based in the Gaeltacht areas
of the Republic, came to be pursued in the form two somewhat opposing models. One, the Teilifís na Gaeltachta model, is based largely on Raidió na Gaeltachta that was established in and has been continuously running since 1972, and the other, Teilefís na Gaeilge model, eventually “won out.” Steve Coleman does a concise job of summarizing the difference between these two models.

The original name of the station, Teilifís na Gaeilge, meant Television ‘of Irish’, that is, of ‘Irish’ as the heritage language of all Irish people, as opposed to Teilifís na Gaeltachta, Television ‘of the Gaeltacht’, the voice and point of view of the habitually Irish-speaking community. (Coleman 2003:185)

This distinction between these two possible models has had an effect on the bulk of programming that appears on TG4.

This (the Teilifís na Gaeilge mindset) shows in the station’s programming, most of which features simple, standardised (and English-subtitled) Irish comprehensible to learners and non-native Irish speakers. Little of its programming seems to present a Gaeltacht point of view. (Coleman 2003:185)

And, certainly, one would be hard pressed to find representations highlighting differences, linguistic and/or social, between Gaeilge-speaking residents of the Gaeltachtai and the English-speaking and urban areas of the Republic of Ireland, making their way on to the schedule of this government-supported and “national” oriented station. That is, filmic media that presents a social vista that represents rural Gaeilge-
speakers as distinguished from, and perhaps in opposition to/with, urban English-
speakers is seldom if ever found in TG4’s programming.

It might be argued that only when the technology of filmic/video production
became so inexpensive and accessible that it was clear that Irish-language media, pirate
or otherwise, would be made that factions in the government decided to establish a
station on the Teilifís na Gaeilge model to fill the demand with representations vetted by
their standards. Such a sentiment was expressed by Gaeilge-language activist and
journalist Seosamh Ó Cuaig in Coleman’s chapter:

Tá [TG4] ar an gcaoi sin mar gheall gur ón taobh amuigh atá an rud ag tíocht.
‘Gabhfaidh muid siar agus slánoidh muid na Sioux Indians’, sin é an meon atá
ann. Ní fhéadfá Sioux Indian a chur i gceannas ar na Sioux Indians.

[TG4] is that way because it is coming from the outside. ‘We’ll go West and save
the Sioux Indians’, that’s the mentality there. You couldn’t put a Sioux Indian in
charge of the Sioux Indians. (Coleman 2003:185)

Whether or not such a claim is warranted, it is clear that TG4 “defines itself as a
‘national’ service,” and “the point of view projected by TG4 closely reflects its own
power structure” (Coleman 2003:185). If it was in this sense that Hourigan suggested
that Gaeilge-language activists were seeking to create their own alternative discursive
space, it seems that in the case of TG4 the effort may have failed as a result of being

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16 Here can be seen an equation of Gaeilge speakers with the Sioux Indians... the primitive.
appropriated by national institutions and established as station dedicated to ‘national’ aims.

Hourigan, however, has high praise for the representations that fill TG4’s schedule. From the station’s launch, Hourigan suggests, the management of Teilifís na Gaeilge/TG4 had a two-pronged agenda to portray a modern image of the Gaeilge speaker and to focus on those, modern, elements of Irish life and society that had failed to be addressed by RTÉ’s Gaeilge-language programming.

For instance, the soap *Ros na Rún* was the first drama on Irish television to feature an openly gay relationship. Programs have also dealt with New Age spirituality, vegetarianism and the dance music scene in Ireland. Many of the programs have featured Irish-speakers in urban settings and international cities such as New York and London and have dealt with very urban themes such as drug use, fashion and architecture. TG4 has embraced pop culture and the service has featured many music programs which play English language pop and rock music with commentary and presentation provided in Irish. (Hourigan 2003:131)

This sentiment has been differently voiced by self-proclaimed TG4 critic Pól Ó Muirí in an article he published in *The Irish Times* in the run up to TG4’s ten-year anniversary. In this piece, Ó Muirí claims that few would disagree with claims by Irish-language newspaper editor Seán Tadhg Ó Gairbhi that “TG4 has brought about a fundamental shift in people’s attitude towards the language (Gaeilge).” This claim is
based largely on the perception that TG4 had effectively employed a number of young, beautiful, even sexy, Irish-speaking actors, hosts, and reporters for the station’s programs (Ó Muirí 2006). This perception of young and beautiful Gaeilge-speakers filling high-profile positions in the media industry, it is argued, has had the effect of undoing long-standing associations between Gaeilge and rural poverty. Based on claims along these lines, Hourigan asserts, “TG4’s treatment of the tension between the traditional and modern reflected the station’s aspiration to be an alternative modern voice within the national mediascape as well as a modern discursive space for Irish language speakers” (2003:131).

Be this as it may, it is important to look (again) at the majority of representations that appear on TG4’s Gaeilge-language programming. A great number of these Gaeilge-language audio-visual representations are quite different from those produced before the establishment of Teilifís na Gaeilge/TG4, having introduced game show and other genres that were previously not undertaken through Gaeilge. Nevertheless, what the

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17 Particular (non-politically-correct) attention has been given to na cailíni aimsire (the weather girls) on TG4’s news service. The term, cailín aimsire, originally referred to a female house servant, a “servant-girl” [Ó Dónaill 1977:171]. The root of this extension of use to the weather reporters is based on the fact that “aimsir” can relate to both ‘time’ and ‘the weather’ in Gaeilge. In a December 2007, tongue-in-cheek, article written by Pat Fitzpatrick in which he compiles a list of things that have improved the lives of Irish men he includes TG4 in his list. Fitzpatrick claims, “[t]he Seoige sisters are only the start of it. We also have Mairéad Ni Chuaig and Sile Ni Bhraonain, right, and a bevy of other cailini aimsire coming off the Lovely Girl production line in TG4. RTE just can’t produce this level of quality, it’s enough to make a fella learn Irish” (2007).

18 This is criticized by some. Ó Muirí quotes one Gaeilge-language programming producer as claiming that a number of the programs produced for TG4 can get a bit silly. “Paisean Faisean and the likes are vacuous nonsense. They should stick to what they are good at – traditional music and culture” (2006)
majority of Gaeilge-language programming does not do, and may not be able to effectively do, is to show Gaeilge in a social vista in which it is one language among a number of other languages. Almost necessarily, the majority of Gaeilge-language representations on TG4 are Gaeilge-speaking from beginning to end with English subtitles. Whether it is *Ros na Rún*, or *Paisean Faisean*, or *Bean an Tí*, or *Cruinneas*, the vast majority sets up a Gaeilge-speaking universe in which all discourse is through Gaeilge.

For example, *Ros na Rún*, which has received praise and condemnation both for addressing controversial topics such as rape, drugs, and homosexuality and for presenting deviations from Caíghdeán (standard, official) Gaeilge to include Anglicizations of Gaeilge, presents a world created in some idealized Gaeltacht town[^19] in which fair-skinned cast members speak Gaeilge and nothing but Gaeilge is spoken. The same is the case in the majority of other shows. Even in *Paisean Faisean*, which is often shot in urban settings in which English is the most common language, only Gaeilge is spoken by the host and contestants. That is, the characters/personas in these programs are linguistically, and thus ethnically, undifferentiated.

How could it be different? It is difficult enough to find Irish-national actors, professional and cameo, with Gaeilge proficient enough to cast these shows. And, it is the mandate of this programming to construct these ‘worlds’ of exclusive Gaeilge speech.

[^19]: Many know the set for the show to be located in An Spidéal (Spiddal) in the Conamara Gaeltacht west of Galway city.
for TG4’s audience. The effect, however, is that the majority of Gaeilge-language programming presents a social vista in which Gaeilge is spoken in exclusion of other languages, and Irish nationals live in exclusion of non-Irish nationals. So, while many of the Gaeilge-language representations on TG4 may have any effect of “modernizing” the perception of Gaeilge, the majority of representations on TG4 are in no position to “post-modernize” Gaeilge. In that way/in that regard it is still not part of European Ireland. It is still a positioning of Gaeilge as behind the times, a thing of yesterday, and a constitution of Gaelic Ireland.

5.5.2 Irish-language Television as Unwaved Flag

Sociologist Naimh Hourigan introduced a different, related, and useful concept at a conference held at the Notre Dame in October 2007. The three-day conference entitled “Race and Immigration in the New Ireland,” was intended to examine a range of issues in the context of an Ireland that is taken to be increasingly multi-cultural due to immigration by numerous non-Irish-nationals. On the second day of the conference, Naimh Hourigan, gave a presentation entitled “Who Are We Now?: The Irish Language Movement and Multiculturalism,” in which she examined ways in which cultural attachment to the Irish language by a population, the majority of which does not speak the language on a daily basis (and, according to many commentators, do not know the language in any functional way), might be examined. After talking about being honest about the messiness of Irish-language identity, wrapped up as it is (at times seemingly
alternately) with a reaction to colonialism and/or a seeming global sentiment for movements of language revitalization, loyalty, etc., she speaks of an “aha!” moment she had while pulling out of a Dublin car park:

How do we, uh, then, explain this cultural attachment to the Irish language, this language that we don't speak? Wha, what are the ways that we could possibly look at that? I was thinking about this recently because I was at a meeting in the Hilton Hotel which is down the road from me, where I live. And I was driving out of the car park and I put my ticket in and the ticket thing said “Slán abhaile” (Safe Home, Goodbye). And I was just thinking about this, because Hilton is a big international chain. And I started to think about where Irish is in everyday contexts. The numerous times in which ordinary Irish people who don’t speak the language everyday encounter it everyday. In some ways, it’s part of those little reminders of where you are that we, that we’re hardly aware of. Michael Billig has actually written about this quite a lot in terms of the American context, and he talks about the difference between the flag, the unwaved and the waved flag. He said you know waved flags, they’re on top of barricades (inaudible) they’re really important. But what’s more interesting, in some ways more… pervasive, is the unwaved flag. It’s the flag that stays in the corner and reminds us without, almost consciously knowing every day where we are. And when you start to look out for it you see in Irish life in a huge variety of contexts Irish operating as this unwaved flag…. What this says to us is symbols are essential.
And we need to think about that, and I think that is an interesting place to start in terms of this debate. (2007)

In this vignette, and the making sense of it, Hourigan evokes the work of Michael Billig, whose effort to move discussions of nationalism from addressing solely the “peripheral” peoples and movements of separatist groups and fanatics to focusing on the “centre” of the mass populations of, particularly Western, nation-states is as applicable in the Republic of Ireland as any of the other states Billig addresses. In making this shift without emptying “nationalism” of its widely accepted meaning, he proposes the phrase “banal nationalism” to refer to the multiple understated and unconscious ways that nationalism is evoked in the daily lives of people throughout the world. “The central thesis of the present book,” Billig claims in his central work, Banal Nationalism, “is that, in the established nations, there is a continual ‘flagging’, or reminding, of nationhood…. In so many little ways, the citizenry are daily reminded of their national place in a world of nations” (1995:8).

