The *Irish Journal of Anthropology* is the organ of the Anthropological Association of Ireland. As such, it aims to promote the discipline of anthropology on the island of Ireland, north and south. It seeks to provide coverage of Irish-related matters and of issues in general anthropology and to be of interest to anthropologists inside and outside academia, as well as to colleagues in a range of other disciplines, such as Archaeology, Cultural Studies, Development Studies, Ethnology and Folk Studies, Gaeilge, Irish Studies, and Sociology.

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Editorial Note
We are delighted to publish here the work of the best undergraduate theses in the Anthropology Departments of Queen's University Belfast and NUI Maynooth. Hannah Carey received the William Wilde Award for her work on student activism and the role of representative groups in the process of identification, while Catlin Greaves was awarded the Anne Maguire Prize for her thesis, which explored the politics of Welsh identity through the eyes of visitors to St Fagans National History Museum near Cardiff. Congratulations to both!

In this issue of the IJA we explore Anthropology in the Public Sphere – how our anthropology departments conceptualize their role in preparing young graduates for employment; and whether, or how, those graduates use their anthropological training. My thanks to guest editor Keith Egan and to our new Editorial Assistant, Kathleen Openshaw, for their Trojan work in compiling this issue. It could not have happened without them.

Front Cover Photograph
‘The Jesus Walk – a politics of integration’
Our front cover photograph is drawn from the work of Mark Maguire and Fiona Murphy, whose publication Integration in Ireland: The everyday lives of African Migrants. (New Ethnographies, Manchester: Manchester University Press. 2012) was reviewed in the Spring/Summer issue of the IJA 16(1) 2013.

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James Quin studied English and anthropology at NUI Maynooth and received a PhD in Anthropology in 2005. He worked at the National Library of Ireland where he was one of the curators on the WB Yeats exhibition. He now works at the James Joyce Centre in Dublin.

Steve Downes: Novelist, poet and optimist.

Mark Maguire is Head of the Department of Anthropology, National University of Ireland Maynooth. He researches and lectures on international migration, new security technologies and counter-terrorism. He is co-editor of the forthcoming volume, The Anthropology of Security (Pluto 2014). He twice held visiting professorships in the Department of Anthropology, Stanford University. He is co-Editor of Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale.

Hannah Carey graduated from the National University of Ireland Maynooth, in September 2013. The article here is based on her BA thesis for which she was awarded the William Wilde Award 2013. Her research interests include gender, identity, political action, linguistic anthropology and globalization

Catrin Greaves is a graduate in Social Anthropology of Queen’s University Belfast She has also studied under the Erasmus exchange scheme for one semester at the University of Copenhagen. She won the QUB Anne Maguire Prize for her undergraduate dissertation in Social Anthropology and has volunteered with numerous museums. Catrin has worked with The Belfast Barge (which has documented the history of the ship-building industry in Belfast) as well as The National Museum of Wales, and The Cardiff Story, a largely interactive museum examining the social history of Cardiff. She is an intern at Butetown History and Arts Centre: an art gallery, educational facility and community archive documenting the history of the people of Butetown, an area of Cardiff which is ethnically diverse due the history of heavy industrial activity in the area.
"Nothing to Lose but Our Aitches": Anthropologists in the Public Sphere

When John Gumperz died last year, one of the more popular anecdotes about him centred on the word 'gravy'. An industrial dispute had broken out at Heathrow Airport in the 1970s between a group of recently hired dinner ladies from India and Pakistan and the British baggage handlers who ate in the staff canteen. Gumperz had done fieldwork in India and at the time was on sabbatical in London, so he was asked to come in and see if he could make sense of the problem. The dispute boiled down to the fact that baggage handlers accused the canteen ladies of being rude and the canteen ladies thought the baggage handlers were discriminating against them. Gumperz taped the interactions between both parties and showed them that the problem was how the canteen ladies offered gravy to the baggage handlers. The British serving women had done so with one word, however according to their cultural convention, their intonation fell at the end. Gumperz, with tape recorder in hand, captured these nuances and was able to explain the conflict to both parties and bring an end to the dispute. The falling intonation sounded like the women were saying that the baggage handlers could take the gravy or leave it.

The incident reveals the hidden tensions that lie between worlds when they meet. It also shows how well situated anthropology can be in revealing to people the value of paying attention to those points of contact, conflict and connection. It illustrates, we think, too, how satisfying it can be to explain those nodes and create new and different kinds of understandings between groups. It is to the role of anthropology and the activity of anthropologists in such contexts that we turn our attention in this issue of the Irish Journal of Anthropology.

Recent issues of the IJA have foregrounded this discussion by exploring the work of anthropologists working outside an Anthropology Department (Murphy and Tsoulakis 2012) or academics in other disciplines who apply anthropological methods (see for example Walsh 2013 or Byrne and O’Mahony 2013). Sheehan (2013) argued that anthropology needs to professionalise ethnography, both to ‘stake its claim’ and to prepare for, and respond to, the challenges of contemporary public and professional spheres. It is clear that an increasing number of anthropology graduates (who are the closest thing we have to ‘professional ethnographers’) throughout the island of Ireland, and beyond, are finding their way in a wide range of professions. It is their work that is celebrated here, as we invite them specifically to show us whether or how their anthropological training impacts their current work.

Anthropology, as Quin argues, has always paid attention to how people build, achieve maintain and modify identities, ‘holding a mirror up’ so that people can see themselves as they are. Quin explores the confluence of Joyce’s literary project with anthropological themes, the ethnographic project and representational strategies. Joyce maintained a sustained evocation of Dublin and Ireland in his writing, wishing to hold a mirror up to Ireland, and to write as with an ‘inside outsideness’, an exile who only wrote about Ireland, his final novel a ‘vast ethnographic attempt to encompass in one book every aspect of life in Ireland’. Thus, Quin, as an anthropologist who works in the James Joyce Centre, feels an affinity with Joyce and his life’s work and invites other anthropologists to engage with Joyce.

Egan argues the case for moral optimism and suggests the duty of anthropologists is to be public and join in public discourse, not just to record the world but to offer their own insights to the mix of opinions. He explores some of the reasons why this has been difficult for anthropologists, following Eriksen, showing how faster media do not have the same patience with analysis that we feel we require to make our nuanced arguments. He teases out some of the pitfalls of being misquoted or misrepresented, detailing Daniel Miller’s success and difficulty in communicating his research on Facebook. He also outlines some of the communication successes in Ireland by anthropologists.

Downes, a successful author and poet with postgraduate anthropological training, offers an example of how anthropological thinking can be applied to explore the world of aspiring writers, specifically FanFic writers, authors who create fiction based on popular fantasy franchises. These writers are exploring alternative worlds, testing new and often dark identities and shifting subjectivities, and Downes explores the kind of work that is offered by anthropological thinking. He finds that anthropology can be used as a tool for understanding these worlds, and invites others to explore the potential of anthropological methods in this context.

Another well-worn anecdote, this one regarding Margaret Thatcher visiting St Hilda’s College, Oxford. Walking through the library she approached a student and asked what she studied. ‘Norse literature’ was the student’s answer. ‘What a luxury’ replied the Prime Minister. Norse literature was an example of what Maguire calls ‘blue skies’ research, the kind of ‘pure’ research that gets spuriously demeaned as navel gazing, the kind of waste of time that provoked such sarcasm from the Oxford-trained chemist-cum-politician. And yet as Maguire lucidly points out, with a current workforce in employment for the next half-century or more, what jobs they will do are not so simply mapped...
out. The future of university according to Maguire is in fostering a more contemplative, and anthropological pace (Wilson and Donnan, 2006) to be capable of, and willing to, reinvent itself. So many jobs today did not exist in Thatcher’s time as Prime Minister. Indeed, Norse literature can be a useful major in an entertainment industry that has spawned so many franchises that draw from Norse mythology, from Game of Thrones and the Lord of the Rings franchises to movies from Beowulf to How to Train Your Dragon, movies that have been netting billions. If one is forced to be ‘a job shaper’ argues Maguire, graduates will need ‘core skills, depth, breadth and opportunities for research and critical thinking’. All authors in this issue would agree with such an assertion. However we hand the last word over to Paul Stoller, who eloquently captures the task of the anthropologist in this era of amplified communication, of faster, farther, and more strident interactions with narrowing parameters for discussion and more attenuated associations:

“The challenge for the social sciences—at least for me—is to simultaneously maintain rigorous standards while producing works that clearly and powerfully articulate important insights to broad audiences across a variety of media. In my discipline, anthropology, the challenge is to communicate critical insights about social life in such a way that moves audiences to think and to act.”

Keith Egan
Fiona Larkan

January 2014
“I need not anthropologise...” – Anthropological Encounters with James Joyce

James Quinn*

Abstract: After a brief look at the use of small elements of anthropological theory in the setting of an interpretive cultural centre, in this case devoted to the works of author James Joyce, I look at the ways in which Joyce's work resonates with recent concerns in anthropology, particularly in relation to subjectivity, identity, and representation. Joyce's works have been analysed by scholars in terms of Irish and especially postcolonial identity and subjectivity, but they also offer opportunities for thinking about writing and the representation of subjectivities in the modern and postmodern world.

Key words: James Joyce; subjectivity; postcolonial theory; ethnography.

Asked to write about the ways in which I use anthropology in the course of my work at the James Joyce Centre, I thought 'Naaah – there'd be nothing to write about.' But I realised there were some things in a talk I was writing at the time that wouldn't have been there if not for anthropology, so I figured that might do for a start. But who wants to hear about my job? Joyce and his books are so much more interesting that I thought I might use this space to do a bit of propagandising on behalf of Joyce by looking at his relationship with anthropology.

I don't intend that this should be, by any means, a comprehensive, all-inclusive look at Joyce and anthropology. Rather, my hope is that those who don't already know so, will discover that Joyce, in his writing, problematises issues of subjectivity and identification in terms that should be familiar to anthropologists; that his writing styles and self-reflexivity problematise the possibility of representation in ways that are meaningful for anthropologists today; and that, in the end, if he doesn't help you do better anthropology, at least reading him might possibly provide a distraction from fieldwork or writing up!

*  *  *

So how did I come to be doing Joyce rather than anthropology? The answer is: accidentally. My BA was a double degree in English and anthropology, and was followed by a Masters and a PhD in anthropology. While I was writing up my doctoral dissertation, I applied for a summer job as a tour guide at the National Library of Ireland's Joyce exhibition. That turned into a two-year stay at the Library during which I also worked as one of the curators on the WB Yeats exhibition which replaced the Joyce exhibition. As Joyce closed at the Library, I was offered a job at the James Joyce Centre and I've been there since.

My research in anthropology centred on issues of identity and shifting subjectivities, and it seems to me that these are central concerns of Joyce's writing. Joyce writes about Dublin at a time when there were numerous competing ideas about what it meant to be Irish, a moment of ferment in which everything was up for grabs, when Ireland seemed to be on the threshold between old and new but was as yet unsettled, stuck in transition.

Joyce's characters, too, are often presented to us in liminal states, on the threshold of significant moments in their lives, estranged from others around them, conscious of being outsiders, or not feeling at home in their own homes. And it was van Gennep's ideas about rites of passage and liminality that I was using in that talk I was writing. The Joyce Centre was going to host a 'Dead Weekend,' a weekend of talks and activities to celebrate 'The Dead,' the final story in Joyce's collection Dubliners. As the story opens, 'Lily, the caretaker's daughter, was literally run off her feet' (Joyce 1996:175). It's the Misses Morkan's annual Christmas party and Lily is acting as doorkeeper, rushing backwards and forwards, from the hall door to a makeshift cloakroom, and back to the door again as the next guests arrive.

The opening of the story is set, literally, on the threshold (bear in mind that 'liminal' is derived from the Latin limen meaning 'threshold'), and those crossing the threshold can be seen as disengaging themselves from normal life, dressing in their party clothes, eating the sumptuous Christmas fare, and engaging in party activities like dancing and singing. The world of the Christmas party is something out-of-the-ordinary, and Joyce piles on the liminal references. The party takes place sometime between the first and the sixth of January. Officially, it's still Christmastime, at least until the sixth of January, but it's already after New Year, so we're stuck somewhere between an old year that hasn't quite ended yet and a new year that hasn't quite begun yet. Janus, the presiding god of January, has two faces, mirror images on one another, one looking backwards and one looking forwards, and he is the patron of doorkeepers and caretakers, and god of beginnings and endings, indicating that he too is stuck on the threshold between one thing and another.

Lily, the caretaker's daughter, also seems to be in a liminal state. When Gabriel Conroy, the main character, arrives, he thinks of her as a girl, and

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remembers her playing on the steps of the house with her rag doll. When he asks if she still goes to school, she answers that she’s been done with schooling for a year. ‘O, then, said Gabriel gaily, I suppose we’ll be going to your wedding one of these fine days with your young man, eh?’ to which Lily retorts bitterly. ‘The men that is now is only all palaver and what they can get out of you’ (Joyce 1996:178). Gabriel’s expectation is that Lily will go from being somebody’s daughter to being somebody’s husband, and he’s discoontected to find that she’s neither one nor the other, neither a little girl nor a married woman. More than that, it seems that her experience with men, whatever it may have been, has embittered her to the extent that she might never complete the transition to married woman, thus ending up a spinster like the other three women in the house.

In addition, Lily’s bitter retort is not exactly the kind of response Gabriel anticipates from a servant. Though we are told he speaks to her ‘in a friendly tone,’ (ibid.) he comes across as being patronising and condescending, smiling at the three syllables she gives his surname, Conroy, and by which her lower class accent is betrayed. Lily’s answer seems to reflect a reluctance to be patronised, but she’s also acting outside the role she’s expected to perform as servant – her ‘back answers’ are not what you expect from a servant – and that adds to Gabriel’s disconnection.

Gabriel is very conscious of how he presents himself to the world and throughout the evening he is forced to confront differences between how he sees himself and how others see him. Lily’s bitter retort makes him feel that even she, the simple serving girl, can see through his mask, and his self-image suffers. Catching a glimpse of himself in a mirror in a room of the Gresham Hotel, Gabriel Conroy sees himself as he really is.

* * *

Let me leave my work there for a moment and turn instead to some questions about Joyce and anthropology. Can Joyce be of any use to anthropologists? Certainly Norman Denzin (1997) thinks so and, in his book Interpretive Ethnography: Ethnographic Practices for the Twenty-first Century, he titles the introductory chapter ‘Lessons James Joyce Teaches Us.’ Interpretive anthropologists in particular seem to be partial to Joyce and, according to James Lett ‘[i]nterpretive anthropologists are more likely to allude to James Joyce or Jean-Paul Sartre than they are to Franz Boas or Alfred Kroeber.…’ (1997:6). According to Professor Ray McDermott (1997), cognitive anthropologist Harold Conklin considered verbal play among the Hanunóo of Mindoro in the Philippines to be so similar to that practiced by Dubliners that he applied to the James Joyce Society of Trieste for a small grant to study Hanunóo ways of speaking.

However, if anthropologists have been reading Joyce, it seems less clear that Joyce was reading anthropology. There are numerous anthropological references in his works, especially in his final novel, Finnegans Wake. Indeed as early as 1944, just five years after Finnegans Wake was published, Richard Chase wrote an anthropological study of it, and the first book-length study of it (also published in 1944) was written by mythologist Joseph Campbell with Henry Morton Robinson (2005). Joyce’s library in Trieste contained Herbert Spencer’s The Study of Sociology, and a volume by Italian social scientist Guglielmo Ferrero.

So far as I can make out, the only anthropologist Joyce ever met was Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, who happened to be in Copenhagen at the same time as Joyce in 1936. As it turned out, Lévy-Bruhl was an admirer of Joyce’s Ulysses and they may have had some correspondence after their Danish encounter. Lévy-Bruhl makes a personal appearance – or, rather, has three incarnations – in Finnegans Wake (Joyce 2012b). Shem is giving about anthropohgy (‘I need not anthropologise for any obintentional…downtrodding on my foes,’ he says (2012b:151)), and Lévy-Bruhl appears first as ‘Professor Loewy-Bruder’ (2012b:150), a pun on the German word ‘Löwe’ (lion) and the German verb ‘brüllen’ (to roar), and on the names Lévy-Bruhl and Robert Lowie (McHugh 2006:150). Lowie, a student of Franz Boas, launched a major attack on Lévy-Bruhl’s evolutionist ideas about the primitive mentality. His second appearance a page later comes as Shem starts to present the findings of ‘Professor Levi-Brullo, F.D. of Sêxe-Weiman-Eitelnaky’ (2012b:151). By the end of that page, he has reincarnated as the Welsh ‘Professor Llewellys ap Bryllars, F.D.’ There is also a mention of a ‘deathbone’ in Finnegans Wake (2012b:193) that seems to come from Lévy-Bruhl’s account of Australian Aboriginal practice of cursing enemies by pointing a bone at them (McHugh 2006:193), but beyond this, there seems to have been no direct contact between Joyce and anthropologists.

So how is it, then, that Joyce and anthropology fit together at all? Let me return to Gabriel Conroy catching a glimpse of himself in the mirror in the room at the Gresham Hotel. Joyce saw himself as holding up a mirror to Irish society. He makes this explicit in a letter to his publisher Grant Richards on 23 June 1906, at a time when Richards was threatening not to publish Dubliners unless Joyce made changes to it. Joyce, defending his use of gritty, realistic details in his depiction of Dublin, wrote to say:

It is not my fault that the odour of ashpits and old weeds and offal hangs round my stories. I seriously believe that you will retard the course of civilisation in Ireland by preventing the Irish people from having one good look at themselves in my nicely polished looking-glass. (Joyce 1996:277)
This idea of holding up a mirror to Irish life is a central concern of Joyce’s works. At the beginning of Ulysses, Buck Mulligan uses a cracked mirror that he has taken from his aunt’s servant and, for Stephen Dedalus, this cracked looking-glass of the servant becomes a symbol of Irish art (Joyce 2012a: 8). Implicit in this is the position of Ireland as servant to England, the colonial master, though, as Stephen says about himself a short while later, ‘I am the servant of two masters… an English and an Italian…and a third…there is who wants me for odd jobs’ (2012a:17), the Italian being the Roman Catholic Church, and the third being Ireland herself. Mulligan holds the mirror up for Stephen to see himself in, and Stephen sees himself ‘[a]s he and others see me,’ but Mulligan, laughing, pulls the mirror away and says ‘The rage of Caliban at not seeing his face in a mirror…If Wilde were only alive to see you’ (2012a:7). The comment about Caliban comes from the Preface to Oscar Wilde’s The Picture of Dorian Gray where

The nineteenth century dislike of Realism is the rage of Caliban seeing his own face in a glass.
The nineteenth century dislike of Romanticism is the rage of Caliban not seeing his own face in a glass. (Wilde 2003:17)

In Shakespeare’s The Tempest, Caliban’s rightful position as master of the island has been usurped by the occupier Prospero, and recent commentators have read this as reflecting the colonisation of Ireland (Brown 1995). According to Joyce

Wilde entered that literary tradition of Irish comic playwrights that stretches from the days of Sheridan and Goldsmith to Bernard Shaw, and became, like them, court jester to the English. (Joyce 2000:149)

So the jester (who is, after all, a servant) holds up a mirror in which perhaps both the colonised and the coloniser can see themselves reflected in a cracked, distorted manner, and all of these ideas (reflection, mirroring, distorting) and these relations (of dominance and subservience, of colonised and coloniser, of jester and king) go to the heart of the issues of subjectivity and identity in Joyce’s work.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the collapse of Irish political power in Westminster after the fall of Parnell had left a vacuum which was filled by the Celtic Revival movement. Revivalists asserted a distinct Irish identity by linking it to a literary and cultural heritage of folklore, mythology and legend, and to an idealised west-of-Ireland peasant life. At the centre of this Revival was the literary work of WB Yeats, Augusta Gregory, George Russell, and JM Synge, all of whom were known to Joyce, and all of whom were helpful to him in his early days. But Joyce reacted against this Revivalism and the identity it produced. As Gregory Castle puts it:

Joyce holds up a mirror to inauthentic lives and, while the people he reflects may fail to amend their lives, to find a way to live authentically, his stories accomplish an important first step toward that goal by representing, with a kind of ethnographic fidelity, the effects of Revivalism on the construction of Irish identity. (Castle 2001:82, original emphasis)

Castle’s book examines the impact of anthropology on writers of the Celtic Revival, like WB Yeats and JM Synge, and also on Joyce. The efforts of Yeats and Synge to create a new identity for the Irish through the revival of folklore and mythology – what Castle refers to as the ‘redemptive mode of ethnography’ (2001:173) – made use of the same political and cultural discourses that the Revivalists sought to undermine. Joyce, however,

...chose to create a national literature by engaging in an immanent critique of Revivalism in which colonial and anthropological discourses are appropriated and criticized in a more sustained and consistent fashion...to arrive at a position from which he can challenge the theories and practices by which the Irish people are represented. (2001:175)

So, as far as Castle is concerned, Joyce ‘foregrounded the problems of “doing” ethnography…and anticipated some aspects of the revisionist anthropology of recent years’ (2001:210). Shifting his attention from the stories in Dubliners and from Joyce’s first novel, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Castle says that critics of Joyce’s major novel Ulysses have ignored its anthropological character, and he claims that,

Ulysses can be regarded as a persistent refusal to adopt the model of autonomous and sovereign subjectivity presupposed as foundational for the authority of the ethnographic participant-observer... (2001:211)

Castle argues that the ‘I was there’ validation of the participant-observer’s view ‘relies on the same sovereign subjectivity that allows the colonialist to distinguish between civilized and primitive peoples,’ but that, in Ulysses, the gaze can be ‘reconsidered in terms of a parodic critique of ethnographic observation.’ (2001:211)

Some commentators have claimed that Joyce’s Ulysses begins with an account of an ethnographic encounter. Stephen Dedalus has spent a restless night at the Martello Tower in Sandycove terrorised by Haines, the Englishman, who has been dreaming of a black panther and shooting off his revolver. Buck Mulligan offers Stephen to Haines as a suitable subject for the material on Irish life that Haines is there to gather. For Vincent Cheng, this episode at the Martello Tower is
Buzard believes that Joyce's work can be found in James Buzard's article as attempts at defining just what culture is. Eliot, Joyce and Malinowski and their critical reception of literature and anthropology, and sees the works of in the early-twentieth-century development of studies demonstrates how these two ideas have been interrelated modern anthropological sense of 'culture.' Manganaro notion of cultures-in-the-plural, which is central to the of 'culture' seems to stand in stark contrast to the Howarth (2012)). This notion of the elite products see, for instance, Carey (1992), Diepeveen (2003) and being considered elitist (for discussion around this hallmarks of modernist literature, and has led to it turned the spotlight of postcolonial critical theories on Joyce's works. Others include Patrick McGee (1992), David Lloyd (1993), and Emer Nolan (1995). Enda Duffy sees Joyce's Ulysses as 'the text of Ireland's independence' and starts his book by posing a radical question: 'How might an IRA terrorist read Ulysses? Or how might a victim of terrorism read the novel, given the opportunity?' (1994:1). Duffy sets out to reclaim Ulysses and to return it to readers everywhere as a novel preoccupied...with both the means by which oppressed communities fight their way out of abjection and the potential pitfalls of anticolonial struggles. (ibid.)

More recent anthropological encounters with Joyce have focused on the culture concept and the issue of ethnography. Marc Manganaro's Culture, 1922: The Emergence of a Concept (2002) traces the development of the culture concept in the early part of the twentieth century, but focuses on the seminal year of 1922 when three world-renowned modernist books appeared: TS Eliot's The Waste Land, Joyce's Ulysses, and Malinowski's Argonauts of the Western Pacific.

For many, 'difficulty' is considered one of the hallmarks of modernist literature, and has led to it being considered elitist (for discussion around this see, for instance, Carey (1992), Diepeveen (2003) and Howarth (2012)). This notion of the elite products of 'culture' seems to stand in stark contrast to the notion of cultures-in-the-plural, which is central to the modern anthropological sense of 'culture.' Manganaro demonstrates how these two ideas have been interrelated in the early-twentieth-century development of studies of literature and anthropology, and sees the works of Eliot, Joyce and Malinowski and their critical reception as attempts at defining just what culture is.