There are, no doubt, several aspects of Billig’s work that are relevant to and useful in elaborating the framework I present here. What I find most intriguing is both Billig’s and Hourigan’s reliance on geographic terminology in elaborating their ideas. Billig suggests that people “are daily reminded of their national place in a world of nations” (1995:8, emphasis mine). And, Hourigan speaks of unwaved flags reminding us without our conscious knowing “where we are” and encounters with Gaeilge in the
everyday lives of people as “part of those little reminders of where you are that we, that we’re hardly aware of” (2007). Both Billig and Hourigan, however, focus on the ‘reflective’ rather than the ‘constitutive’ aspect of these instances. Bringing Stuart Hall to bear, these daily encounters with Gaeilge do not (only) reflect the “reality” of living in Ireland, but actually constitute the national space that is Ireland (however fleetingly) for the individual in question.

Applying this adaptation of Billig’s concept of banal nationalism becomes particularly salient in light of comments made by my Irish-student informants regarding the ways in which they do watch, or perhaps only see, Irish-language television. The majority of students suggested that they actively watched little to no Irish-language television. Occasional statements made in the course of my interviews reveal that they do in fact “flick through” Irish-language programs and pause there for a few moments, perhaps slightly longer, to witness an instant of banal (Irish) nationalism not only reflecting the “fact” of their living in the “Gaelic Ireland,” but evoking that world and the thinking inherent in the social vistas that accrue within that place/space. An evocation that is perhaps particularly acute due to the Gaeilge-only representations that dominate TG4.
5.6 The Gael and the Migrant Sharing the Savage Slot

Continuing the conversation in which one of the two students I was interviewing suggested she would see a small amount of Irish-language television programming while visiting her grandmother, I turned to the other student being interviewed:

AT: How ‘bout you?

C2: Um, when Seachtain na Gaeilge was here and RTÉ had a show where they had five foreigner... foreigNERS learn Irish more than our people (inaudible).

AT: What, in, in a house, like, speaking Irish? Like, what was the…?

C2: They got teachers to teach them and they also had to learn a (inaudible) skill like tin whistle or hurling or something.

AT: Where, where, where were the people from? Do you know?

C2: Um, all different countries.

The program that this student was referring to was entitled “Níos Gaeliá… More Irish.” The show takes its title from an Gaeilge saying, “Níos Gaelaí ná na Gaeil iad féin” (More Irish [Gaelic] than the Irish [Gaels] themselves), which is reputed to have originally referred to “Old English” colonizers who settled in Ireland in the eleven and twelfth centuries and came to speak Gaeilge and display other cultural signs of the Irish people they lived among (see 2.2.2.1 earlier in this work). As C2 explained, the show consists of a “social experiment” in which four recent immigrants from different places (Raj Khan from Bangladesh, Vivian Mackey from China, Taiwo Matthew from Nigeria, and Lucia Atencia from the autonomous community of Galicia in Spain) are challenged to learn to
speak Gaeilge and one other cultural performance of the Irish tradition (a musical instrument, cooking, Gaelic sport, and Irish dance, respectively). In this four-episode show, it can be argued, the Gael is associated with these recent, accented, immigrants through Gaeilge and the “Gaelic” traditions of Ireland.

This show is but one of a number of media examples in which Gaeilge is “semantically allied” (Silverstein 2005:377) with recent non-Irish national immigrants to Ireland. Another example of this comes from a short film entitled Gafa (taken, caught, ensnared, and engaged [to be married]). This short film was one of a number of Irish shorts presented among a collection of Irish Film Board (Bord Scannán na hÉireann) supported film shorts as part of the Jameson Dublin International Film Festival on February 22, 2007. At the beginning of this thirteen-minute short film, a young Gaeilge-speaking flight attendant, Úna, about to step onto flight from Dublin Airport to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, is complaining to a colleague about her former boyfriend, who she recently found out was engaged to be married to another woman. It is not too far into the flight before Úna determines that everyone on the flight is paired up and in love. She has an anxiety attack during which she determines she has to escape this plane full of lovers and she opens the plane door and jumps from the plane while it is in mid flight. Miraculously, she survives the fall and wanders for a time around the desert landscape in which she ‘landed.’ Úna realizes she is lost and walking around in circles, and settles down under the gnarled remnants of tree before passing out. She awakes to the sight of
a moped and its driver slowly making their way toward her. She waves down the moped driver. Through impromptu sign language, Úna gets some water from the man. Then, she tries to speak to him in English, which he clearly does not understand. When Úna then mutters a phrase in Gaeilge, the two come to find out that the man, Javi, is a fluent ‘Gaeilge’ speaker.20 He drives her to the nearest bus stop on his moped and she makes her way home. Eventually, Javi travels to Ireland to be reunited with Úna, whom he asks to marry him. In this short film we see, again, an association between non-Irish national immigrants to Ireland and Gaels through Gaeilge.

An additional example of media drawing this connection between recent non-Irish-national immigrants to Ireland and the Gael can be found on a DVD of short films entitled Gearrscannáin (Shortfilms), supported by Bord Scannán and TG4 in association with the Irish Film Institute, and produced specifically for use in educational establishments.21 Yu Ming is Ainm Dom (My Name is Yu Ming) is an eleven-minute film about a young Chinese man who, dissatisfied with his life in China, decides to find a new life for himself. While waiting at a circulation desk of a library, he keeps himself occupied by spinning a globe that is on the desk, closing his eyes, and putting in finger down on the globe. His finger lands on Ireland. He then refers to an atlas, which states that the official language of the country is “Gaelic.” He goes about learning the language

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20 Úna’s savior, Javi, insists he is not speaking Gaeilge, but that she is speaking his language.
21 According to a copyright notice at the beginning of the DVD
and eventually travels to Dublin. Upon arrival, Yu Ming finds he cannot communicate with even the Irish nationals that populate the city, let alone the many Australian, Mongolian, and other non-Irish-national characters he meets. In his loneliness he even resorts to talking to a statue of Patrick Kavanaugh that sits next to the Grand Canal in North Dublin. Eventually, Yu Ming wanders into a pub in search of work. After a somewhat comic exchange with the Irish bar man, Yu Ming is asked, in Gaeilge, to sit by an old man sitting at the bar named Patty. Patty explains to Yu Ming that though Gaeilge “is there” as the official language of the Republic of Ireland it is not spoken except in a few regions of the island. In the end we see Yu Ming working as a bar man in the Connemara Gaeltacht, welcoming tourists into a traditional Irish pub with his practiced Gaeilge. In this representation, again, we see an association drawn between non-Irish-national immigrants and Gaeilge, the language of the Gael.

Students themselves have begun to produce filmic examples that semantically ally the immigrant and the Gael. One example of this is a student film is entitled *Rotha Mór an tSaol* (Great/Big Wheel of Life). The film takes its title from an Irish-language book that is the life story of Micí Mac Gabhann, an Irish-speaking man who traveled to America in search of work in the late 19th century and eventually returned to his home in Ireland. The initial script for the short film was produced by a Transition-year Gaeilge class at Monkstown Christian Brothers School as an entry for the Comórtas Scannán (Film Competition). The Comórtas is an annual contest in which short film scripts
written in Gaeilge by Transition-year classes are judged. Then, film crews are then sent to help four winning classes turn their scripts into a finished film. These short films are then, in turn, judged and the winning film goes on to represent Ireland at the Ciak Junior Youth Film Festival held in Treviso, Italy, each year.

In the opening scenes of Rotha Mór an tSaoil, a direct analogy is drawn between Famine-age Irish youths fleeing hunger and the promise of “no future” in Ireland and a young Nigerian brother/sister pair migrating from Nigeria to Ireland in the face of the promise of “no future” in their home country. I have detailed the analogy set out in the opening scenes elsewhere (Thornburg 2009:40–41). For the purposes of the current discussion, it is enough to note that this analogy between Gaeilge speakers and (particularly non-white) immigrants to Ireland is, again, made in Rotha Mór an tSaoil.

Applying the framework developed in the previous chapter, it might be suggested that what we see here is a confluence of social vistas available to viewers as a result of past discursive experience, including (but by no means limited to) previous filmic representations. This is in large part due to the compatibility of the (questionable) discursive position(s) of the Gael and the migrant that the association between the two is available.

5.7 Chapter Conclusion

In the previous chapter I laid out a framework for the analysis of audio-visual media representations that highlights the Locality mode of thinking I am attempting to
develop. In this chapter I attempt to utilize that framework to examine the audio-
visual/televisual media my Irish student informants told me they watched. The
interpretation I have given presents televisual media as creating (social)
places/site/worlds, in a word localities, in which viewers engage. Looking at Lost, Skins, and The Simpsons, those shows I was told or suspected were regular viewing material for my Irish student informants, I have suggested that episodes of these effectively create (social) spaces and associated (social) thinking through the development of social vistas in which particular characters/personas are primitivized through characterizations and interaction throughout the show. These worlds are engaged in by viewers of the show and, while not imparting fixed interpretations in viewers, these worlds act as “resources for experiments with self-making” (Appadurai 1996:3), but for self-making within social vistas that are alternately evoked at different times, places brought to life in the daily practice of persons. Thus, media practices of the students with whom I did my research have a supportive effect on their ability/propensity to alternately engage in one of a number of historic-discursively constituted localities. Like “flicking through” the shows that they watch, they “flick through” localities throughout their daily lives. This process will be the focus of the next chapter.
6. Localities in the Lives of Dubliners

6.1 Introduction

To this point, I have attempted to develop a “locality” framework that is appropriate for analysis of the data I collected while doing my research in Ireland. Having laid out the history, or histories, behind three different localities that are constituted on the island, and looked at how audio-visual media that is most regularly watched by the students with which I did my research contributes to the process of locality production and parallel engagement in these different localities, I now turn more directly to the how the semi-structured ethnographic interviews I conducted reflect/show these processes.

6.2 Dublin as “The Pale”

The first thing to note about the Dublin-based students I worked with is that a great many of them, the majority, either suggested that they were not very good at Gaeilge or went so far as to suggest they did not “like” the language. This is represented in the opening lines of an interview I did with a student at an inner-city denominational secondary school.

AT: So... I'm at a university in the U.S. I'm doing a Ph.D. And I'm studying uses of media in Irish-language classrooms.

D1: Yeah.

AT: So, you're taking Irish right now, right?
D1: Yeah, well I’m not very good at it.

AT: (Laughs) I get that a lot from students. They’re like, oh, I don’t like it or I’m not very good at it, or whatever.

One of the correlates and motivations of this claim is the perception that Gaeilge is not an active part of the lives of these students. The general suggestion from these Dublin-based youths is that the language is not used, or even useful, outside of school. Another student at the same secondary school expressed this idea well.