A different view of culture and its relation to Joyce's work can be found in James Buzard's article "Culture" and the Critics of Dubliners' (1999/2000). Buzard believes that any discussion of Joyce's work must sooner or later involve itself in issues pertinent to the study of "cultures"...although critics have tended not to handle such issues in a manner open to the idiomatic conceptual framework of anthropology... (1999/2000:45)

In tracing the connection between the critical treatment of Joyce's book Dubliners and the growth of modern ethnographic science, Buzard claims that What links the early Joyce and his critics with the ethnographers is the pursuit of authority over a culture, understood as a unified 'field' not to be grasped directly but inferred as the occult network of connections among all phenomena in the field. Regarded in broad outline, the last century's professional Joyce criticism and cultural anthropology proceeded along parallel tracks. (1999/2000:46)

Part of Buzard's argument is that, if the authority of the critics derives from their standpoint – 'an outsider's insideness,' similar to the standpoint of the ethnographer – then Joyce's authority derives from 'an insider's outsidership' or an auto-ethnographic standpoint (1999/2000:55). This can also be seen as deriving from Joyce's own views on the role and position of the artist as someone who stands outside and above society and who, from that standpoint, can better see society. Joyce put this idea into very literal practice in his own life by exiling himself from the city of Dublin but never writing about anywhere else.

Outsiders and their standpoint are crucial to Joyce's works. As I mentioned earlier, many of the characters in Dubliners feel themselves to be outsiders, and we are presented with ambiguous views of their world seen through the narration and through access to the thoughts of the characters. 'Lily, the caretaker's daughter, was literally run off her feet,' the first line of the story 'The Dead,' is an example of this ambiguity. Lily cannot be 'literally' run off her feet, but this 'literally' certainly reflects the way Lily would think about herself on this busy evening. This technique, known as 'free indirect discourse' (or what Joycean Hugh Kenner calls the 'Uncle Charles principle' (Kenner 2007)), allows the linguistic traits and characteristic ways of thinking of a character to be integrated into the dominant narratorial voice, which sounds like what a good ethnographer would try to do.

William Mottolese (2002) takes the question of Joyce's ethnographic stance a step further by examining the 'Wandering Rocks' episode of Ulysses as ethnography. This episode marks a couple of significant departures from the rest of the book. Firstly, all the other episodes of Ulysses have some parallels with Homer's Odyssey, but the 'Wandering Rocks' episode occurs in the story of Jason and the Argonauts, not in the Odyssey. In fact, Odysseus chooses to sail by the twin monsters Scylla and Charybdis rather than go...
by way of the Wandering Rocks, so the episode is, as it were, an intrusion from outside, breaking into and undermining the otherwise straightforward paralleling of the Odyssey. As if to emphasise that interpolation, the episode is broken into nineteen scenes and each of the scenes is broken into by further interpolations, with the insertion into one scene of events that are occurring somewhere else entirely at the same time. Secondly, most of the time in Ulysses we are centrally concerned with the two main characters, Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom, but in ‘Wandering Rocks’ we seem to become detached from that grounding and to float over the city, seeing disparate and connected elements from outside or above. We see both Stephen and Bloom in separate scenes, but they are no longer the focus of our attention.

Mottolese claims that in this episode Joyce ‘takes a distinctly ethnographic turn,’ and that the narrative voice of this episode is akin to that of ‘a Joycean participant observer, who is intimate with the inside of Dublin and detached enough to see Dublin “as others see [it]”’ (2002:252, quoting here from a letter Joyce wrote to his brother). Significantly, however, Mottolese goes on to claim that Joyce equally undermines his own ethnographic aspirations in this episode, showing the inability of ethnographic discourse – a discourse historically tied to colonialism – to do anything but represent in a partial, fragmented way a culture already fragmented and paralyzed by colonialism. (ibid.)

Throughout Ulysses Joyce changes the style of writing for each episode in order to match it to the content of the episode, so that what the episode is about and how the episode is written coincide. So, for instance, the ‘Aeolus’ episode is set in a newspaper office, with conversation about famous news stories and journalists, and with the business of making a newspaper taking place all around. No surprise, then, that Joyce writes the episode in the form of a newspaper, inserting mini-headlines that break up the text, advertizing to and commenting on the action of the episode. With ‘Wandering Rocks,’ Mottolese says, Joyce’s subject matter is what we call culture in a modern sense – all aspects of life and living – and, as a style of presentation, ‘Joyce invokes a discourse, ethnography, that befits, albeit ironically, the subject matter of the episode’ (2002:253), and consistent ‘with the trope of cultural holism, Joyce’s narrator attempts a cultural totality by representing the particular as well as the vast’ (2002:259).

Even so, Mottolese believes that the method fails, fragmenting the episode and leaving the reader to ‘navigate among the connections, misconnections, and illusions’ (2002:265) that the episode presents. Ethnographic discourse is therefore seen as ‘useful but ultimately limited, since any “culture” or “nation” resists any easy categorization or representation’ (2002:266). Mottolese considers that Dubliners are a people ‘whom the pen of the ethnographer or novelist can never fully represent,’ (2002:268) and he concludes by saying that

For Joyce, a modernist skepticism toward representation is accompanied by a postcolonial awareness of the disfiguring, objectifying power of ethnographic representation in the hands of the conqueror. With great irony, Joyce crafts an episode dominated by a discursive mode that freezes and fragments in order to reveal a culture frozen and fragmented by imperialism… (Ibid.)

If, in this moment, Joyce can leave behind the colonial anthropological view of Ireland, it does not, I think, signal his abandonment of anthropology entirely. His final novel, Finnegans Wake, is nothing if not a vast ethnographic attempt to encompass in one book every aspect of life in Ireland! But it’s done, perhaps, not from a single standpoint, but from multiple standpoints, taking in many possible views. In this, Joyce expends enormous energy doing anthropology: making ‘the strange familiar and the familiar strange.’

References


Emerging Voices: Public Anthropology and Moral Optimism

Keith Egan*

Abstract: Anthropology as a discipline struggles to achieve a more public profile and influence popular discourse with its learning and conclusions about the broad range of forms of life documented in the ethnographic archive. Yet anthropology has a claim to feel a sense of moral optimism derived from the object of its knowledge and the discipline’s potential in popular debate about what it means to live well in society. This article explores some of the contexts for engagement, examines pitfalls and reiterates this call to moral optimism.

Key words: Public anthropology; popular discourse; publishing.

We owe it to ourselves and to our interlocutors to say loudly that we have seen alternative visions of humankind—indeed more than any academic discipline—and that we know that this one . . . that constructs economic growth as the ultimate human value . . . may not be the most respectful of the planet we share, nor indeed the most accurate nor the most practical. We also owe it to ourselves to say that it is not the most beautiful nor the most optimistic.

(Michel-Rolph Trouillot, Global Transformations 2003:139)

The above quote is gleaned from a post on the blog Living Anthropologically (2011), as part of a manifesto for anthropology, a statement of optimism for anthropology’s messages, neatly encapsulated in Trouillot’s lines. Part of our ontology is that our experience of other worlds, tells us that alternatives already exist. The ethnographic archive shows us that the dominant versions of the world, of history, politics and the free market are not the only or best ones, or even, for that matter, all that free.

What is attractive about Trouillot’s lines and the blog post that draws from his thinking, is the call to moral optimism, in contrast to pieces even such as this one, which stem from anxiety. The discipline of anthropology has only in small part communicated to the public regarding its vast wealth of knowledge and valuable insight into the world as we have come to know it. The authors of the blog post do more than echo that optimism though. By discussing Trouillot’s larger and less accessible book, as well as other work from him in subsequent posts, they make the blog as a means of popular communication much more effective, breaking the important messages into more manageable, signposted pieces for a potentially larger or different audience. Not only is the blog a manifesto, then, but also another tool to help in substantiating the claim that anthropology ‘does work’.

Historically, anthropologists have always made the claim that their skill set, their way of seeing the world could and did provide valuable and useful insight to broader society (Field and Fox 2007:1). Over time, the particular value that anthropologists claimed to provide changed with the needs and interests of society, e.g. earlier studies that purported to see in tribal societies the evolutionary antecedents of more advanced and complex Western societal structures, or Franz Boas’s championing of cultural relativism in the face of eugenic theories of race and genetic superiority. Of course, for anthropology to have done such work, from George Frazer’s Golden Bough in the 1890s to Mead’s Samoan girls in the 1920s or Benedict’s reading of Japanese culture in the 1940s for the US War Department, the discipline depended more on the visibility and appropriateness of anthropological workings than on any particular essential logic to arguments presented by anthropologists. That is to say, anthropology has been more visible in the past as it spoke to concerns already prevalent in society at those times, and those concerns and interests have waxed and waned with governmental and popular understanding and interest in the discipline’s own knowledge claims. Thus, in the US, anthropology was for a time seen as merely a university subject and museum discipline (a view that has currency once more; Florida governor Rick Scott recently declared anthropology to be the worst college major, despite the fact, or maybe because of it, his daughter was studying the subject), colonial partnerships were difficult, both in terms of reconciling the politics of studying groups of subject peoples and the kinds of esoteric knowledge, as far as the colonial apparatus were concerned anyway, that anthropologists learned, such as kinship or ritual (Field and Fox 2007:2).

Despite this narrow recounting of the discipline’s history, which can evoke pessimism, anthropology today does make some contribution to popular thought and discourse, having real effects in the world. Work from anthropologists like Nancy Scheper-Hughes on organ donation, Paul Farmer on MDRTB and HIV/AIDS and Jim Yong Kim as head of the World Bank have the possibility to make a difference on a global scale, but on other scales, presence and influence are possible. Mo Mowlam’s training in anthropology and political science, for instance, has been claimed to influence her decision to visit the Maze prison in Northern Ireland as Northern

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Ireland Secretary at a crucial point in the evolving peace process in Northern Ireland. Quite a number of anthropologists undertake applied research, away from a ‘purer’ theoretical agenda. There are quite a few contexts and scales to keep in mind when deciding whether anthropology may be said to have been working.

Indeed, the discipline is continuing to undergo major changes. In a number of countries, departments are struggling to survive, with fewer students and dwindling funding. Field and Fox argue that the split between grand theory building and more ‘applied’ research has further fractured any tenuous unity of the discipline (2007:3). Other disciplines have adopted terms like ‘culture’ and undertake versions of ethnographic research. The push to publish means that big idea books and extended fieldwork are less achievable and the number of professional anthropologists already probably far exceeds any potential demand for tenured staff (see Amit 1999 and Faubion and Marcus 2009 to see the changing contexts of conducting and communicating fieldwork experience). This last point is not unique of course to anthropology; the New York Times reported that many PhDs in the US have been debating the reality that three quarters of teaching in American universities is done by adjunct staff on a semester-by-semester basis (Lewin 2013).

Finally the recent economic ‘crisis’ has meant that economic considerations take precedence over other concerns, even at times over those stemming from basic human decency. The need to articulate complexity in popular discourse has been drowned out in debates that centre instead on pragmatic issues such as how to get people back to work, in any job. This state of affairs is in contrast for instance to examining the flawed economic system that has brought capitalist societies to their knees. With so many pressures taking their toll, and others besides, the claim that anthropology can, does and ought to work, requires much more consideration.

Much of what has come to pass seems to paint a difficult picture of the future for anthropology and the generalized effectiveness of the discipline. Can anthropology be a public discipline or an engaged one? Are anthropologists commentators or advocates? Are we making our own place among others in the world, or ‘hibernating in a difficult language’ (Adorno, cited in Eriksen 2006:iix)? In some ways many anthropologists around the world are one or more of these at different times. Anthropology has been moving out of the academy—undergraduates trained in anthropology work with an ethnographic sensibility informing their reading of how society itself ‘works’ as they take up a range of different jobs. People from industry, from NGOs and other disciplinary backgrounds train at postgraduate level to enhance their skill-sets, and PhDs find positions in universities and in other working contexts, all the time working and providing value and valuable insights as they do. The boundaries between ‘university’ and ‘industry’ are increasingly fluid, so it is important then not to paint too grim a picture of how anthropologists are engaging.

Pathways to engagement
There is an important contribution that anthropologists can make, for instance in defending the idea that society is what we are making of it and simply something that determines us. The notion that the market, which must be thought of as free, is the best arbiter of public good, to be implemented, but largely unregulated by state agencies, is one that anthropologists are perfectly situated to engage with and reveal as troubling and insufficient for human flourishing. In this sense, anthropology has the ability to help society work – the work of Keith Hart (2010) and his research into human economies is one avenue, through his writing and the Human Economy Program, but also the appointment of Jim Yong Kim, the Korean-American medical anthropologist, to the World Bank, shows the potential power of anthropology to be the centre of change too. David Graeber’s (2005b) work with the Occupy movement is just one more example of the possibility of practical work that anthropologists can do in the western political sphere at the edge.