D2: See, Irish, Irish is kind of, like, you use it, you do it in school, but then after that, unless you’re taking up a career in the Gaeltacht or anything like that.

AT: Um hm.

D2: There’s no real use for it, like, in anything. Do you know what I mean?

AT: Um hm.

D2: Like, if you ask a lot of people, like, older people about Irish, they wouldn’t really, like…. Most of them have forgotten it, do you know what I mean, since they were in school anyway, so.

This student’s mention of the Gaeltacht is important, for the Gaeltacht is always present in the students’ articulations as a place against which the English-speaking space of Dublin is presented. In these articulations, the city of Dublin constitutes a sort of Gaeilge-free zone. In response to a query about whether he attends any events at which Gaeilge is used, the first student at the denominational secondary school I just quoted expressed this.
AT: What about outside of school? Do you, are there any venues, any places you go where Irish is used. I mean, you have the street signs and, and, and that type of thing.

D1: Yeah.

AT: But, beyond that, are you going anyplace... 

D1: Not around here no.

AT: No?

D1: It'd be mainly in the Gaeltacht.

AT: Um hm.

D1: There's nothing around here, everything's spoken in English.

AT: Um hm.

D1: You know? It's the odd one or two people that can speak Irish fluently but...

AT: Yeah.

D1: ... nothing else. You know?

AT: What about the, uh, Conradh na Gaeilge downtown and, and, uh, you know, Gael Linn and some of these other places that kind of teach Irish and have Irish events and that type of thing? Do you know anything about those?

D1: No (laughs). Shows what I know.

AT: (laughs)

D1: I never even knew about them.

AT: Yeah?

D1: Wow.
This student’s surprise at my suggestion that there are a number of places at which Gaeilge is spoken in the city is indicative of what I have come to regard as a degree of “media blindness” that is prevalent among many in Dublin. Media blindness, in this specific case Irish-language media blindness, is manifest in the daily lives of people in Dublin when they parse out the numerous instances of Gaeilge that are present as they go about their daily lives. Everyday living in the city makes it easy to ignore the fact that buildings have names in both English and Irish. It is easy to “forget” that the city’s buses, trains, and light rails are littered with Irish-language destination names and safety warnings both printed and/or audibly announced. It is easy to miss the admittedly smaller number of Irish-language newspapers and magazines that sit among their English-language counterparts on newsstands throughout the city.

Another example of this media blindness comes from a conversation I had with a friend I had made on an earlier trip to the Ireland. We arranged a lunch in order to catch up after I arrived in Ireland to begin my research. As might be expected, this friend inquired about what I was doing back in Ireland and I began to explain my research. When I explained my interest in Irish-language instruction and Irish-language media of all sorts, my friend asked if I was aware of a publishing company named Authentik, which took newspaper articles and other published examples of non-English-language media and republished them in formats that they made available to second-language learners. I asked him if they had a series like this for Gaeilge, to which he suggested
there was not enough published material in the language for that purpose. I asked about
\textit{Lá, Foinse, Saol, Comhra}, and other Irish-language publications. Did he not think they
could provide enough content? I remember him staring at me in silence for moment
before echoing D1, “Shows what I know!”

As this was an informal lunch between friends, I had not recorded our
conversation. I did, however, record the incident in my fieldnotes. Later, when I began
the series of independent adult interview sessions, I asked this friend to participate and
he agreed. During our interview I reminded him of our earlier conversation.

\textbf{AT}: We were talking one time about, um, a group, uh, based in Trinity that, that
publish, uh… newspapers from, like clips from, from foreign-language newspapers, and
that type of thing. Do you remember that discussion? And, and I said well do they have
one for Irish. And you said well there’s not really enough material. And I, I said well
there’s Lá Nua, and Foinse, and,…

\textbf{A11}: Mmm

\textbf{AT}: and sss, and Saol and, and there’s like a number of them. And you went, you
were, like, surprised…

\textbf{A11}: Yeah

\textbf{AT}: that there’s all this kind of Irish-language publications.

\textbf{A11}: I don’t see them in my local shops I, I think is, is probably the point there. There
probably is quite a bit of published material. I don’t know. Is there, is there an Irish-
language… newspaper or rather a pedagogical equivalent for Irish? I don’t think that…

\textbf{AT}: I, I, I’m not…
A11: Sorry! That, that

AT: Oh, no. No. Not that I’m aware of.

A11: No, I don’t think it’s there. Eh…

AT: What was the name of that group in… Academy?

A11: Um, Authentik.

AT: Authentik, that’s it, yeah.

A11: Their, uh,

AT: And I should look in and see if they, if they produce one because it seems

A11: They’re a Trinity campus company. Yeah, they’re down on Westland Square. They’re not hard to find.

AT: I can, I’ll try looking them up online. Because I’ve seen some of their stuff…

A11: Yeah, it’s authentik.ie.

AT: Yep!

Something approaching my concept of media blindness was described in Roxanne Varzi’s ethnography of residents of northern Tehran, Iran. Varzi writes of asking one of her cousins to translate the text of government propaganda posters that litter the city.

Instead of literal translations, I was often given explanations laden with opinion:

“Oh, that’s not an important sign; it says that prayer is like a dewy spring

1 Authentik’s website states that “[f]or over 25 years our experienced editors, practising teachers and native speakers, backed by the research of Trinity College, Dublin, have been publishing materials of the highest quality in French, German, Spanish, English and Italian” (Authentik 2010). No Irish-language version is available from the company and I know of no like publication from any other source.
garden. Government garbage.” Sometimes, my cousin would barely look at the poster before translating it. Like most Tehranis she no longer read the text, even the image-text, because she has come to anticipate propaganda in anything displayed in public space.” (2006:127)

In another, related, example Varzi writes of her efforts to record propaganda in public spaces throughout the city. Another cousin offered to help her “record Tehran,” and drove her around the city in search of instances to record. He pointed out what he took to be important architecture and ancient monuments, but Varzi suggested that they were not what she was looking for. Coming upon a billboard of a young girl wiping the blood off a martyr’s forehead Varzi asked her cousin to stop the car so she could take a photo. Varzi’s cousin became enraged asking why she insisted on portraying these instances of government propaganda to the world and claiming “This is not Tehran.” To this Varzi questions:

If this is not Tehran, then what is? How is the city, already a text, translated into another text? How can my cousin drive past these billboards every day, experience them and see that they physically dominate public space, and still claim that they are not Tehran? How is it that he can live in this city and not see what is most obvious? (2006:127–128)

Similarly, I could imagine an Irish person protesting a project that entailed going around Dublin taking pictures of instances of Gaeilge in public spaces, perhaps claiming “This is not Dublin.” In many articulations, Dublin is taken to be a Gaeilge-free zone in
counter-distinction to the rural, impoverished, Gaeilge-speaking Gaeltachtaí. The differences between these places, Dublin (The [Colonial] Pale) and the Gaeltacht, and the people that are taken to inhabit the two were elaborated upon by my friend during our interview:

A11: The cultural background, you, you, the whole society, I mean, is carried through language. So, I mean, just, people from Carraroe\(^2\) are just infinitely different to people from Dublin. Not just because they’re little village and big city and all that but because of the language they speak and the culture and history and all that sort of thing.

AT: Sure.

A11: The immigration, or emigration, rather. And the whole thing... it, it, this, It’s not controversial to say that it’s different...

AT: You mean the immigration into Dublin and, and?

A11: Also and overseas, as well. I mean in most Gaeilgeoir areas are typically extraordinarily poor. They tend to be the poorest places in the country. Or at least until recent times, I would say. So, there, there, there’s a wealth of difference between the experiences of, say, the Dublin middle classes and, and the poorest Gaeilgeoirs who would have had to dig their own turf and go off to Manchester to build on sites and all that kind of thing.\(^3\)

AT: Uh huh.

\(^2\) A small town in the Conamara Gaeltacht

\(^3\) I find this articulation of the difference of Gaeilgeoirs based on their mobility, their potential propensity to go to “Manchester to build on sites and that sort of thing” particularly interesting given Paul Silverstein’s work regarding the New Savage Slot (2005).
In sum, the Dublin residents I worked with at times characterize Dublin as a particularly non-Gaeilge-speaking area.

6.3 The Gaeltacht (and the Implications of Going There)

As discussed in Chapter 3, there are programs in Ireland that allow students to travel to camps (Coláistí Samhradh [Summer Colleges]) in the various Gaeltachtaí. The students practice their Gaeilge and, hopefully, have some fun. As part of my interviews I asked students whether they have attended such institutions. Here is an exchange that followed one inquiry:

AT: Um, what about summer colleges. Have you ever gone out to Coláiste Samhradh.

C5 I've never gone to a Gaeltacht, no.

C6 No. Everybody has like, but…

C5 Yeah.

AT: I'm sorry.

C6 Everybody, like, has. Loads of people.

C5 Yeah.

AT: Lots of people have but…

C5 Yeah

AT you guys haven’t.

C5 No.

AT: Do you plan to, in preparation for Leaving Cert or something?
C5: No. (laughs) Nooooo.

AT: Not taking your summer to...

C5: No.

C6: I don’t think so. I’ve been told to go. All my mates and all that say, like, go.

AT: Um hm.

C6: I wouldn’t go though.

AT: They said it was a good, a good experience.

C5: Yeah.

AT: Was it a good experience because they learned loads of Irish or just because it was good craic.\(^4\)

C6: Good craic.... Yeah, that’s all.

C5: They said that you don’t realize how much Irish you know until you go there and you actually just find yourself speaking it anyway.

AT: Uh huh.

C5: Not even realize it. Still, I wouldn’t go.

AT: No?

C5: No.

AT: Why?

C5: I don’t know (laughs).

C6: Ní thuigeann sí Bearla, or Gaeilge. (She doesn’t understand English, or Irish)

\(^4\) “Craic” is a Gaeilge word, but has such wide use among Irish English-speakers that it can now be considered an instance of Hiberno-English slang. It means good times, fun. It is defined in Ó Dónaill (1977:307) as “Conversation, chat.”
AT: Hmmm.

C6: Ní thuigeann sí Gaeilge. (She doesn’t understand Irish)

C5: (laugh)

AT: Ní thuigim fein. (I myself don’t understand)

C5: That’s, like, the only Irish he’s like spoken all year.

AT: (laugh)

C5: (inaudible) there now.

AT: Ah, tá Gaeilge an-mhaith agat. (You have great Irish)

C5: What?