But we cannot all be advisors to the occupy movement or shape the policy of the World Bank; other avenues can and often do shape popular thought and debate. Eriksen (2006:69) reminds us of Marshall McLuhan’s dictum, that ‘the medium is the message’, arguing that fast media dictates both the speed of the news cycle and the depth of analysis that is possible. Articulating complexity and revealing important contradictions in self-evident truisms that continue to organise our economic and political lives and possibilities is difficult enough—taking greater time and considered argumentation—but such a feat is impossible in the face of many media outlets that paradoxically seem to provide the main forum for making such arguments. ‘Speed encourages simplification’ (2006:70) is part of his diagnosis. Academics are often called to account for trivial ‘cultural’ or social phenomena and left out of the more serious debates, often with economists doing the heavy lifting. This all calls for a more subversive and ironic approach to contributing to, and even shaping debate. Books can explore why we still think in large, unhelpful categories like us and them (Why do they hate us is a good example of an anthropologist and a journalist collaborating to do just that) but often the news cycle has simply moved on by the time such a considered rebuttal can be formulated. The popularity of Jared Diamond provides another clear example of a poorly written book (Collapse: How societies choose to fail or survive Jared’s answer is environmental determinism, making a nonsense of the book’s title (see Eriksen 2006:46)) that captured the popular imagination, while the careful, intelligent rebuttal of his work are in danger of simply missing the boat by being too conscientious and overly-analytical.

Emerging voices in Ireland
On the island of Ireland students from around the world come to study anthropology, and teachers from around the world bring their own traditions
with them to train those students. Anthropologists are to be found working in departments other than the two anthropology departments on the island of Ireland, in Queen’s University Belfast and NUI Maynooth, and a few trained there have made their homes abroad too. The experience of anthropologists who have been trained at both universities reveals that making anthropology work is never easy; nevertheless our voices are emerging. Thousands of students bring with them the ethnographic sensibility to their work from these degree courses, and the discipline has been evolving here to work in new and challenging contexts. One way that this can be seen is in the presence of early career anthropologists in institutes dedicated to more applied research, e.g. Cormac Sheehan’s work with Mallow Primary Healthcare Centre, Emma Heffernan’s work as part of the Applied Research for Connected Health project in UCD, and in the Institute for the Study of Conflict Transformation and Social Justice, based in Queen’s University Belfast. The work of this generation of ethnographers thus has a number of foci – researchers work in political science settings, business schools, Music schools, Intel, medical anthropology, tourism (see Murphy and Tsoulaklis 2012 for a broader discussion on this). The question is what can be done to support those coming out of the university to further their input and influence in the world through the training they have received whether above or below the border. It is of course always important that the discipline has been growing and growing up since its origins. Ireland too has moved from being a site of exploration, a rich source of ethnographic data and theory testing to being a place that trains its own ethnographers. In that regard, a whole generation of anthropologists has helped to make anthropology work here on the island, and across both political economies. The Association of Anthropologists in Ireland has of course been an important link in that regard over the last quarter of a century.

When anthropologists get the tone right it is heartening. Jamie Saris appeared on a popular history talk show (Geoghegan 2013) to discuss the history of money, lucidly and intelligently, with a mindset that offered something different from the other participants in the debate. Equally to read about the contemporary work of anthropology in Ireland in the Irish Independent (Walsh 2014) makes one feel hopeful for the future of the discipline, or the excellently written piece by another anthropologist dealing with his recovery from mental illness gives one cause for optimism (Macarthur 2014). It is possible to speak about difficult subjects, economic or personal recovery in the last two examples in a way that does not leave a lay audience cold.

Empathy and the pitfalls of public speaking
In many ways, the anthropologist, who values rapport, empathy and relationship can be among the first to learn to let the audience off the hook, that every nuance need not be known and detailed, in order for a chink in the armour of current dominant thinking to be challenged. In this respect, Malinowski’s comment that the overview of the Kula ring is something that its participants lack, available only to the ethnographer, presents us with a different perspective in this day and age: the fact that ‘they’ may not ‘get’ it, and who knows how clever those Western Pacific businessmen really were, it is still possible to speak to them about the Kula in a meaningful way. In fact it would hardly be surprising if the current Trobriand inhabitants were all too well aware of the historical Kula and its possibilities. The scholarly nuances may not have mattered as much as we thought, and functionalism’s day has passed, Malinowski himself having missed the bigger picture. In fact the work of Daniel Miller on a modern Kula ring, the social networking site, Facebook shows the possibility of communicating research effectively.

In the first case, Miller’s ethnography, Tales of Facebook (2011), is in some ways three books, and consciously so. The first ‘book’ is a series of twelve snapshots of the lives of ‘Trinidadian Facebook users, the difficulties and complexities that attend their lives as they work to make their lives better within the particular limits of their own milieu. It is a fascinating look at the kind of information and insight possible by thinking critically and ethnographically about people from a traditional anthropological perspective, national identities (his book is focussed on his Trinidadian fieldwork) and using current popular thinking about how we are connected to each other, each our own social networking site. In this Miller shows us how anthropology loses nothing of its prestige or traditional focus in doing this kind of work, while at the same time critically engaging with traditional ideas through popular media, i.e. national identity as both real and really problematic. Facebook is a cultural network that connects people in new ways, but also, and here is where the book I think really finds its niche, by showing how those connections can help us to articulate notions like culture, nation and globalisation meaningfully. Finally Miller draws on Nancy Munn’s The Fame of Gawa and Trobriand ethnographic data from over a century ago, reading Munn’s work as ‘the culmination of Malinowski’s project (Miller 2011:206). Plus ca change, he implies, in a way that acts to caution us against making any promises that ‘new’ media connections like Facebook are apt to make (Zuckerberg said once that he wanted to make Facebook as integrated into users’ lives as the water company or the electric company), while providing us with the tools to think and act better in any case. The intimate portraits are as much cautionary tales and reality testing for our own activities as they are examples of good ethnography. Miller is clever in separating these portraits into one section, while in a separate section doing the work of discussing Facebook as meta-friend, as community, and as shaper of time space and ‘culture’, among other conclusions he draws. Miller critiques simplistic notions of ‘Facebook’ – there is no Facebook as such, only ‘facebooks’, and despite the implicit promises of a terra nova in the internet for our dreams, possibilities and aspirations, we tend to
recreate in many ways the old territory we sought to transcend there. Thus many of us follow the friends we have in real life anyway, as well as keeping contact with people who gradually become less important anyway to our profiles and online lives as they might in real life. Dunbar's number holds for the Internet as for real life; 150 friends is our evolutionary limit. Miller though actually moves further by engaging critically with Munn's *The Fame of Gawa* in the final part of his book. He offers an invitation to readers who have enjoyed the portraits, and engaged with his theorisation, to journey back in time. There we see that, not only do things not change as much as we might have assumed at the beginning of the book, but Miller brilliantly shows that the 'primitives' had their own version of Facebook a hundred years before Mark Zuckerberg was rating girls in Harvard through the internet.

Of course, Miller recently found himself in some difficulty with a small survey that he conducted on the changing profile of Facebook users. He found that the teenagers he interviewed were increasingly conscious of their parents’ presence and surveillance of their lives through Facebook, and thus were abandoning Facebook in favour of other sites such as Instagram and Snapchat, the latter providing the advantage of instant and erasable interactions, rather than the permanent digital footprint that Facebook is insisting on. The finding from Miller’s survey tied in nicely with a Forbes article (Olson 2013) that suggested a similar trend among teenagers from 30 countries. Yet the news media jumped on the finding as a more major one that it actually was. The whole episode showed a number of things: journalism is indeed often a (poor) first draft of history and current affairs, and that part of the agenda for this bad drafting was coming from sensationalist reporting and a general appetite to punish Facebook for such a poorly handled IPO. It is disappointing though that nobody talked about Miller being an anthropologist, and that the logic of his method, his small careful pieces of research setting out and considering larger trends, was completely missed. Miller himself has admitted that he let the phrase ‘dead and buried’ stand in the journalist’s article. Yet it is, in one sense, no bad press. Miller’s work will have gained what he media consultants call ‘traction’ and will be revisited when he begins his more official publications from his project on social media.

There are a number of means and ways that anthropologists are working to popularise, if not the discipline, then the thinking. Blogs, opinion pieces, radio spots, interviews are all part of this and there are a number of those. Our great challenge though is to be brave, to realise that we have a responsibility talk to people other than other anthropologists, and we do not have to assume anything much about our audience to communicate. It is after all what we practise, that we need not be fearful of a change in the era of ethnography. That has happened and changed since. The postmodern critique has emphasised the value of particular knowledge, knowledge that is not generalisable, as well as the value of ontology over epistemology, the recent AAA dedicating itself to just that topic (Savage Minds 2013).

Our ability to articulate complexity with a greater sense of speed and urgency means that we have to express our arguments with greater simplicity. One anthropology blog argues that we have to remember that most people have not had a single class of anthropology. We must avoid allowing analysis to keep ‘getting in the way’, as Eriksen (2006:100) puts it when he discusses Douglas Holmes’s excellent ethnography, *Fast Capitalism*. With care and attention to studying up and making some excellent connections between global capitalism and the rise of right wing politics in Europe, Douglas nevertheless fails to write a book that anyone outside of anthropologists would crave to read. We have to work on our brand; there are several websites that are doing just that. With the impact of postmodern theory on ethnographic practise, the notion of generalisations is not particularly welcome, but big ideas are important; Graeber’s *Debt: The First 5,000 Years* (2011a) is a great example of that. We have the potential to step away from the crumbling edifice of the ivory tower and become citizen anthropologists, to enhance the idea that anthropology can work, but that it can also have a purpose. This is clearly stating a case for moral optimism with respect to anthropology. We can see the benefits of collaborative or negotiated research relationships. As a contract researcher I am quite aware of the need for such a system of relationships to foster a better world and earn a living. As Saris and Macarthur have shown, articulating complexity while abandoning jargon is possible and really comes across well on radio and in print. We ought not be too shy of the notion of branding ourselves, just careful. We understand branding better than most, and it is precious not to want to develop our own presence for the furtherance of people and arguing the moral basis for intervention.
Concluding remarks

This article is necessarily incomplete and that is as it should be. There are many contexts I could have covered and did not. I could have spent less time on Miller’s book and time in the media spotlight, and talked more about Eriksen’s (2006) own attempts at engaging the public through ‘faster’ media outlets, speaking with equal authority and less nuance or analysis. I have not discussed the Open Access movement that is lobbying to remove the pay-walls that keep publicly funded research from being available to the public. I could have spent time discussing Grinker’s (2008) book on autism, an honourable example of a book written by an anthropologist—Grinker has an autistic daughter—that is directed at other parents without compromising his erudition. Michael Jackson’s blending of autobiography, poetry, and anthropological insight is another lamentable lacuna in my thinking here, though I would suggest reading some of it anyway (see especially 2012a, 2012b). The politics of who funds our work is an area fraught with any number of landmines; though. We have moved away from a difficult colonial collaboration, though the charge of complicity still hangs over the discipline, and Marshall Sahlins’ characterisation of anthropology as sometimes akin to US military strategy in Vietnam, ‘research and destroy’ in his precise phrasing, can be read through other, more contemporary, embedded or ‘weaponized’ anthropological engagements (Price 2011) in Iraq or Afghanistan. There is a range of ways of engaging broader audiences—I happen to think Daniel Miller has been one of the better exponents—and not all of them are easy or clean. These gaps aside, the piece is concerned with engagement and optimism, and there is no shortage of examples for either or both. There simply ought to be more. The core points I’ve made stand, as well, and the value of a critique that simply points to shoddy thinking in my argument is less than the value of trying to talk from outside the academy about the worthiness of ethnography to contribute to a better world and a more equal society. The larger point is that in this age the kinds of topics that interest anthropologists—culture, civilization, family, kinship, health or economics—interest everybody else as well, albeit in very different ways. Many see all kinds of other people as the Other, and rapid cultural and political change is constantly happening, revolutions happen and quickly become ‘culture’, or accepted wisdom. The larger point is this; we have spoken and written about these things, and we have in the past been heard and read. We can and must do more of it.