AT: Tá Gaeilge an-mhaith agat. (You have great Irish)

C5 and C6: (laugh)

C6: Seo. (Yes [but the proper, grammatical, response should have been “Tá”])

AT: (laughs)

C6: Maith go leor. (Good enough)

There seems to be a general hesitance about traveling to a Gaeltacht area among a number of the students with which I did my research. Neither of these two students were particularly keen about the idea of traveling to the Gaeltacht. Also, however, there was the suggestion that inhabiting space in the Gaeltacht seems to, almost effortlessly, lead to better speaking of Gaeilge; “They said that you don’t realize how much Irish you know until you go there and you actually just find yourself speaking it anyway.” And, relatedly perhaps, it was discussion of the Gaeltacht that prompted one of the students to begin speaking in Gaeilge (to which I responded in Gaeilge).
Students at the other (denominational) school at which I did interviews, likewise, expressed both a reluctance to go to the Gaeltacht and the idea that spending time there leads to a higher ability level in the language.

AT: What about fieldtrips to, like, the Gaeltacht. Have you ever been to the Gaeltacht?

D1: No.

AT: Have you ever done, ah… I guess you haven’t done, uh, summer colleges...

D1: No.

AT: that they have over there. Is that something that you, you, you might do in preparation for Leaving Cert.

D1: I might. I don’t know. But me mate done it.

AT: Yeah? What he, What’d he say about it?

D1: He thought it was very good.

AT: Yeah?

D1: Like, when he came back he was able to hold… a full conversation….

AT: Really?

D1: with the Irish teacher.

AT: Um hm.

D1: Like, he’s good at Irish now.

AT: How long, how long was he… over?

D1: Eh… He went over for, I think it’s three weeks…

AT: Um hm.
D1: last summer and the summer before that.

AT: Uh huh. Two summers in a row?

D1: Yeah.

AT: You’ve never done it.

D1: No.

AT: Do you plan on doin’ it?

D1: No. (laugh)

AT: (Laugh)

D1: Don’t like leaving home.

AT: You don’t?

D1: No.

AT: Why’s that?

D1: Too much comforts at home.

AT: (laugh) You think the Bean an Tí (woman of the house) would be a little rough on ya? (laugh)

D1: Yeah. (laugh)

Exactly what “comforts at home” this student was referring to is difficult to pin down. I assumed at the time that he was talking about the comforts of his household, as opposed to sleeping in a room full of bunk beds with a number of other students, many of them strangers, and being forced to wake earlier than he might otherwise in order to begin the day’s activities. However, it is not impossible that he was talking about the comforts of city life. The coláistí samhraidh are most often in very rural areas, which, while most
often taken to be very scenic and beautiful, lack shopping centers, movie theaters, and like (urban) facilities. These are areas that are taken, as suggested by my friend in an extract presented earlier in this chapter, to be some of the most impoverished areas of Ireland.

Not all of the students I spoke to were so resistant to going, or reticent about saying they had gone, to the Gaeltacht.

AT: What er, what about going to the Gaeltacht? Have you ever, um, gone to a coláiste samhraidh?

C12: Yeah.

AT: You have been?

C12: Yeah.

AT: And, wh, when? Like, how often have you done this?

C12: I went about a year ago. I couldn’t last…

AT: Last summer was it?

C12: Not last summer, but the summer before.

AT: The summer before last.

C12: So, nearly two years… But, I thought, I learned more in the two weeks that I was at the Gaeltacht than I did doing Irish for how many years in school.

This student did not display any hesitation about letting it be known she had gone to the Gaeltacht. Further, she did express the commonly repeated idea that it increased her
proficiency in the language immensely, two weeks in the Gaeltacht did a better job than
ten years of language training in Dublin.

The Gaeltacht in these articulations is a different (perhaps oppositional) space
than Dublin. The Gaeltacht is a space that is associated not only with Gaeilge, though as
we have seen in the articulations presented in this chapter that is clearly the case, but
also with a lack of (urban) comforts. Each of these spaces, the rural Gaeltacht and urban
Dublin, has implications for the people that inhabit them.\(^5\)

6.4 Gaelic Ireland in Dublin—A Renaissance?

At times, people I spoke to claimed that Gaeilge is seeing increased use by
everyday Dubliners. In one interview at the community school a student made such a
suggestion in order to illustrate the “effects” that increased amount of Irish-language
media was having.

C7: Like, I, I’m even seeing families now which are fluent in Irish. Like, they’re
talking to each other in Irish.

AT: Who, who, who is this?

C7: (inaudible) just, like, normal families. But, if there wasn’t TG4 or stuff like that
they wouldn’t, they wouldn’t be speaking Irish. Nobody would know it existed.

AT: Yeah? So like even in the Gaeltacht or you’re talking here in, in Dublin and

Ireland (inaudible)

5 This articulation of the Gaeltachtaí as an almost “wild west” of Ireland, that is correspondingly filled with uncivilized people, is likewise reflected in the quote likening Gaeltacht residents to “Sioux Indians” presented in the last chapter (see 5.5.1, and associated footnote 16).
C7: Well, in the Gaeltacht, but also I saw people down in (name of a suburb of Dublin) the other day, just, in the bookshop speaking fluently, flu…. FLUENTLY in Irish.

AT: Uh huh. At a coffee shop here?

C7: In the bookshop.

AT: In, in the bookshop. Uh, the (local) bookshop. Um…. Do, I, is that becoming more common? I mean are you (stammer). Are you noticing that more often, or?

C7: I’m noticing it more often, because and I think, it is because of the, like, the Irish stations on the TV or the radio because I think (inaudible) we’re saying well it is our language, why aren’t we speaking it rather than just reading about it in a book.

This contention is in line with suggestions seen in the public sphere during my time in Ireland.⁶ Ultimately, however, in response to a (rather minor) contestation from C7’s co-interviewee in this session, C7 slightly alters her claim to suggest that it is in the rural areas outside Dublin where this is a more common occurrence.

AT: What about her claim that she, she, you’re hearing more Irish spoken at the bookshops, at the coffee shops, whatever? Is that your… did that… do you see that, or?

C2: No.

AT: You haven’t noticed that… No.

C7: I’ve seen it more apar, apart, out of (suburb).

AT: Yeah.

⁶ A pamphlet produced by Foras na Gaeilge (2005) claims that there is rising confidence among Gaeilge speakers (see quote at end of section 3.6 earlier in this work).
A: In the city or out, outside of the city?

C: Well, sometimes in the city and then... I go with my dad out to, like, he works in Ashbourne, like.

A: Where's that?

C: In Meath.

A: Um hm.

C: And I go there and I hear people talking there in Meath and a different part of Meath and wherever I traveled.

A: Um hm... Um hm... Yeah. I know there's a, there's a small Gaeltacht up there, Ráth Cairne. I think your teacher's from there.

C: Yes.

A: Is that, is that near where you're going, or?

C: Um, I think so. I'm not entirely sure, because I go to different parts of Meath.

A: Uh huh.

C: But the, like, in those particular parts of (inaudible) people fluent in Irish.

A: Um hm.

C: And I can see them, like, talking to each other FLUENTLY in Irish.

So, in this revised articulation, it is not Dublin in which this increased use of Gaeilge can be seen, but in the next county over, Meath. Just outside the modern-day Pale of Dublin County.
6.5 The Making of Gaelic Ireland in Dublin—“Messing”

Despite this articulation of Dublin as, predominantly, a Gaeilge-free zone, other instances of talk from the students I worked with suggest that Gaeilge is indeed spoken in their everyday lives.

D2: (inaudible) So, my dad, that’s, my dad’s a Guard, so he uses it, like. He’d need to use Irish in work sometimes.

AT: Really? How, how, how so, like?

D2: He would, see if, well… you have to, you have to have Irish. Like, you have to have a C in Irish I think.

AT: Um hm.

D2: Ordinarily, going into the Guards. And then, only if, like, they can (stammer). You’re arresting somebody and they ask to be, you’re, like, arrest them in Irish. Do you know what I mean?

AT: Um hm.

D2: And most, most of the time they’re only, like, doing it to, kind of, annoy the Guards. Do you know what I mean? But, then, they, kind of, comes back in their face because then they can go through the whole trial in Irish, and they won’t have clue what’s going on, basically, so.

AT: Oohhh (rising intonation)

D2: That’s only the time, the only time you really use it. But, he’s fairly good at it anyways, so.

AT: (inaudible)
D2: I get him to help me. Do you know what I mean?

AT: Um hm…. Do you speak it at home at all?

D2: No…. Never…. I, I, actually, I get, messing, like, I’ll speak it at school sometimes.

Do you know what I mean? In other classes, like, just messing.

AT: Um hm.

D2: I’ll try to say it in Irish.

AT: To, to the teachers, or… ?

D2: Yeah.

AT: other students, or?

D2: In…. Both, both really…. Just, not, not often. Just kind of like… the odd time.

AT: Um hm…. And, uh, is, do you, uh, speak it at, at home. Like, does your father speak to you in Irish at all?

Here we see a suggestion that Gaeilge is, indeed, spoken in Dublin. What is most interesting is not the claim that this student’s father speaks the language as part of his work as a police officer, in line with discussion in Chapter 3 regarding Gaeilge requirements of civil servants, but rather the suggestion towards the end of this extract in which the student suggests that he will on occasion speak to teachers and fellow students in Gaeilge outside of his Irish-language class. This “messing,” as he refers to it, is the use of a small amount of Gaeilge in, often, unexpected contexts. I probably would have passed over this reference to “messing” without notice had it not been that other of the students I worked with evoked the idea in exactly the same terms.
At the community school at which I did research, I was asking two students about their exposure to Irish outside of school, at home or at venues throughout the city. One of the two suggested that they “messed” in a manner very much like D2 did.

C8: I speak, like, in my… in… like, every day, I speak a small bit of Irish. Like just words of Irish.

C7: Yeah, I try to do it, but…

C8: Just, like, messin’ and with my family.

AT: Um hm…. Just with family, and friends?

C8: You just mess like.

C7: Just like words, as you’re speaking an English sentence you’ll sort of insert an Irish word and then…. It’s the most you can do (laugh).

AT: Uh huh…. What about, like, events? Are you guys going to, uh, events where Irish might be… something at the Conradh na Gaeilge or, uh, Gael Linn or… Do you guys ever find yourself in, kind of, events outside of school where Irish is the language?

In this extract we see that C8 claims to use Gaeilge on (nearly) a daily basis. It is interesting that C7 concurs with this, although seemingly with much less confidence and vigor than C8.7

After having done some review of these previous interviews, I took the opportunity to follow up with C8 (now in an interview session with a different co-

7 As noted in the last chapter, C8 identified himself as a regular watcher of at least two Irish-language television programs. C7 claimed not to receive TG4 at her home, but did in other instances claim to participate in “messing”-like Irish-language use, as will be seen.
interviewee) regarding the act of inserting Gaeilge into everyday English conversation.

Again, C8, without prompting, referred to this as “messing.”

AT: You talked about it, in our last interview, you talked about inserting a little bit of Irish in to, in to everyday English speech.

C8: Yeah.

AT: Do you still do that? Do you find people doing that around you?

C8: Yeah.... Yeah.

AT: One of the people I was talking to today they went, when they were at the (local) bookshop the other day and there was some people speaking Irish in the bookshop. Do you see that happening? Do you see people speaking more Irish and…

C8: Yeah.

C1: Yeah.

AT: In town or…

C8: You’d just be messin’ speaking Irish.

C1: Yes... Yeah.

AT: Yes, weh, you were.

C8: Yeah.

C1: Yeah.

C8: Spec.... I don’t know.

AT: Um hm.

C8: I’d say you’d speak it every once and a while.
AT: Um hm. What, like, what would, what kind of context would lead you to, to break (laughs) into Irish instead of English?... Besides being on holiday and having other people speak (laughs)…

C8: Well…. Well, just like. I don’t know, just, you just like break into Irish sometimes.

C1: Yeah.

C8: It just comes into your head.

C1: Yeah, you just don’t think about it. It just comes into your head.

AT: Hmmm…. When? (laughs)…. Whhhyyyy? (laughs)

C1: (laughs) I don’t know.

AT: (still laughing) Cén fáth? (Why? or What for?) (laughing)

C8: Yeah… (with rising intonation)

AT: Just like that?

C8: Yeah.

C1: Yeah.

AT: Just like… why?

C8: Yesterday I was saying, (tap, tap sound) I was asking people Cén fáth

AT: Um hm.

One of the things that is noteworthy about this extract is the language used, the way it is framed. Note, I asked C8 if he, in particular, used Gaeilge on a regular basis. C8 changes his reply from one that claims personal volition to one that generalizes the process. Thus, C8 says “you just like break into Irish sometimes” and “[i]t (Gaeilge) just
comes into your head,” rather than “I just like break into Irish sometimes” and “[i]t (Gaeilge) just comes into my head.” This use of “you” in these sentences, which in strictest terms do not refer to me (Aaron Thornburg) but rather to a hypothetical every person, works to construct a world, a locality, in which this is done by most people, if not every (Irish) person. In this regard, this use of “you” is similar to the use of discursive markers as “Presupposition-triggers – words or constructions that indicate what the speaker posits as assumed common ground” (Strauss 2004:185). It is also worth noting also that in these extracts a third student, C1, echoes C8’s appraisal of the process in exactly the same form; “Yeah, you just don’t think about it. It just comes into your head” (emphasis mine).

In section 5.5.2 of the last chapter, I detailed Naimh Hourigan’s use of Michael Billig’s work to highlight daily instances of Gaeilge in the everyday life of Dubliners as “unwaved flags” that remind Irish people of “their national place in a world of nations” (Billig 1995:8). I expanded upon this framework by highlighting the constructivist nature of instances of Gaeilge in the daily lives of people in Ireland; that is, they are not only reflective of the reality of being in Ireland, but constitutive of a (Gaelic Ireland) locality. Here, I posit “messing” as another instance of such place-making unwaved flags. Many of the students I spoke with suggested they used or acknowledged the use of a small amount of Gaeilge on a (nearly) daily or basis. This use of Gaeilge is above and beyond both that they see daily on signage and in the media, and the compulsory Irish-language
classes they sit through three to five days a week during the school year. Despite Dublin’s consistent construction as a Gaeilge-free zone in many articulations regarding the city, even there the process of “messing” makes manifest the Gaelic Ireland locality.

6.6 “Messing” Abroad

Another consistently forwarded suggestion was that Irish people, even those that were not fluent in the language, might speak Irish while abroad. One instance of this assertion was presented when I asked a pair of students if they attended events or venues outside of school at which Gaeilge would be spoken.

AT: Um, can you think of any other venues, places, um, where Ir, where you use Irish? Like...

C1: Em, ..... not really.

AT: Can you?

C2: If you’re in another country it’s funny to talk Irish in front of others because they don’t have a clue what you’re saying.

C1: Yeah.

AT: Um hum… Um hum... and (stammer) are, is your ability good enough to, to, to speak Irish to, to a classmate or something if you were in... like where, where, you sound like you’re talking about an instance. Did this happen to you at some point?

C2: Well, my brother does it, because he lives in England now.

AT: Uh huh.
C2: So him and his friend always talk, like, random Irish words in front of English people.

AT: Uh huh.... And, but.... You’ve never done this yourself?

C2: Not really, no.

AT: Uh huh. Um, what about... in the home is Irish used by any of your family, extended family, anything?

C1: Um, certain words I might say in Irish or my dad might say in Irish, but they wouldn’t be strong at Irish for instance to speak a conversation.

AT: Uh huh. And you?

C2: No it’s never really used in my house.

Not only is the idea that Gaeilge is used when Irish people are in other countries expressed by C2, but an instance of “messing” is highlighted by C1 who, answering my direct question about whether Gaeilge is spoken by anyone in her family states, “certain words I might say in Irish or my dad might say in Irish, but they wouldn’t be strong at Irish for instance to speak a conversation.”

In the second (two-person) interview including C2, I followed up with her on this point. C2’s co-interviewee in this session, C7, was reminded of an instance in which she spoke Gaeilge while in another European country with another Irish person.

AT: You had actually mentioned, you said if you’re, if you’re in another country, and you were talking about your brother.

C2: People always do that.
AT: Yeah? Like, if your away on holiday and, and you want to say something that you don’t want someone else to understand you, you…

C7: Yeah, I did that once in (European Country).

AT: You did? In (European Country)? What? Tell me, tell me the story.

C7: I was in (European Country) for (organization) for (an international organization meeting). And then I was talking to someone from my (group) there. And then we decided we wanted to talk in Irish because we were hanging out with a whole bunch of English guys.

AT: Um hm.

C7: There were like five English guys and we were hanging out with them.

AT: Um hm.

C7: And we decided that we wanted to have a conversation in Irish just, JUST to confuse them.

AT: Um hm.

C7: And so we starting talking in Irish, and they were just sitting there going what the hell are they saying.

AT: Um hm.

C7: And then they spoke in some other language that we didn’t understand. But, yeah.

So, here we see another suggestion that Gaeilge is spoken to others who it is assumed have some (however small) abilities in the language when in countries other than Ireland. Much like “messing” in Dublin, I contend, this is a process of creating
locality. It is a process of making a Gaelic space, a Gaelic Ireland locality, in decidedly non-Irish context. But, how can this be? How can it be suggested that these students are attempting to manifest a Gaelic locality in a country other than Ireland? In some ways they are not. In one sense they are manifesting the Gaelic locality of Ireland from which they come. In another they are creating Gaelic locality wherever two or more (potential) Gaeilge speakers happen to be.

Steve Coleman makes a similar point. In his contribution to an edited collection, Coleman is discussing Raidió na Gaeltachta, the Irish-language radio station headquarterd in the Conamara Gaeltacht. Though in most senses a “local” station, focusing on events and stories that are of particular pertinence to residents of the Gaeltachtaí, the station’s news service has been very effective at covering national and international politics and events through the use of an informal network of Gaeilge-speaking correspondents (Coleman 2003:184). As a result, “[t]he case of Raidió na Gaeltachta – a ‘local’ station with national and international reach – shows that, perhaps, the ‘local’ is not merely a geographical entity; locality is not a physical container for people but a wider set of concrete social relationships.” (Coleman 2003:184). In support of this contention Coleman footnotes the final chapter of Appadurai’s book *Modernity at Large*, which is covered substantively in Chapter 1 of my own work.
6.7 “Flicking through” Localities

6.7.1 Between Gaelic and Colonial Ireland

As also discussed at some length in Chapter 1 of this work, statements made in semi-structured interviews of the type utilized in my research are often inconsistent, even contradictory. The statements made by the students I interviewed were no exception in this regard. It is not uncommon for statements made in the two different interviews I conducted with students at the community school to be somewhat inconsistent. A prime example comes from extracts of the two interviews I conducted with C11. In the first interview I conducted with this student, I asked a standard question regarding what, if any, Irish-language television programming each of the two interviewees watched. C11 replied:


C11: Eh, Hector san Afraic and, you know, Hector san Oz and all that.

AT: Yeah, I, I, I just saw the, uh, the san Oz one when I was, uh,....

C11: Yeah, no, I think he’s brilliant.

AT: recently, but it’s not something I get to see when I’m in the States, of course.

C11: Yes sss.

AT: Yeah.... So, you watch Hector. Any other, uh?

C11: Eh....

AT: Wh, what do you like about Hector?
C11: Uh... sssss brilliant, like. I also like the way he, he has some English programs, as well, on RTÉ and stuff. You know, he went over to the soccer players in England, and all. But I like the way he speaks English, but he brings Irish into everyday, so he’s...

AT: Um hm.

C11: kind of going in between the languages all the time, which... I try to do.

AT: Yeah?

C11: Yeah.... (in?) school.

AT: And, so, do you use Irish in, on a day to day basis?

C11: Not much, now. I wouldn’t be fluent. Now, my Dad’s fluent Irish, but, uh....

AT: Um hm.

C11: I try, you know, like, the basics, I, a bit.

This student is referring to Irish-language television shows featuring Hector Ó hEochagáin, a Gaeilge-speaking television presenter who got his start on Teilifís na Gaeilge/TG4 as host of a travel show entitled Amú (Wasted). In this show, Hector traveled to places outside of Ireland speaking to locals in English, and other languages to the degree that he could, and providing Irish-language commentary to the camera/audience. Hector later expanded his career to make English-language programs on other RTÉ channels, but continued making Irish-language programs as well. When I was doing my research, a series featuring Hector traveling around Australia (Hector san Oz) was aired on TG4. He had also released a book related to his experiences in the travel shows entitled Hector’s World.
As can be seen in this extract, discussion of the way that Hector moves between Gaeilge and other languages leads this student to suggest “he brings Irish into everyday, so he’s kind of going in between the languages all the time, which… I try to do.” While admitting he is not fluent in the language, he suggests he does try to use “the basics” in a fashion that we can now call “messing.”

In my second interview with C11, he contradicts this claim.

AT: What’s your opinion of the Irish language generally, like the state of the Irish language?

C11: Uhhhh....

AT: Do you, uh?....

C11: Don’t know, ah....

AT: (laughs) Broad question.

C11: Yeah, it is really, but, cause… I don’t think it, like we should, uh… eh (laughs). I don’t think it should be, should, like, call it, like, dire, you know. But… I wouldn’t use it that much.

AT: Yeah, actually you wouldn’t… You told me your father, your father’s fairly...

C11: Yeah, Yeah...

AT: adept at speaking (inaudible)

C11: Yeah, but still at this point, it’s just… I would never...

C3: Different generation really, isn’t it?

AT: Yeah.... How bout your, how bout your.... family? Do your...

C3: No.
AT: Not at all?

C3: Not at all, no.

Contradicting the statement suggesting he attempts to use Gaeilge on a regular basis made in the first interview, in this session C11 suggests “I wouldn’t use it [Gaeilge] that much.” When I remind him that he told me that his father was a fluent speaker of Gaeilge, he acknowledges this but suggests he himself “would never…” do something, before our one-on-one exchange is interrupted by the co-interviewee in this session, C3.