References


Fan Fiction: Fickle Fad or Fiction’s Future?

Steve Downes*

Abstract: In this article I examine the interaction I have had with Fan Fiction and Fan Fiction writers over the last year. As one author speaking to many others on dozens of forums devoted to writing and dedicated Fan Fiction or ‘FanFic’, I have explored why FanFic is so popular, why it has become so loved and so hated, and why it has developed its own language and cliques; as FanFic develops beyond any one person’s or group’s control, the questions themselves will undoubtedly change with time.

Key words: FanFic; ePublishing; Writing; Fiction; Publishing.

Alliteration aside, Fan Fiction has become an internet sensation over the last decade, replacing or augmenting the Gamer subcultures that had grown-up around such titles as Dungeons & Dragons, WarHammer and Magic: The Gathering. Fan Fictions numbers are staggering; the posts on dedicated websites for Fan Fiction in general or Fan Fiction of a particular series of books, films or games, number in their millions. This popularity is not exclusive to the English-speaking world; Harry Porter Fan Fiction can be found in Hindi, Russian, Japanese and even in made-up languages such as Parseltongue. Neither is it unique to J K Rowling’s teenage wizard school; the multigenerational Star Wars franchise is by far the most popular Fan Fiction topic to date. Star Trek, Twilight, Lord of the Rings and Dungeons and Dragons also feature highly on the list of most popular topics, with millions of online postings.

Fan Fiction is split evenly between the genders, with just as many girls as boys engaging in writing (unlike the Gamer subculture which was dominated by boys), although popular topics are largely split between sci-fi-fantasy (boys) and Erotic-paranormal-fantasy (girls).

More obscure and unlikely candidates for Fan Fiction can also be found, namely: the films of Disney (e.g. Tarzan and Hercules), Manga Cartoons (from Japan), comic book heroes (from classic heroes like Superman to modern anti-heroes such as Preacher), the works of Jane Austen, Sonic the Hedgehog, Doctor Who, Bollywood Heroes (India), countless novels of Erotic Paranormal Fiction, and even characters from the Bible—Jesus at Hogwarts and a Jesus/Hitler romance are two FanFic creations available to read freely online.

Being from a certain generation I remember loving Star Wars, and if one loves Star Wars one might read some of the many official spin-off novels, collect the toy models or trade cards and comic books. Many fans play the Star-Wars D&D-like game, in which they assume the role of one of the lead characters for a few hours of gameplay. Haven’t we all done it at some stage as a child, assumed a character from our favourite show, film or book, but how many of us have brought that playground fantasy world into our adult lives? It is regarded a normal stage of child’s developing mind. One million hits per week from adults on FanFic’s most popular websites suggest that this process is ongoing and augmented by the Internet. FanFic has become more than gameplay for adults, it has become a serious financial and creative engine driving the movie, literature and television business rather than being driven by it.

With the inexorable rise of internet forums and mass e-publications subject to dwindling editorial input, fans of block-buster franchises do not just pay homage to the story and the characters in their gameplay, they continue writing the story, creating prequels, sequels and parallel universes where they can be the heroes alongside Harry Potter, Luke Skywalker and the ubiquitous androgynous vampire. The scale of FanFic publication and Internet activity above represents an entire generation of writers emerging on a completely new and developing format. But not all is as it seems in the world of Fan Fiction.

What is FanFic?

Fan Fiction or FanFic accords to no single agreed genre, but it can be broadly defined as any work which embellishes, alters or rewrites the work of another (usually published author) with new storylines, characters, alternative ending, beginnings and substitute sets of morals, ideals or sexual politics. Like its definition, FanFic’s genres cannot be easily placed circumscribed; here is just a selection of the more common emic terms/genres that authors of FanFic use:

Xover - abbreviation for cross-over, putting two separate stories/books/movies/characters into one, (i.e. Star Wars meets Star Trek)

Vignette - A piece of fan fiction which is centred on a (main or minor) characters feelings, emotions, experiences, reflections, and thoughts. Usually very short.

AdultFic/EroticFic - Fan fiction that depicts sexual (most often homosexual or lesbian activity with non-sexual or heterosexual original story characters) or overtly violent material.

DeathFic - A FanFic style which centres around the death of a main or the main character of a book, TV show or movie. This usually is a fiction

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about how the other characters cope with the loss.

**Femslash** - A story depicting sexual situations between female characters (which does not appear in the original)

**Pre-series** - A story which is about events occurring before the series/original story began, this is mirror OutcomeFic and PostFic which continue the story beyond the original author's work.

**CrackFic** - Named after the drug (crack cocaine) to imply that it can only be the product of a deranged mind, CrackFic is identified by its random, nonsensical contents. The plotline might be twisted into a knot and characters altered beyond reasonable recognition.

**SillyFic** - A light piece of fan fiction that is ridiculous and meant to amuse.

Fan Fiction is not a new phenomenon by any definition; it has existed for decades as a background to mainstream cult TV shows, films and books as a sort of socially awkward elephant in the room. But it goes much further back; scratching the surface of any great saga reveals FanFic. As far back as stories have been told, those listening have always embellished the tale with their own contemporary twist: new characters, backgrounds and outcomes the original storyteller never envisaged. Almost all of ancient Greek playwriting is built on such a process. The story of Medea, in Euripides' play of the same name, could be argued in any history department to be a prequel to the story of the Trojan Wars or an embellishment of the myths of Jason. In fact, in its many different endings in Greek storytelling, Medea was also adapted to the politics of the day. Indeed, these scenarios can readily support such readings. Fast-forward to Rome, is Virgil's *Aeneid* not a Fan-fiction 'outcome story' of Homer's much more ancient work the *Iliad*, infused with Roman morals, Roman heroes and Roman ideals, perhaps it is not such a leap of faith to imagine a young Virgil dreaming of being a Greek hero on the shores of Troy.

In the medieval world the scribes of the day Christianised pagan tales and texts, altering stories to accord with their own developing cosmology. And, in the late Middle Ages when writing for pleasure began to return to Western civilisation, we can see the development of the hero cult in such folk-tales as *Robin Hood*, who begins as a shadowy forest figure to be feared and ends up with a team of side-kicks and a moral purpose to match the political realities of the day. Epic poems like Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667) drew their inspiration from the Bible's terse Hebrew verses to give a depth and humanist voice to the first humans, Adam and Eve, and a very seventeenth century view of the Fall of Man. Milton was not the first or last author to use religious tomes to account for faith, or lack thereof, and today's Christian authors, as well as religious critics, use similar literary techniques to communicate their messages. Biblical Scholars may find it disturbing to think that deeply-held messages of faith could be humanised as they are by Milton or bowdlerised as they are by sceptical modern authors, but yet there is a direct connection between the two when they both put faith in the power of their words to alter stories and minds.

One of the most successful FanFics of all time is Tom Stoppard’s play *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (1966). It is a celebrated tragic-comedy that centres on minor characters used by Shakespeare in his play *Hamlet* as literary devices to further the main plot of his masterpiece. Stoppard's own masterpiece is FanFic at its finest: it is set in another author's world (Shakespeare's medieval Denmark), it elevates minor characters into major roles, it has appearances from the original author's main characters (heroes and villains), it gives background stories that never existed in the original script and plays-out an alternative future, all of this denied us by Shakespeare.

Fan Fiction has been around, then, since time immemorial and has infused itself in every aspect of our mythology, culture and entertainment. Why is there such a backlash against the flood of FanFic now? The answer may lie in the in the fact that the world is ‘flooded’ with it; our screens and books have been overtaken by the once vague spectre of FanFic and mass duplication has led to authors, publishers and readers/viewers rebelling openly against the practice.

Duplication, popularly known as 'the Hollywood syndrome', is a serious problem in modern writing; many blockbuster films in 2012 were remakes of old movies or rehashes of old books. Almost every eighties television show is being revamped into a cinema drama; *Battlestar Galactica, Doctor Who, Miami Vice, The A-Team. And duplication is not just confined to the movie industry; in books, familiarity sells. The numbers are staggering. As an example, of the 765 friends on my Facebook Author's page, 505 regard themselves as authors and 411 of those are 'paranormal/erotic/fiction writers'. When asked, most of them told me they started out writing in FanFic, but are all now selling their work online and in some cases selling as mainstream authors in print and e-Book formats. Would it be too bold to say FanFic has become mainstream?

**The Hows and Whys of FanFic**

Where does FanFic fit in to an anthropological sense of culture? Certainly FanFic has complex social behaviour—it has its own secret language, codes of conduct, genres and exclusive and elitist clubs that have to be penetrated, pandered to and believed in, rather than just simply joined. Some groups act more like online faculties than open writing and reading forums. If FanFic is to be classed as a subculture then what is it a subculture of? On the face of it, Google searches,
Wikipedia entries and similar articles to this one claim, with some justification, that FanFic has developed out of the lucrative and worldwide Gamer Culture, most commonly generalised by those outside the Gamer circles as the role-playing fantasy game Dungeons and Dragons. In fact it is more far reaching in both its creative complexity and its social strata.

Gamers have for decades cultivated their own vernacular, dress codes and identity based around one or more of the games they play. What started as a hobby has become an identity for many thousands of Gamers around the world, so it was easy for them to slip into the habits and culture of FanFic as they share many of the same traits.

Gamers make up a significant section of FanFic authors and readers but informal polls conducted by myself and other investors into the phenomenon on FanFic and open writing forums (such as Wattpad and FanFic.org) show that they are in fact just one of many minority groups that make up the FanFic world. There is no average or typical FanFic writer. If you want to converse and swap stories with a Goth-music loving, black make-up wearing teenage Gamer, then there is a forum for that, a set of implicit linguistic rules by which you can communicate, a set of abbreviations you can type into the forum search engine and genre that will indulge your specific requirements for reading or posting your own version of your favourite book etc.

But as tastes for writing and reading FanFic differ so will the options, by changing the language, the abbreviations and genre choices, one can equally meet and chat with (in the virtual world of forums and social media): openly gay authors, non-openly gay authors (usually using an alias), self-styled Christian or Muslim authors, heavy metal fans, fans of pop idols (Justin Bieber is currently a popular one, his fans called themselves ‘Beliebers’), segmented age groups from eleven to over seventies, from different political stances such as Black culture authors, Feminist authors, or pro- and anti-Israeli authors, to take a current global hot topic.

So why all the language of secrecy? Avatars and anonymity are very attractive things on the internet, and even more so to a culture of writing that is to most, teetering on the brink of legality and to many crossing over the line of international copyright law. Several high-profile cases, injunctions and attempted injunctions by well-known authors and their publishers over recent years have not stemmed FanFic in any way, but they have driven many of FanFic’s more famous, or infamous, and earliest authors to write solely as internet ghosts; it is often advised by FanFic sites, magazines and forums that writers have an alias. Some sites even insist on it.

The legal arguments on FanFic have been discussed at length in the media of late, and while, as an author (but not of FanFic) I personally stand on the fence at the moment, one cannot help but think that publishers are fighting an impossible battle against an internet sensation that simply is too big, too global and too fluid in its nature to control or legislate for. One only has to look back a few years to the music industry’s ill-advised and ill-fated attempts to battle global social and legal disobedience on the internet when they fought to close music downloading (and sharing) sites; confrontation with such anonymous, placeless, viral entities is pointless. Just as with the Music Industry’s failure, the publishers and some mainstream authors have managed very limited success in closing down one or two particular forums/sites or individual authors, only to see, like a hydra’s head, more spring up in their place. Currently some mainstream print authors are jumping on the FanFic bandwagon and openly call the practice a ‘compliment’, ‘free advertisement’, even praising FanFic as a vehicle for bringing a generation of youth into creative writing and reading.

Legal arguments aside, chat on any FanFic forum about aliases and you will realise that you name, your picture and your online identity is a major part of the FanFic fantasy world. Any serious Twilight forum admin will think twice about allowing a new author with a Harry Potter moniker to join. A series of coded words and letters in your name can indicate the user writes and reads violent or overtly sexual material, even the forums themselves have these codes, and if you don’t understand what the letters/names and terms mean, then you’re probably not welcome or would not want to be there anyway. Just as in the FanFic stories themselves the authors are a distortion of something else, like the characters in their stories they take an original and alter it to suit their own, sometimes hidden, aspirations and desires.