What can account for the difference between the seemingly contradictory statements in C11’s interviews?

Foremost, perhaps, present company might be a ready explanation for the different statements. In the first interview session with C11, the co-interviewee was a female who had some affinity for Gaeilge, C12 (remember C12 was the student that had no compunction about revealing that she had gone to a coláiste samhraidh.) In the second interview C11’s co-interviewee was a male who was on the whole much more circumspect about Gaeilge. C11’s assumptions about the expectations of his co-interviewees might have played a part in the difference between the two statements.

The context and framing of the conversation leading up to the relevant statements may also have had a significant effect. In the first conversation C11 was talking about a positive example, Hector Ó hEochagáin, who is seemingly quite adept and code-switching between Gaeilge and other languages. This evokes a vision of a
world in which this ability is possible and desirable. My question about C11’s opinion of the state of Gaeilge in the second interview came at the end of a discussion of C11 and C3’s opinion of the Irish-language programming on TG4. The general tenor of the conversation was that Irish-language programming seemed to lack the professionalism and pop-appeal of much English-language programming. This discussion possibly led to an evocation of a media version of the Pale/Gaeltacht distinction, which carried over into C11’s take on Gaeilge more generally.

Noteworthy is the grammatical framing of C11’s statements, his claim that “I wouldn’t use it” as opposed to ‘I don’t use it’. While this is framed in the first person singular, “I”, the use of “wouldn’t” instead of “don’t” has the effect of highlighting the state of the world rather than his personal decision within it.

It is not just between interviews that contradictions arose in statements during these semi-structured interviews. Another noteworthy example of seemingly contradictory statements by a student interviewee comes within a single interview. I present the transcript of this extract at length so that readers can get the feel of the overall transition made in the course of the conversation. The extract begins when I ask C7 the intentionally broad question, “what is your general opinion of the Irish language.”

AT: Um…. So, what’s your, what’s your general opinion of the Irish language?

Like...
C7: I think it’s good we have our own language. But, I’d like it better if more people spoke it...

AT: Um hm.

C7: … in everyday language. Because, it’s getting to the point where people are just talking Irish in school, and that’s only cause they have to.

AT: Um hm.

C7: I think it’d be better if more people spoke it, because it is our own language.

AT: Um hm.

C7: And every single person in the entire country used to be fluent in it.

AT: Um hm.

C7: It just sort of… gave way when the English came over.

C2: English (inaudible)…. (inaudible but something to the effect of “The English pushed/forced it out.”)

C7: Yes they did push….. But even, like, even in other countries (inaudible). We’re just, we’re just sort of stuck with the English because we’re not bothered to try and speak it.

C2: What about Australia?

C7: Oh! (laughs)

AT: What’d you say?

C2: I don’t know. (laughs)

C7: NEARLY every country has their own language. (laughs)

C2: America. (laughs)
AT: We don’t. We speak English, too.

C7: Nearly every country (laughs)

AT: And increasingly Spanish.

C7: So, yeah. See, they have Spanish.

AT: (laughs)

C7: Ha!

AT: Um, ANOTHER colonial language…. Uh, do you think it should continue to be taught in school and be a required course?

C7: Yeah..... Yeah.

AT: Yeah.

C7: Because, for the kids that actually want to know Irish, if their parents haven’t done it, if they don’t do it in school they’ll have no way of knowing Irish.

AT: Hm.

C7: But, uh.

AT: What do you think (C2’s name)? What’s your, what’s your opinion of the Irish language?

C2: Yeah, it’s good to have our own language, but... It should be taught better in schools though.

C7: Yeah.

(C7 and C2 speaking simultaneously, inaudible)

C2: ... the same for learning French or Spanish or whatever as we do Irish, at this stage (inaudible) better after four years.
AT: Uh huh…. I’ve heard that a lot. Like, I speak, I speak Spanish almost better than I speak Irish (inaudible)

C7: I’m actually better at Spanish than I am at Irish.

AT: Why, why is that?

C7: I got a B end of the year in Spanish. I got a C in Irish.

AT: Wh, Wh, Why is that, how, why is it, how is it being taught differently in Spanish or French or whatever?

C7: Spanish…. You go on exchanges in Spanish.

AT: Um hm.

C7: And, like, you’re able to just go out and speak Spanish.

AT: Um hm.

C7: And, then… even in French they did a exchange recently as well.

AT: Um hm. And you think those experiences are helpful.

C7: And Irish isn’t like that, because NO OTHER COUNTRY IN THE WORLD speaks Irish.

AT: Um hm. But what about the Gaeltacht, eh, summers? Like….

C7: I haven’t gone to Gaeltacht, like, personally.

AT: Yeah. And neither have you, right (C2’s name)?

C2: No…. But…

AT: But, do you think that that would have, kind of, the same effect, the same role, doing that?

C7: Well, it, it could have an impact.
C2: Yeah.

C7: I’m not sure it would do exactly the same thing, but it would have an impact.

C2: But, remember (inaudible)

C7: That is a GOOD point!

C2: when they came back they wouldn’t stop speaking Irish, they loved it that much.

C7: Yeah.

AT: Really?

(inaudible, three of us speaking simultaneously at times)

AT: Who, who was this?

C7: My, our friends in, in... earlier. They were, they went to the Gaeltacht for the first time in (questioning C2) third year?

C2: Second.

C7: Second year. There you go. Second year. (laughs)

AT: Uh huh.

C7: And, uh, before they went they were dismal. (inaudible) But, they came back and they couldn’t stop speaking in Irish. And we were like, just SHUT UP already. We GET IT you liked the Gaeltacht. (laughs) Save the Irish for school.

AT: Is there, why is that, why, why, why save it for school? You just said that you’d like it if more people spoke it, and now your saying...

C7: No.... No.... YES. Spoke it, but not... so much so that I can’t understand what you say anymore.

AT: (laughs) I’d like it to be spoken more, but, I don’t want people speaking it.
C7: I want to understand what you’re saying.
AT: Ohhhh.
C2: They spoke it too much.
C7: Yes. That’s it.
C2: Everything they said had to be in Irish.
C7: EVERY single thing they said had to be in Irish.
AT: Uh huh.
C7: And we were trying to talk to them in English and they would answer in Irish. And I was like…
AT: And you kind of find that con, condescending or, or pompous or…
C7: Well, coming from. Not usually, but coming from three guys that hadn’t spoke Irish at all before they left. They came back and they were… not shutting up.
AT: Um hm.
C2: (inaudible) the language.
C7: And it was during the summer. So, I wasn’t thinking about ANY school related subjects at this point.
AT: Um hm.
C7: And then they came back and started speaking fluem, like, all the time. And I was, like, guys I hate you so much. (laughs)

There is a lot that can be unpacked in this extract along the lines of the arguments presented in this work. First, the sentiment of linguistic nationalism is expressed by C7 in the early portion of the exchange. She claims “it’s good we have our
own language” and that almost every country has its own “native” language. This point is mildly contested by C2, who introduces a number of other countries in which the majority language is English, namely America and Australia.

Second, the colonial project of the British and its role in the loss of Gaeilge is touched on. C7 states “every single person in the entire country used to be fluent in it. It just sort of... gave way when the English came over.” C2 suggests an even stronger version of the colonial critique suggesting it didn’t just “give way” and that colonial Britons actively sought to extinguish Gaeilge. C7 accepts this point, with a slight qualification that Gaeilge would be in a much better position if only people in Ireland “bothered to try and speak it.”

The idea that Gaeilge is taught incorrectly, perhaps uninnovatively, in schools is expressed when C2 suggests “it’s good to have our own language, but... It should be taught better in schools though.” A benefit that other European languages have over Gaeilge, it is suggested, is the possibility for “exchanges,” going to places where particular languages are primarily spoken. This leads to discussion of trips to the Gaeltacht, which in turn leads to a story about mutual friends of the two interviewees who went the Gaeltacht, a trip that increased the friends’ ability level in and, apparently, enthusiasm for speaking Gaeilge (the Gaeltacht left its imprint on these youths). Finally, the designation of school as a space for speaking Gaeilge is also expressed.
The most important aspect of this extract for the purposes of this work is the incongruity between C7’s initial statement, in direct reply to my query about her general opinion of Gaeilge, that she would like to see more people speak it in everyday interactions and her later statement that she was irritated by the (over) use of Gaeilge by friends who had returned from the Gaeltacht. I call C7 on this inconsistency asking, “why save it [Gaeilge] for school? You just said that you’d like it if more people spoke it.” When C7 suggests there is a limit to the amount of Gaeilge she would have spoken, “Spoke it, but not… so much so that I can’t understand what you say anymore”, I (somewhat mockingly) forward, “I’d like it to be spoken more, but, I don’t want people speaking it.” At this C2 voiced in support of C7’s position, “They spoke it too much.” With this, C7 agreed.

The inconsistency within this extract may be the result of the conversational context in which the two stances arose. At the beginning of the extract, the general nature of the question allowed C7 to wish for an existence in a Gaelic Ireland. To some degree, C7’s constitution of locality concedes to the encroaching existence of The Pale in that “it’s getting to the point where people are just talking Irish in school, and that’s only cause they have to.” But, note, this is framed in a sense that the present locality is one of (potential) Gaeilge speakers, which is being undone, not the Gaeilge-free zone of the Colonial Pale.
The counter-claim in this extract, the claim that the friends of the interviewees spoke Gaeilge too much after returning from the Gaeltacht is raised by C2’s initial mention of these friends. It is not hard to imagine that this was a relatively well-traveled topic of conversation for these two classmates, that they had at some point or points in the past discussed their friends’ propensity for ‘over use’ of Gaeilge after returning from the rural Gaeltacht to urban Dublin. No doubt, based on C7’s comments in this extract, these friends received a fair amount of protest to their over use of Gaeilge. C7 claims, “they came back and they couldn’t stop speaking in Irish. And we were like, just SHUT UP already.” Note that C7 claims “we were like, just SHUT UP,” rather than “I was like, just SHUT UP.” The raising of these friends as a topic of discussion, in the context of talking about the potential effects of going to the Gaeltacht (and perhaps in the presence of a friend with whom she had in the past ribbed their friends for their over use of Gaeilge), led C7 to return to the well-worn ground of protesting the friends’ use of Gaeilge.

Thus, in the course of this extract we see indicated a movement from one locality to another. In the course of the conversation C7 moves from a “place” in which the speaking of Gaeilge is a definitive characteristic to be perpetuated, Gaelic Ireland, to the Colonial Pale of Dublin constituted in opposition to a rural and primitive Gaeltacht.

Potentially pertinent to explaining the discrepancy between C7’s utterances is research on the effects of the wording of survey questions on the answers to those
questions. Claudia Strauss discusses how specific wording of survey questions can prime respondents to give particular answers (N.d.:28). She elaborates this point by looking at a survey about immigration into the United States that contained a broad query regarding whether immigration was a good or bad thing followed by a number of questions probing the respondents’ perceptions regarding the effects of immigrant populations. While a majority of respondents suggested that immigration was a good thing, their responses to the follow-up queries indicated a number of prevalent bad effects perceived by survey participants. Strauss explains this by suggesting that the initial query evokes the idea of America as a Nation of Immigrants, while the follow-up queries necessarily evoke a number of attitudes prevalent in the public sphere regarding the effects of immigrants. Similarly, my broad query invited C7 to answer in favor of Gaeilge. C2’s mention of mutual friends who returned from the Gaeltacht ‘speaking Gaeilge too much’ forced C7 into a previously rehearsed critique of these friends for their behavior.

In these exchanges can be seen a shifting from engagement in one locality, a Gaelic Ireland locality in which Gaeilge is present, and another, Colonial Ireland locality in which English is (nearly exclusively) spoken in the Pale of Dublin and Gaeilge is (almost entirely) restricted to the rural, pre-modern west. In the framework presented in this work the students who are making these contradictory statements are “flicking through” these localities, engaging now in one, now in the other, at different times.
6.7.2 Between Colonial and European Ireland

The exchange regarding the fact that C7 was better at speaking Spanish than Gaeilge is, also, an interesting part of the last (long) triologue. Spanish is a popular language of study among the students with whom I did my research. In order to highlight a relevant and interesting point from this exchange, I re-present it here.

C7: I’m actually better at Spanish than I am at Irish.

AT: Why, why is that?

C7: I got a B end of the year in Spanish. I got a C in Irish.

AT: Wh, Wh, Why is that, how, why is it, how is it being taught differently in Spanish or French or whatever?

C7: Spanish…. You go on exchanges in Spanish.

AT: Um hm.

C7: And, like, you’re able to just go out and speak Spanish.

AT: Um hm.

C7: And, then… even in French they did a exchange recently as well.

AT: Um hm. And you think those experiences are helpful.

What is interesting about this exchange is the way in which it assumes that it is possible for people learning Spanish (or French) in Ireland could travel to Spain for a language emersion “exchange” experience. This assumption is based in large part on a perceived ease of flow or travel between Ireland and Spain. This perception is, of course, based on the fact that travel between the two countries has, in at the past few decades,
gotten easier. As both countries are member of the European Union, Irish nationals have unhampered entry into Spain (and vice versa) for pleasure travel or work. An increase in low-fare airline flights and the increased affluence of a significant portion of Ireland’s population since the country’s entry into the European Union has made it more possible than ever for Irish people to visit Spain. Recognition of, and assumption of, these facts are indicative of C7’s engagement in the European Ireland locality/discourse.

Given that the assumption of increased mobility between Spain and Ireland is based, at least in part, on a relatively high level of affluence of Irish students studying Spanish, it might be particular to students at the more-upper-class Community School. However, at least one student at the more-working-class (denominational) Secondary School at which I did research found his own reasons for advocating the learning of Spanish over Gaeilge. In this exchange, our conversation had turned to a recently forwarded proposal to make Gaeilge an elective, rather than a compulsory, subject of study in second-level schooling. At this, I asked the student if he would study Gaeilge if he were not required to.

AT: If you had that choice, would you choose not to do it (study Gaeilge)?

D2: Yeah, I’d choose not to do it.

AT: Um hm.

D2: Cause see, to be honest, if it was more kind of like… if af, after you left school, if there was a USE for it…

AT: Um hm.
D2: I’d do it. But there’s no, there’s no real use for it. So there’s not, I don’t see much point in actually, like, studying it if there’s no use. Do you know what I mean?

AT: Yeah.

D2: Whereas, Spanish…. Like that can come in, like good, like a HUGE use after like…. Like, if you end up, like, moving over. If you want to move over to Spain, like, obviously you’re gonna need to use, speak Spanish.

AT: Um hm

In this exchange, then, we can see related, if differently justified, assumptions valuing the learning of Spanish over the learning of Gaeilge. The first part of the dialogue evokes the Colonial Ireland locality, in which Gaeilge is a language of no use in the English-speaking Pale of modern-day Dublin. Spanish, however, is marked as a language that could potentially be of use to working-class people living in Dublin. This is based on the European Union facilitated opportunities to move to Spain in order to work. This assumption is one that may not have been possible prior to European Union membership and the resultant freedom of employment in other EU-member states. Thus, in the course of this dialogue, D2 “flicks through” from the Colonial Ireland locality to the European Ireland locality.

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8 This is all in line with D2’s statement that “unless you’re taking up a career in the Gaeltacht or anything like that” there is no use for Gaeilge after people leave school, which he made a different point of our interview. This statement is indicative of the Colonial Ireland locality that depicts Dublin as Gaeilge-free zone.
These were not the only students with whom I worked that suggested that learning Spanish might be of more use than learning Gaeilge. At the community school at which I did research another student suggested he was better at speaking Spanish than Gaeilge. The reason for this, he initially suggested, was that Spanish was just easier than Gaeilge. He claimed, “Spanish is a lot easier language. Like, the words are kind of... they’re kind of the same, you just add a E S or something at the end of it. But Irish is, like, totally different. Like, all of the verbs and all. Like the verbs in Spanish are a lot easier to learn than it is for, eh, Irish.” But, in the end, the practicability of learning Spanish, based on an assumption of mobility between Ireland and Spain, is evoked.

C9: I just think it’s, I just love to learn Spanish, like, because people go on holidays already. You don’t see most, much people comin’ over here for holidays and sss, speaking, uh, Irish. But over in Spain, you go over there, you kind of have to speak Spanish. So, it’s a good language to know as well.

AT: Um hm.... Sure... We have a lot of Spanish speakers moving into our area in North Carolina now, like, people from Mexico coming up and finding work, a lot like, maybe, Polish people here.

C9: Yeah... (inaudible).

C10: Yeah

C9: They’re running the place now... Polish people.... everywhere

AT: Yeah
Here you can see how discussion of increased mobility (between Ireland and Spain) leads to the direct evocation of non-Irish-national labor migrants in Dublin. While this transition was, admittedly, largely at my prompting, both of the students in this interview session acknowledge the increased number of non-Irish nationals, in this case Polish people, that are a telltale aspect of the European Ireland locality.

This evocation of non-Irish-national migrants returns me to the first student interview I presented in this work (see the beginning of 1.2). For the readers convenience, I re-present that triologue here:

AT: So... What do you think about Irish-language programming generally, like TG4 and other....

C6: Have to keep the language.

AT: Hmmm?

C6: Have to keep the language.

AT: You think it’s important?

C6: Yeah....

C5: Yeah...

C6: Like when foreigners come over we have to speak Irish.

AT: Why?

C6: (Pause) So they don’t know what you’re talking about.

C5: (Laughs)

AT: (Laughs) Someone else said that earlier. They’re like, Ah, it’s fun when you’re in England, you can speak Irish and they won’t know what you’re talking about.
C6: No matter where you are.

C5: Yeah.

C6: There are all these foreigners coming over, like, and...

C5: It’s important with all the foreigners coming over to have *your* language as well.

In the framework I have developed throughout this work, these statements can be interpreted as relatively boldface support for the Gaelic Ireland locality. While it recognizes the (encroaching) reality of the European Ireland locality, the perception that an increasing number of non-Irish-national migrants are moving to the island, it resists that reality in its claim that Gaeilge (the Gaelic Ireland locality) must be maintained.

I questioned C5 on her suggestion that the maintenance of Gaeilge has become more important as a greater number of non-Irish-nationals have come to the country, “It becomes more important? Like, it’s only been, what, ten years since you’ve had a large influx of people from Poland or other places and so before that, you know, people didn’t think it was as important, or?” To this C5 shifted focus a bit, suggesting that non-Irish-national labor migrants should be expected to assimilate.

C5: I don’t know... I just, I think just more and more foreign people coming in it’s kind of important if they’re going to be coming to work here they may as well... like, you know, learn to listen to the language and do things with (trailing). They’re going to work where we work, they may as well listen to what we have to, when we do speak it and things like that.
AT: So you, so you you think it’s important for them to learn Irish, like Polish immigrants or...

C5: Well, hm... no. I don’t think they’d bother to be honest.

AT: Yeah.

C5: We all speak English here.

C6: They don’t bother, they don’t bother speaking English, never mind Irish.

C5: Yeah.

AT: Um huh.... And if if they are going to be learning languages they should probably be learning better English rather than Irish?

C5: Yeah.

C6: Yeah.

C5: It’s only (stammer) It’s only like really the west they really speak Irish. There’s certain areas in the west that really speak it, so. And they all come... none of them (non-Irish-nationals) really go there to work anyway.

AT: Um huh.

C5: Still, I think it’s important to have it, though, with people coming in. Maybe they’ll get to know the country and the language as well.

Throughout this second part of the exchange, I perceive C5 to be flicking through the three localities of the framework I present in this work, attempting to reconcile them in a (perhaps uncommon) moment of introspection. From a position in the Gaelic Ireland locality, C5 moves to discourse more in line with the Colonial Ireland locality, claiming “We all speak English here,” that immigrants time would be better spent
learning English than Gaeilge as “It’s only like really the west they really speak Irish. There’s certain areas in the west that really speak it, so. And they all come… none of them really go there to work anyway.” Of course, the entire exchange is predicated on the assumption that non-Irish-national migrants are present and/or arriving in Ireland, in line with the European Ireland locality. Ultimately, though, it seems that C5 returns to a defense of the Gaelic Ireland locality. “Still, I think it’s important to have it, though, with people coming in.” Or, perhaps, the final sentence of the statement is indicative of some sort of reconciliation of the Gaelic and European Ireland localities. When C5 claims “Maybe they’ll get to know the country and the language as well” a space may be made for a locality in which Gaeilge is seen as one among any number of languages that might be spoken by a cosmopolitan and multi-national population inhabiting Dublin.

6.8 “Flicking through” Dublin(s)

As a quick and cursory thought experiment along these lines I want to narrate a quick tour through Dublin in order to highlight elements of the lived environment that might facilitate this “flicking through” from any one of the localities I propose here to any other. I will begin my tour in a northern suburb of Dublin, Kilbarrack. Kilbarrack is not the location of the northern suburban community school at which I did my interviews, though it perhaps shares much with that northern suburb. I begin in Kilbarrack because of an interpretation of the place presented by Fintan O’Toole.
Writing about the film version of the “Barrytown” novels written by Roddy Doyle, O’Toole relates a discussion he and Doyle had while strolling through Kilbarrack.