Why write fan fiction? It’s the question I have asked hundreds of authors on a dozen forums in the last year, and the answers are varied but patterned. Most will tell you it is a bit of fun, a hobby or a pastime to relieve the boredom of school or college essays. Also, most FanFic authors who write or re-write their favourite book, show or film, see it as a sort of homage to the original writer or, if they write in a broader sense, an addition to the archetype of the genre they love. But more profound reasons for writing FanFic exist. I mentioned earlier the various code-words that classify FanFic; inside some of these sub-genres and behind the avatars lie individuals struggling with themselves, a lot of young boys and girls still at school dealing with emerging sexualities that they can only express in FanFic and under the protection of their forum aliases. A lot of middle-aged authors are frustrated by their mundane lives and lacking any formal creative training or education they turn to FanFic to relieve their dissatisfaction, this often results in the more extreme FanFic. There is, of course, a middle ground in FanFic. Not everyone is a brooding teen, a bored housewife or a frustrated middle-aged man. Some FanFic authors are in it for the fun and many of them pass through the FanFic phase (say that ten times quickly) and move on to write their own creative works.
So is FanFic a waste of time and a waste of talent?
Are we allowing a lost generation of original thinkers or is it a spur to new creativity in a new media? Inside the FanFic world the answers are explicit while outside the world of publishing and mainstream reading the general public are mostly blissfully unaware that FanFic even exists. The average bookshop reader would be shocked to find out that worldwide best-selling book *Fifty Shades of Grey* began life as a FanFic of equally famous bestsellers, the *Twilight* series. Both books/series sit right in the heart of what drives FanFic writers; commercial success can be achieved.

The debate of the positive and negative aspects of FanFicdom continues in the courts, the houses of publishing, between fellow professional authors and among concerned parents and teachers. Even FanFic authors themselves are questioning each other's genres, the overall value of the process and the direction of genre as a whole, but the obvious negative and positive consequences of mass FanFic:

**Negative:** International copyright laws have been blurred beyond recognition and any one author can no longer guarantee their story or characters will remain under their control.

**Positive:** Millions of young people from all races, creeds and colours around the world are writing, reading and interacting because of the freedom of FanFic sites and forums.

**Negative:** Bad writing practices (basic sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, spelling, plot development, character development) are going unchecked, unedited and into uncontrollable space where publication and affirmation is guaranteed, irrelevant of quality.

**Positive:** The publishing industry is booming with an influx of authors from FanFic into mainstream writing.

**Negative:** Repetition is dominating FanFic creativity, with similar stories, characters and plots beginning to infuse mainstream culture, particularly in the areas of paranormal romance, fantasy fiction and erotica.

**Positive:** FanFic has boosted the sales of traditional books within Sci-fi and fantasy genres, to the point were older, largely forgotten authors and genres are being rediscovered by a whole new generation of readers.

**Negative:** Children as young as ten are being exposed to material that is unsuitable for them via a medium that is difficult, if not impossible, for parents to control.

‘Language’ deserves a special mention in the positive and negative section; critics of FanFic will point to the same negative aspects of bad writing practices mentioned above, but they also heavily cite the alteration and invention of language to separate FanFic and FanFic sub-genres from mainstream writing and from each other. Language has always done that, though, and that usage is the ultimate arbitrator of what is an idiom and what is not; the language of FanFic could well be the dialect of the future, in the same way text-speak has become both common and a common problem for education.

**FanFic’s Unseen Problems?**
Two bigger issues with FanFic give cause for worry. The first is the separation of young people from their own lives into the virtual lives of FanFic. One thirteen year old FanFic author I spoke to in person described himself as alienated at school; he was ignoring school work, shunning friends in order to produce vast amounts of FanFic for a particular site. The wordage produced by some young FanFic is prodigious; an average published novel is 95,000 words, a sage novel can be twice that and can represent three years’ work for a professional author; it is not uncommon for dedicated FanFic writers under eighteen years of age to produce three hundred thousand words of FanFic a year. This output represents a monumental amount of time and effort, and most of it is wasted as the vast majority of FanFic authors will not go on to write in any professional sense and the cost to their private lives, their social development and their social interaction skills outside of inter forum can be detrimental, for instance in the diversion from study, which could have a huge effect on their college and career prospects.

A second and final concern also involves younger writers, who of course make up the majority of FanFic users; the sexualisation of fictional works written originally for children is currently one of the most popular genres of FanFic. Explicit and violent heterosexual and homosexual versions of books such as Harry Potter, Alice through the Looking Glass, films like Star Wars and The Hobbit, as well as TV shows from sitcoms to Star Trek, are all being overtly sexualised in the fantasy world of FanFic. There are no controls as to who can read this material and none regarding who can write it; children are precociously learning explicit terminology and acts from reading each other’s work and the work of older, anonymous, authors. Unlike the pornographic sites on the Internet, FanFic sites are largely literature and parents either cannot block them or are unaware of the sub-thread genres they may contain. Not all FanFic sites contain explicit material, and others have recently banned erotic work, but such sub-groups remain a minority.

FanFic is a complex web of millions of contributors, readers and critics. On balance, its positives seem currently to outweigh its negatives.
As FanFic becomes increasingly influential on the mainstream, legal and moral battles may change it further. FanFic’s impact on young people in particular is slowly becoming more negative. Young readers are moving away from reading, watching and learning from mainstream media and begin to focus on enjoying and mimicking FanFic. Teenage authors are even writing FanFic homages to other FanFic writers; it will be an interesting journey to see where we end up when the author of a story featuring Captain Kirk has never seen Star Trek.

This all just leaves me with one question: Is FanFic their Woodstock, their Punk Rock, their Declaration of ‘here we are’? Or, is it just a fad, and like Woodstock and Punk Rock it will fade.
Abstract: This short essay briefly reflects on the international ‘jobs market’ for anthropology graduates before turning to consider the role of anthropology in liberal university education. In doing so, I consider Donnan and Wilson’s (2006) call for a reinvention of anthropology on the island of Ireland, and I look back to the vision of education proposed by Franz Boas. This essay marks out some interesting anthropological careers and indicates some future areas of growth. Overall, however, it is an argument for the importance of anthropology as critical inquiry in the contemporary moment.

Key words: Anthropology in Ireland; reinvention; Boas; universities; graduates.

In 2012 Forbes Magazine reported on a Georgetown University survey indicating that the ‘worst’ majors in US universities are anthropology and archaeology. But anthropologists and archaeologists should pause for contemplation before opening their desk drawers and deciding between the whiskey and the revolver. According to the survey, anthropology and archaeology graduates stand a better chance of gaining initial employment than, say, architecture or photography graduates but tend to enter low-paid employment initially. But what constitutes ‘employment’ in the ‘initial’ period after graduation in a world where a postgraduate-level qualification and experience is generally required? A benchmark suitable for professional nursing studies may not be suitable for architects or budding archaeologists. Moreover, by graduating from any arts, humanities or social science degree one adds a rather vulgar $1.2 million to one’s earnings over an average career.

Forbes Magazine does not do analysis very well but that does not stop the flow of advice. If you wish to land a job in the US straight after graduation (and immediately start chipping away at your enormous student loan) then take a numbers-based professional degree. If, however, you wish to read books and think about the contents—perhaps focusing on those books in which the only numbers are the page numbers—then you will be punished. Indeed, reading and thinking types might wonder about the implicit suggestion that if you plan on going to university to luxuriate in knowledge then you are probably a communist or a Democrat. Picking up on the Forbes article, financial journalist Rick Newman recently argued that consumers should be more ruthless in their university course choices. Avoid psychology, biology and economics, says Newman, and especially history. Remember, ‘We are not a contemplative society’.

I would like to live in a contemplative society. I share with most students a strong sense that contemplation is vital and the lack thereof has discernible and generally unfavourable consequences. As Ireland continues to reel from one of the worst financial crises in modern European history, universities are increasingly under pressure, and the kind of liberal education represented by disciplines such as anthropology needs to be better understood by a variety of audiences. We may be living through an era of indebtedness, poverty and emigration, but the prevailing style of reasoning is certainly not in crisis. The state may be howling like Polyphemus blinded by Nobody, yet a certain form of economic rationality is stronger than ever. Today, truth-like common sense comes from somewhere else but is spoken in an Irish accent. Inefficiency and duplication are sources of shame; efficiency is a form of purity achievable only through the ‘taking’ or sharing of pain. All of these extraordinary factors are shaping the higher education system. But rather than react we must contemplate: what do we imagine as the future of our discipline on the island of Ireland, and what do we envisage for graduates of our programmes? Here, for the most part, I confine myself to discussing Maynooth Anthropology.

Anthropology grew successfully in Maynooth since the establishment of the department in the early 1980s (the exact origins of the department are obscure, even in terms of the requisite paperwork, which is rumoured to be in a basement somewhere; heroic figures and their mythical deeds loom large in folk memory). As the sector and the university expanded so too did the department, especially during the so-called Celtic Tiger period from 1995 to 2008 when nothing was too small to fail. Today, our graduates generally leave the discipline behind for a bewildering variety of work and postgraduate options, from attempting to establish an NGO to working in forensic computing and cybercrime detection (to nod at just two recent graduates). From the early 2000s onwards, surveyed MA graduates went on to take up positions in the private sector and in the so-called third sector, which, we must remind ourselves, is one of the largest employers in the world. The majority, however, entered doctoral programmes in Ireland or overseas.

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Our postgraduate programmes continue to thrive. Our MA in Anthropology and Development is in the second year of operating an internship programme with Trocaire. This year the Departments of Anthropology and Design Innovation in NUI Maynooth will launch a new MSc in human-centred design and innovation. Anthropologists in Maynooth have long noted the exciting potential of research happening under new interdisciplinary umbrellas such as user experience (UX). We foresee important collaborations with intellectually exciting colleagues in and outside of the academy. We also look forward to seeing our graduates informing design and innovation, broadening and critically evaluating those concepts, and hopefully also challenging the discipline of anthropology. Some cohorts of future postgraduates, then, will pitch their tents in new interdisciplinary domains and their ideas to non-academic audiences; they may draw their conceptual influences more from Bruno Latour than Conrad Arensberg. Yet, the concept work and research practices that so excites colleagues and potential employers rests on a powerful image of anthropology. Oddly, today, anthropologists’ self-perceptions are rather humble and post-Writing Culture. Elsewhere the anthropologist is still hero: he or she really finds things out, they go beyond numerical representations of human life to the very core of meaning in everyday lived experiences. We are recognized for being there, partly because few disciplines go there.

Thomas Wilson and Hastings Donnan’s (2006) The Anthropology of Ireland called for the reinvention of anthropology in Ireland in terms of scholarship and professional practice. Reinvention denotes contemplation followed by careful efforts to understand, respect, defend and expand anthropology in Ireland. The reinvention of anthropology in Ireland is a process that needs to be mindful of but not obsessed by context: the pressured institutions bowing their heads in the court of the ‘smart economy’ or even in the service of ‘economic recovery’. Anthropology is not training for jobs. Some of our graduates will be working in 2060. One educates now so that those individuals may use anthropology’s conceptual tools and insights to the betterment of society in future decades. The onus is on anthropology departments as homes of scholarship and professional practice to defend what is good in traditions while reinventing continually to meet new problems and challenges. The onus is on us to avoid educating students so that they can get a job tomorrow and maintain a focus on the education of students such that they can meet the unknown challenges of the future.