“People look at a place like this,” Roddy Doyle once told me as we were walking around Kilbarrack, “and they see that it’s pretty much the same as anywhere else. The houses, the road, the video shop, the community centre, are all the same as they would be in any city in Europe. But that doesn’t have to be a disadvantage. You can look at it and say ‘This is terrible, it’s all the same.’ Or you can look at it and say ‘This is great, it’s the same as everywhere else,’ and anyone in Europe is going to understand what you’re talking about if you talk about this place. (O’Toole 1999:38, see also Cronin 2006:10)

Indeed, walking the streets of Kilbarrack (with a fair degree of “media blindness” to avoid the Gaeilge on the street signs, “Scoil Eoin” prominently scribed on the outside street-facing wall of the local primary school, and other instances of Gaeilge that act as unwaved flags per Hourigan and Billig as initially discussed in section 5.5.2), you might indeed think yourself in(to) any place in Europe. Making your way to the Kilbarrack rail station, you could sit on a bench along the tracks (perhaps very much like any other urban rail stop in Europe) taking in English-language advertisements to fill the time until the train comes. You need hardly notice the station sign that reads Kilbarrack/Cill Bharróg, listing both the English and Gaeilge versions of the town’s name.

On a good day the trains come quickly, as both DART and commuter trains run through this relatively close-in station. Depending on the time of day the train might be
wide open with plenty of seats to choose from. At peak travel times, the trains can be packed with workers headed into the city center from points north. Those with whom you share the train car might include ethnically diverse workers heading into the city from places like Balbriggan (Baile Brigin), which is home to a significant immigrant population.9

If you are traveling on the weekend, you should have no problem finding a seat for the short trip into town. That is, if you are not trying to make the trip on those days in late summer when the GAA Gaelic Football and Hurling All-Ireland Finals are played at Croke Park. If you are trying to make the short trip into town on those days, the train cars will packed shoulder-to-shoulder with people from numerous points north of Kilbarrack wearing the jersey of their favored team with the county name prominently displayed, in Gaeilge, on its collar.

Assuming you are not trying to make the trip on the day of the All-Irelands, though, Kilbarrack is a quick trip five short stops south into the city, through the suburbs of Raheny/Ráth Eanaigh, Harmonstown/Baile Hearman, Killester/Cill Easra, and finally Clontarf/Cluain Tarbh. (The names of the rail stations in both Gaeilge and their [colonial] English approximations are displayed on the signage at each stop and announced on electronic signs in the trains.) Then you arrive at the major city center

9 “Balbriggan became home to thousands of immigrants because of its proximity to a former Butlin’s holiday camp. In the late 1990s the Irish government used the site at Mosney on the Irish coast to house thousands of asylum seekers. Many of those granted citizenship or allowed to remain because their children were born in Ireland chose to settle in nearby Balbriggan” (McDonald 2007).
stop of Connolly Station/ Stáisiún Uí Chonghaile. (Opened, under British rule, in 1844 as Dublin Station, the name was changed ten years later to Amiens Street Station. It was renamed Connolly Station, after the leader of the Easter Rising of 1916 [James Connolly], in 1966.)

From Connolly Station it is a short walk to one of the main thoroughfares of the city, O'Connell Street. On this street you will see the General Post Office (Árd-Oifig an Phoist), site of resistance (and martyrdom?) in the Easter Rising, with bullet holes left unrepaired and visible in the stone work as a reminder of that event. Prominently displayed in the front window is a bronze statue of Cuchulain slumping dead, a raven perched on his shoulder. This structure stands as a (potential) reminder of both the British colonial rulers who built the post office, the nationalists who eventually threw off their yoke, and the Gaelic literary tradition the nationalists emphasized.

Circle the post office to the right and you find yourself on Henry Street, the traditional shopping area for Dubliners. Take the second right off of this road and you are on Henry Street, the cosmopolitan, multi-ethnic market street focused on in the article by Ó Conghaile (2006) discussed at the end of Chapter 3.

A short walk across the Liffey River over O'Connell Bridge will lead you to Trinity College; established on the site of a dissolved Augustinian monastery by Royal Charter in 1592, the institution is known, for official purposes, as the College of the Holy and Undivided Trinity of Queen Elizabeth near Dublin. In the past, this institution of
higher education was seen as the training ground for the Protestant rulers of Ireland. The Catholic Church forbade its adherents from attending the school well into the twentieth century. Today, a walk through the campus will allow you to hear a range of accents and languages, as the institution is a magnet for students from throughout Europe and farther abroad.

Turn left out of the Nassau Street entrance to leave Trinity campus and head down past the National Gallery of Ireland (Gailearaí Náisiúnta na hÉireann) and you will come to Merrion Square (Cearnóg Mhuirfean). This area of town is the location of some of Dublin’s finest examples of Georgian redbrick townhouses built during British rule in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Once residences, these buildings now contain offices, including those of Foras na Gaeilge and an Irish-language radio station, Raidió na Life. As a result the presence of these and other institutions in the area, it is not uncommon to hear Gaeilge spoken on the street as you pass through.

By way of this quick (narrative) tour through the streets of a part of greater Dublin I hope to have illustrated how one passing through the city is, potentially, confronted with a multitude of sights and sounds that could act as contextual cues to evoke engagement with/in the three localities I posit in this work: Colonial Ireland, Gaelic Ireland, and European Ireland. As one circulates around the city, one is struck (if one is open to it) with fine examples of Georgian and Victorian architecture dating from the colonial period of which Dubliners are, perhaps only at times, understandably
proud. Many of these structures have been reappropriated, retasked, through the (re)naming with Gaeilge names or naming them after “heros” of the struggle for independence. And, a number of these sites have indications of a, perhaps, more cosmopolitan Europeanness (whether in the internationalism of co-inhabitants on particular train lines and college campuses or signs marking out European Union offices around the city). Each of these sites might act to draw, perhaps even hail, people into engagement in one or another of multiple localities.

Further, my (solo) tour does not even take into consideration the companions with whom one might take such a tour. As exemplified by a number of the extracts presented in section 6.7, intersubject constitution and negotiation of locality is a major factor in the process. In sum, with whom one travels makes a major difference in the localities in which one travels.¹⁰

Of course, this is all just an imaginary ramble on my part. It would take further research, and perhaps research quite different from that I have presented here, in order to document this process. Such research might involve a program of digital storytelling, putting digital cameras and (flip) video cameras into the hands of Dubliners and allowing them to record their own experiences, and then giving them the resources necessary to use this raw footage to assemble a coherent narrative. Such a research

¹⁰ This echoes Coleman’s suggestion that locality may be more about social relations than geography that I mentioned earlier in this work (see 6.6).
project would be greatly aided by the recent work of Wendy Luttrell (2009) and the Center for Digital Storytelling (Lambert 2010).

**6.9 Chapter Conclusion**

What comes out of my research, then, is the idea that the students with which I did my research are engaging in multiple localities as they proceed through their everyday experience. They are not “between worlds,” as anthropologists have suggested of (colonized) people in the past, a suggestion that has been criticized by commentators (Deloria, 1969:86)\(^\text{11}\). Rather, they engage (serially/in parallel) in multiple “localities” that are historic-discursively constituted based on a number of different context cues and (unconscious/implicit) decisions.

I suspect this process of differential engagement in separate localities is active as Irish people go about their daily lives in Dublin, on the streets, in their homes, at schools and the countless other institutions at which they spend their time. The space(s) they inhabit as they circulate between these multiple spaces is not an objective “Ireland” or “Dublin,” in fact it is not a single place at all, but rather a range of localities made meaningful by the historic discourses of which they are comprised.

\(^{11}\) Alternately, we might all be thought of as being between two (or more) worlds.
7. Conclusion

Throughout this work, I have attempted to articulate a framework appropriate for analyzing the complex interview data I collected while doing research in Dublin, Ireland, in 2006 and 2007. In developing this framework I have attempted to give simultaneous consideration to utterances of real people and socio-cultural discourses that act as resources for their imaginations.

The framework I put forward to meet this goal posits three localities (Colonial, Gaelic, and European Ireland) with which, I propose, the people I knew and did research with engage throughout their daily lives. These localities are historical-discursive in nature. As discussed in Chapter 2, the histories proffered in support of these localities are, in a very real sense, the analyst’s histories (histories put in the service of the framework developed here). I propose that these historical-discursively constituted localities are largely discrete. Each has been fashioned by the historical contingencies upon which it is based and the resulting social institutions that support that locality.

Among these supporting social institutions is media. And, in Chapters 4 and 5, I address how the various media I have examined impinge upon and support the processes my locality framework helps to illuminate. Extending the locality framework to the filmic, televisual, and related audiovisual media present in the lives of those who participated in my research, I attempt to show how media can be taken to effect spaces,
places, localities, complete with social vistas of personas or subjects. These mediated localities encompass numerous ways of thinking that act as resources for viewers to (re)engage with in their daily lives. The large, and seemingly ever increasing, number of readily accessible audiovisual media venues allows many of the Dublin students I spoke with to “flick through” a variety of them. This, I suggest, facilitates the ability for serial and/or parallel engagement in multiple different historical-discursively constituted localities.

In Chapter 6 I apply the locality framework I have developed more directly to the interview data I collected from the people with whom I spoke. I note that many of the comments made by participants in my research call into question their own suggestions that Gaeilge is ‘not spoken’ in Dublin, which is quite often represented as a Gaeilge-free zone. Following up on this finding I detail the practice of “messing,” using small amounts of Gaeilge in everyday conversation. Through this practice of “messing,” I suggest, Dublin-based youth are engaged in the production of a Gaelic Ireland locality. I go on to detail like aspects of the discourse of those who participated in my research that can be interpreted as the production of the Colonial Ireland and European Ireland localities I detail.

I recognize that the framework I propose here is, like the histories at the heart of the three localities I posit, my analytic creation. In crafting this work, I have drawn selectively from the academic materials with which I am familiar and my personal
experience, and utilized those elements that I thought best, for the analysis of the interview data I collected during my research. I recognize that if I had a different experiential base, in either my ‘non-academic’ life or my academic training, the framework/interpretation presented here might be significantly different. I do not believe that this, a priori, invalidates the analysis I offer. The framework I develop in this work has explanatory value for the data I collected and constitutes a contribution to previous and current social scientific work in the fields of Irish studies and media studies among other fields. Future research may, of course, produce support of or challenges to this work. I welcome and eagerly await such research.

A locality (based) framework, such as the one I forward here, goes some way toward taking into account recent criticisms of “identity” as a social scientific concept. The framework I propose here problematizes the ego-centered concept of identity and always keeps the social field against which subjectivities/selves are constituted in primary focus. I recognize, however, that identity remains a useful, in some ways essential, social-scientific concept for analysis of many aspects of social life. As such, I offer this work as an additional fruitful approach to ethnographic interview analysis.

It is my hope that the framework I have developed does justice simultaneously to the complex, at times seemingly inconsistent, talk of real people and the (social) representations that affect, perhaps even effect, their worlds and lives. It is in that hope that I present this work.
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