Many of anthropology’s ancestors understood these deep truths well. As an Irish anthropologist I occasionally feel the presence of ancestors such as Haddon and Browne or Scheper-Hughes. Today, their expeditions seem weird – the craniometers and Rorschach tests are gone but ‘unethical’ remains like a tattoo. When I look for insights and opportunities for reinvention in the history of anthropology I think of those individuals who exceeded their time, place and discipline. Franz Boas, for example, is well worth turning to for a clear-sighted sense of what anthropology is and can be, especially in the context of pressured universities and graduates in search of meaningful jobs. Boas understood the difference between disciplines such as anthropology and the natural sciences, pushing for the rigorous study of the particular. In folk memory he is associated with ‘four-field anthropology’. In reality, however, his sense of the emerging discipline was more fluid and creative. He understood that anthropology had an enormous contribution to make in producing fully rounded education experiences. His annual letter to the President of Columbia University in 1902, quoted in an essay by Nicholas Dirks, reads like a contemporary prospectus. Anthropology is ‘... perhaps the best means of opening the eyes of students to what is valuable in foreign cultures, and thus to develop a juster appreciation of foreign nations and to bring out those elements in our own civilization which are common to all mankind.’ He fought tirelessly for academic freedom and supported the establishment of new departments to amplify the global dimensions of undergraduate education. But his vision of the university was no ivory tower walled off from the world. Nicholas Dirks finds that Boas was worried about disciplines that existed for administrative reasons than scholarly ones. Universities, Boas wrote, cannot be the home of the universitas litterarum, of the world of knowledge, if their faculties are closed corporations, and if university research and instruction are a monopoly of those who have secured recognition by appointment’. What we have in Boas’s ancestral presence is a kindly reminder to think seriously about the role anthropology can play in providing a liberal education, one that listens to students and responds in mature ways (which is not the same as ‘feedback’), one that provokes us to constantly reassert and even reinvent anthropology’s conceptual contributions and increasingly fashionable research practices. In the contemporary moment we need to reassert and even reinvent what we mean by university education in Ireland. If anthropology can contribute to providing a rigorous, liberal and globally aware education then it will leave its mark on workers in 2060. But we also have responsibilities now to provide more opportunities for engagement, to reach out more in the university community and well beyond, to look to ways to create meaningful partnerships with civil society and commercial entities. There is nothing incompatible in these goals; rather they are complementary. In fact, when one closely examines the nature of the employment market and the articulated needs of major employers – as opposed to the needs attributed to them – one sees that the pressure on universities is often internal to the public sector. The criticisms levelled at universities and their degree programmes by major multinationals are often about insufficient core skills, too much
specialization at the expense of breath and depth, and not enough 'blue skies' research. Multinationals are not disinterested champions of traditional universities; they simply form views on what works. Today, apparently, one needs to be a ‘job shaper’ not a job seeker. This does not sound like a stable future, but it does sound like a future in which an education that focuses on core skills, depth, breadth and opportunities for research and critical thinking will be required.

It is my hope that anthropology in Ireland will grow appropriately as time goes by, hopefully contributing to the diverse and successful careers followed by its graduates for a long time. In the future graduates may well be job shapers, and their critical skills may result in unintended shapes. It is neither incompatible nor naïve to hope that anthropology in Ireland will also contribute in some ways to creating a more contemplative society.
Constructing Studenthood: Student activism and the role of representative groups in the process of identification

Hannah Carey*

Abstract: The research presented here is concerned with the theme of student activism. It was carried out between September and December of 2012 with student participants at NUI Maynooth. The purpose of this project was to analyse the internal processes of identity construction within student activist groups in order to gain an understanding of the processes at work in mobilising students. I analyse how small activist groups, in the form of University societies, become the discursive fields for constructing notions of ‘studenthood’ and look at the processes of identification involved in negotiating movement alignment and group membership within these societies.

Key words: Studenthood; activism; identification; protest; ritual; voice; alignment.

Saturday 17th November 2012: Justice for Savita march and candlelight vigil

It was one of those mild yet chilly November afternoons; dry enough for Dublin, but with a subtle scent of moisture in the air. Our group was made up of femsoc members but the large white banner we were sporting read ‘NUIM 3 Pro-Choice society’, not ‘NUIM femsoc’. As we stood and listened to the speeches, a light rain began to fall. It summed up the mood of our gathering perfectly. No one knew quite how to feel or act. I held up her hand-painted sign and posed for a picture. She looked into the lens with a serious but glassy expression, saying uncertainly afterwards: ‘I don’t know how to act; you can’t smile in this kind of photograph can you?’

The march began under a solemn, heavy atmosphere. M started initiating chants straight away, shouting the first line ‘Justice for Savita’ into the megaphone, to which I responded with an unamplified cry ‘Never Again’. The rest of femsoc, under the guise of Pro-Choice society, took up the chant. Yet it felt like we were shouting alone in a sea of disconnected strangers. The crowd was largely irresponsive and subdued.

As darkness fell, the crowd of marchers seemed to expand somehow before us. We had started near the front, yet now we were bringing up the rear. It wasn’t until much later that we realised a large number of passers-by had joined the march as it made its steady progression towards Merrion Square. The noise level increased. More people were joining in the chants and those leading them were rejuvenated by the responses. Gradually, a communal atmosphere began to link the mass of strangers together, making our voices clearer, connecting our outrage so that it was palpable and coherent.

Processes of Identification

This project arose from an interest in the mechanisms of mobilising people across interest groups. In order to investigate this I undertook participant observation with activist societies at NUI Maynooth, primarily Young Friends of the Earth (YFE), a society involved in environmental activism, and NUIM’s feminist society (femsoc). I also carried out research with the Maynooth Students Union (MSU) and The Union of Students in Ireland (USI). Based on the premise that social movements require the construction of a unifying identity, I investigate how representative groups undergo processes of identification, whereby these groups become the ‘discursive field’ in which ideas of ‘studenthood’ are conceptualised, contested and ultimately represented (Stephen 2001:66; see also Kasmir 2005).

The activities I took part in included protest marches, public meetings, discussion groups, society meetings, documentary screenings, book clubs and social gatherings. Over the course of my research, certain events and themes became focal points in my analysis. Particularly within femsoc, the transformation of the society’s rhetoric in response to the developing Pro-Choice movement in Ireland at the time, especially in relation to the death of Savita Halappanavar on the 28th of October, became central to my investigations on the discursive processes of identification. When I first joined, femsoc had a neutral stance on abortion. As time passed, members began the process of aligning the society to the Pro-Choice movement, gradually shedding their neutrality.

My reflection on the notion of “studenthood” was inspired by Stephen’s analysis of the construction of “motherhood” within the women’s rights group CO-MADRES (2001:67). Her discussion includes an explanation of the ways in which CO-MADRES became the “discursive field” for members to contest and negotiate the various meanings they attached to the concept of motherhood and eventually agree upon unitary goals and symbols for the group to project.

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Stephen describes this process as “identification” (2001:66). In my investigation of the processes of identification within student activism, I focused on the following questions: What does this process look like and how is it integral to constructing unity and illuminating common goals within groups? What is the range of interpretations of student identity within these groups? How do these interpretations affect events within social movements? Finally, Stephen states that ‘the need to create unitary names, symbols and goals can result in the essentialization of women as mothers’ (ibid; see also Reddy 2005). Drawing from Stephen’s conclusions then, I investigated whether student identities become essentialized in the pursuit of political goals.

Anti-fracking forum theatre
During the first five minutes of the act, the audience seemed to be holding their breath. Everyone sat perfectly still, waiting for someone to break the silence and put themselves forward. It seemed almost taboo to interrupt such a staged performance. K was the first person to tentatively shout ‘stop’. Everyone looked towards her. K began to describe what she thought the character Margaret should do differently, but the director interrupted. ‘Take Margaret’s place on stage and demonstrate yourself what you think she should do,’ she suggested. K reluctantly did so. She interacted with the other actors as Margaret, suggesting that they set up a town committee responsible for researching the contract for the fracking scheme and the effects of fracking on local environments. The other characters responded to K in a way that stayed true to their own character, some needed more convincing and others were supportive.

After that, there was an influx of people interrupting the performance at various moments, everyone with their own ideas about how to deal with the situations arising in the scene. Some people came on stage and engaged in a screaming match with the actor playing the councillor. Others got up to preach to the other townspeople about the negative impact of fracking on local communities, listing off figures and predicting apocalyptic scenarios. Others came up simply to make one or two suggestions. As lunchtime drew near, the scene was called to an end and we commenced a discussion about what worked and what didn’t.

Voicing Self: An exercise in Identity Alignment
Keane notes that there are two common ways in which the notion of voice is invoked (Keane 1999). The first centres on the idea of ‘having a voice’, correlating to political representation and authority. The second refers to ‘epistemological questions about relations among identity, experience and point of view’ (1999:271). Those student activist groups, which I claim are the “discursive field” for constituting studenthood, encompass the site at which political voices and epistemological voices converge (ibid.).

I became interested in notions of voice during a Grassroots Gathering event at NUI Galway. Grassroots Gatherings are one-off events, each one run by a local group. Their purpose is to bring together people involved in different community campaigns and social movements in order to forge alliances and develop strategies and networks. The GGG that I attended with YFE members had as its central themes: environmentalism, focusing primarily on the “No Fracking Ireland” movement and anti-austerity. Various discussions and workshops at the GGG encouraged participants to add their voice to the negotiation of movement strategy. These discursive activities employed the practice of symbolically incorporating a multiplicity of voices into movement rhetoric. For instance, during a day-long series of anti-fracking talks, various discussions we took part in were turned into wall art as volunteers painted and designed a mural art form of our discursive activities. Workshop leaders tried different techniques to spread out participation and ‘drown out dominant voices’. Of particular note was the forum theatre workshop, whereby participants problematized and strategized the anti-fracking movement by taking the place of a character in a short play staged around the issue. This allowed people to perform a version of themselves corresponding to their own personality, whilst also projecting the voice of an active, political subject, expressing their political dissent. This example neatly illustrates how the sites at which processes of identification take place represent the apex where political notions of voice and the inner voice of personhood converge (Keane 1999).

My reflections on voice led me to understand the GGG as a rite of passage in which participants are socialized into various movement ideologies or rhetoric (Turner 1969; see also Van Gennep 1909) as an exercise in identity alignment, whereby individuals perform acts of identity, orienting themselves to particular movements or movement features (Hastings and Manning 2004). However, Hastings and Manning have argued that, “identity performances are relational with respect to different dimensions of alterity” (2004:294). That is to say, identity formation necessarily includes a boundary-making exercise where figures of ‘Other’ come to represent the antithesis of group membership and identity (ibid; see also Stephen 2001).

The Death of Savita Halappanavar
On the 28th of October 2012, a young, Indian dentist named Savita Halappanavar died in University Hospital Galway while miscarrying an unviable foetus. Media reports claimed that she had requested an abortion three times over the course of the three days she spent in hospital, but was refused due to the fact that under Irish law an abortion cannot be performed if there is still a foetal heartbeat.

Various media reports made reference to a statement by Savita’s husband in which he claimed that as they were being refused an abortion by the
Irish health services they were told: ‘this is a Catholic country’ (Irish Times November 4 2012). This reference to the Catholic value system that once permeated every institution of Irish society resonated with members of femsoc. The response from many Pro-Life advocates served to further fuel the fire as they refused to accept that Savita’s death was directly related to the lack of abortion legislation in Ireland.

This became a major theme in subsequent demonstrations. Protesters placed red tape over their mouths to signify this and religious imagery featured in many posters and banners. Some common chants and slogans included ‘keep your rosaries off my ovaries’ and ‘Not the church, not the state, women must decide their fate’. One bystander got angry at this chant, shouting at the marching protesters: ‘What are you on?! The church has no power to dictate legislation!’ As I acknowledge to myself that this was technically true, I knew instinctively that it mattered somehow. Even if the church did not directly dictate legislation, their judgement weighed heavily on Irish hearts.

Voicing other: An exercise in boundary building
Following the death of Savita Halapannavar, the content of discourse within femsoc changed in response to the increased urgency in the abortion debate. The discursive processes of identification within femsoc were increasingly articulated in terms of what members were not, and essentialized types of other, characterised by ‘pro-lifers’, became the ‘figures of alterity’ against which members aligned themselves and femsoc to the Pro-Choice movement (Hastings and Manning 2004:302; see also Goffman 1974).

Hastings and Manning describe how in identity alignment, ‘the voice of the other’ finds its way into the mouth of the ‘self’ (2004:301). This began to occur in discursive activities within femsoc. Whether members were quoting the speech of an ‘essentialized’ (ibid.) figure representing a Pro-Life point of view, or engaging in an exercise of ‘performative mimicry’ (ibid.) whereby ‘pro-lifers’ were categorized as hysterical or unreasonable, they were clearly increasingly engaging in ‘acts of alterity’ (2004:291). Sometimes specific pro-life groups were targeted in this exercise. J, who was involved in the national Pro-Choice campaign, once offered her advice on how to spot Youth Defence infiltration at a meeting through ‘performative mimicry’ (ibid). She proceeded to adopt a hyper-polite register, raised the pitch of her voice and asked a series of condescending questions. These practices were performing the same function of movement alignment as those I analysed in the previous section. The only difference was that there was a clear boundary-building exercise going on, as femsoc attempted to guard their values and the integrity of their group against the influence of the dreaded ‘pro-lifers’.

Justice for Savita march
L held up a hand-made white placard with the words ‘Her blood is on your hands’ painted in black. A number of red handprints framed the written message. M was there with a megaphone in hand and a self-tailored sign of his own, which read “What she said” accompanied by a number of yellow arrows gesturing outward. I took up the corner of the Nuim Pro-Choice banner so that M and L could switch between operating the megaphone. As our small group manoeuvred their way awkwardly through the crowd, M fell into step with a girl who was leading chants with her own megaphone. They began to discuss and synchronise chants. At one point we tried to tailor our own chant along the lines of: ‘Politicians hear our voice, Irish women deserve a choice.’ After a few renditions of the admittedly not very poetic chant, one femsoc member suddenly exclaimed: ‘No! What about Indian women?’ After that our custom made chant seemed utterly useless so it was dropped. When it was all over and most of the crowds had dispersed, a strange sense of relaxed fatigue appeared to come over the group. L was the first to comment. ‘I’m wrecked, my voice is hoarse from yelling, but I feel so much better,’ she said contentedly. S piped up ‘I think it’s a relief when you see how many people agree with you!’ L and S both expressed how they had been feeling frustrated and uncomfortable leading up to the march because of a sense isolated outrage. L sheepishly admitted that she had spent the previous evening involved in a string of arguments in the comment sections of various online forums that had been circulating articles about Savita’s death. ‘Even though I knew that the people posting online would either be extremist pro-lifers or trolls, I still felt like there was this overwhelming amount of people who didn’t get it. Which made me feel a bit like, wait a minute... am I alone in this?’

Protest as Ritual and Performance
When Turner modernized ritual theory with notions of ritual process and social drama, he analysed social action as a performance (Turner 1987). The events leading up to and including the series of protests in connection with Savita Halappanavar’s death and the issue of Choice in Ireland, constitute such an example of Turner’s ‘social drama’ (Turner 1987; 1974; 1969), in which those taking part performed their political dissent on the stage of civil society and challenged established discourses of power relations (ibid; see also Moser 2003). Turner describes a social drama as a ‘disharmonic or crisis situation’ (1987:4) in the social life of regular, norm-governed society. He also theorizes that liminality occurs when structure is suspended (Turner 1969; 1974; 1987). During the march participants experience a reduction in social difference, rank and status characteristic of the liminal phase. In addition, participants experience an intense communal spirit and feeling of solidarity in the form of communitas, during which time their ties to the group (femsoc) and the movement were strengthened. These
performances of public protest rituals are also integral to the process of identification of groups like femsoc for this very reason. Even as members project the unitary identity of a group, they are still negotiating the terms of their alignment to the movement at various moments during the march, as indicated by the negotiations over chants.

According to Turner, ritual performances in response to crises are inherently dramatic because, not only do participants ‘do things’, but they attempt to show others what it is that they are doing (1987:4). Their actions take on ‘a performed-for-an-audience aspect’ (ibid.). Turner contends that ‘if daily life is a kind of theatre, social drama is a kind of meta theatre’ (1987:6), a kind of societal reflexivity in which participants are communicating about the ordinary, norm-governed systems of communication. In the case of the Pro-Choice movement this rings true, for at the very centre of the issue is not merely a demand for legislation, but a critique of the hierarchies in structured society’s public discourse. Who has the authority to speak about these issues is also in contention. ‘Not the church, not the state. Women must decide their fate’.

### USI General Assembly

In a stuffy, brightly-lit conference room at the Glenroyal Hotel in Maynooth, a USI meeting to promote the upcoming Anti-Austerity march was going horribly wrong. The most prominent members of all the major activist societies were there. USI and its President John Logue were coming under heavy criticism for being ineffective at mobilising students against cuts. Even the facilitator began to lose composure, unable to maintain the precedent of turn-taking. ‘Excuse me,’ she said sternly into the microphone, addressing a participant who continued to argue with Logue ‘show some respect please’. Unperturbed the addressed party exclaimed: ‘We’re all adults here! Let us have a proper discussion!’

At that point, a member of the NUIM Pro-Life society was granted the floor and began to read off a written statement with reference to the recent events surrounding the Pro-Choice debate. While his statement was long-winded, his argument was clear. USI’s Pro-Choice stance was divisive and discriminated against Pro-Life students who would hesitate to get involved in USI activities as a result. In response, an irate student promptly grabbed her bag and coat and swiftly made her way to the exit. As she made to leave she turned and said to him: ‘This is not a platform for that issue and no one here should have to listen to your views on it. So in response to your comments, I’m exercising my right to choose to leave.’

She was applauded as she left by the majority of people in the room who had moments ago been yelling at one another. Over their applause the speaker attempted to continue his argument but as more female students stood to leave, the USI President decided to put an end to it. ‘We are not here to discuss that issue. USI is a Pro-Choice organisation, mandated democratically by a majority of members. If you don’t like it, sin é an doras9,’ he said, pointing to the door. Following this incident there was a dramatic turn-around in the atmosphere of the meeting, which even resulted in a handshake between Logue and his most vocal opponent of the night. By the end, Logue had managed to get everyone in the room to stand up and pledge to promote student participation in the Anti-Austerity march for Saturday the 24th of November.

### Studenthood

The process of constructing studenthood is never complete and requires groups and even individuals to sort through a multi-vocalic collection of ambiguous and contradicting positions and perspectives (Nash 2005:292). At certain moments, particular interpretations of what studenthood should constitute become more emphasised than they might at other moments. This became clear to me at the USI meeting. I believe the incident described above unified a room of students that had moments previously been in contention. Needless to say, USI’s Pro-Choice stance is not its defining feature and would not ordinarily exert that much influence over affiliation to it. It was due to recent events surrounding the issue of Choice in Ireland, as well as circulating discourses in the media and among student activist groups that brought this issue to the surface and made it a central aspect of studenthood. Similarly, the issue of Choice became a matter of definitional urgency to membership of femsoc for the same reasons.

While larger representative groups like USI also form part of the discursive field in which ideas of studenthood are negotiated and contested, they are largely informed by the discourses of smaller student groups such as femsoc. Inevitably, the process of negotiating difference within groups often presents contrasting and conflicting perspectives, as demonstrated by the conflict at the USI meeting. Even so, participants can experience moments of unity with regard to those discourses that have become relevant to the lives of individual members and the rhetoric of representative groups (Nash 1992). At the same time, ideas about studenthood and the kind of values it should project are not framed or constructed within the rhetoric of a single movement that can be called a student movement. Rather, studenthood is conceptualised and negotiated within the domains of multiple interest groups and in the realms of student activist networks.

### Conclusion

In my investigation of student activism and the construction of ‘studenthood’, I analysed those processes of group identification which are key to constructing unity and illuminating common goals within groups. While these processes can take the form of any number of activities, including meetings, discussions, forum theatre or protest marches, they
are essentially discursive and their role is to negotiate the terms of group membership and/or movement alignment. This process necessarily involves a number of alignment activities which incorporate a multiplicity of voices into movement strategy and group identity, as well as the marking of symbolic boundaries of what is not suitable for group membership. A range of contrasting and conflicting interpretations can exist within groups, especially as they are expanded into larger representative groups such as USI. However, interpretations of movements and identities are highly reflexive and are constantly emerging in the ever-changing climate of social and political reality. As various issues gain and lose importance in the lives of students, those that have become most pertinent serve to unite the group when the time comes to project a unified identity in the performance of public protest. In these cases, students are able to coordinate their actions despite a variety of perspectives and outlooks. This was demonstrated at the USI meeting, when the issue of Choice became an integral part of student unity. In this way, representative groups such as femsoc, YFE and USI become the discursive field in which notions of studenthood are constructed.

Finally, on the question of whether student identities become essentialized in the pursuit of political goals, looking at the complexity of symbolic meaning and the variety of articulations in the Pro-Choice movement, it has become clear to me that even in moments of supposed homogenisation in the liminal phase of ritual, participants are still negotiating interpretations of events and identities whilst also trying to come to terms with their own conflicting perspectives. Essentialization becomes the discursive practice of identifying ‘other’ in an attempt to position oneself firmly within the rhetoric of a movement, as can be seen in the case of femsoc’s alignment towards the Pro-Choice movement.

In the end, I could not see a single one of my informants as simply a student activist. Even in the midst of public protest demonstrations, they never projected a single, essentialized identity. They were at once feminists, pro-choice advocates and students. They were simultaneously against education cuts, water charges and a home owner’s tax. They projected their studenthood, but it did not define them. They defined it, and it was always fluctuating, unfinished and contested.

References


Notes
1 This article is an adaptation of my BA undergraduate thesis. I have used pseudonyms and initials to protect the identity and confidentiality of the informants who have kindly helped me with the research presented here
2 NUI Maynooth’s feminist society
3 National University of Ireland Maynooth
4 I will here on refer to all groups by the abbreviations given
5 From here on in I will refer to the Galway Grassroots Gathering in initials as (GGG)
6 Fracking: short term used by activists to refer to hydraulic fracturation, a method of underground drilling used to harness natural gas trapped underneath bedrock.
7 An aggressive Pro-Life organisation heavily funded by US religious organisers
8 An Irish expression meaning “the door is right there”.

Visitor Experiences at St Fagans National History Museum, and their Role in the Politics of Welsh Identities

Catrin Greaves*

Abstract: Museums are becoming increasingly orientated towards the visitor experience. There has been an increase in the ways in which the visitor can engage with the exhibits on display and add their voice to the story that the museum aims to tell. I examine the case of St Fagans National History Museum near Cardiff, Wales, which comprises of historic buildings from various locations across the country. I propose that visitor experiences are one way in which to engage with debate regarding the meaning of contemporary Welsh identity.

Key Words: National Identity; Open-air Museum; Visitor Experiences; Memory; Craft-making.

Introduction

‘In order for groups to know themselves… they must ‘announce their identities’ (Goffman 1959 in Hermanowicz et al 1999:198). I propose that visitor experiences at St Fagans National History Museum are one way in which Welsh people ‘announce’ their multiple ‘Welsh’ identities since ‘Wales is a singular noun but a plural experience’ (Dai Smith, 1999:36, in Mason 2011:23). I will examine how visitors express and reaffirm identities at St Fagans by participating in cultural activities, attending ritualistic events and through engaging with ‘traditional’ craft-making practices, whether through the making or purchase of goods that are seen to be ‘traditional’ to Wales.

My fieldwork took place over a six-week period in 2012. I interviewed museum staff, with a focus on changes that have occurred at the museum in response to contemporary identity politics in Wales, and the difficulties that have arisen in the attempt to present a democratic representation of the country’s national identities (whether these are practical difficulties or conflicts arising between people being represented). I interviewed craftspeople regarding the role of craft-making (as a key visitor experience) at the museum, and its relation to national identities. Visitors were interviewed about their experiences at the museum and their own ideas regarding how Wales is represented by St Fagans.

The Interactive Experience model of Falk and Dierkling (1992) takes into account the personal, physical and social contexts of visitors, noting how these aspects affect experience. In this model, physical contexts include the ‘feel’ of the building where the experience takes place; the personal context includes visitor interests in, and familiarity with, the experience; and the social context (in this case) includes whether the visitor is Welsh, who they visit the museum with, and how they interact with staff. Through the application of this model, I will shed light on the relation between the visitor’s contemporary experience and his/her Welsh identities.

Expressions of Welsh identity

The Rural Landscape

Visitors were able to engage with the rural landscape as a form of identity. The landscape has been connected to a sense of national identity by Moore and Whelan (2007:88), who cite Olwig’s (1984) linking of the heath of Western Jutland to Danish consciousness. Similarly, the rural landscape is associated with Welsh identity at St Fagans in that it is seen to be the setting of a nationalistic sense of folk culture. Where occupations were once specialised and diverse, migration to cities to work in industry meant that a larger number of people worked within the same occupations (ironworker, miner for example). Nationalist discourse thus idealises folk culture as a part of trying to find the primordial ‘givens’ of a culture in an increasingly standardised world, and this idea manages to persist in industrialised societies (Geertz 1973:25-60 quoted by Smith 2001:53). ‘Rural’ and ‘urban’ were conceived as opposites by visitors.

I found that visitors were attracted to the rural as an antidote to busy, modern living, and enjoyed the variety of housing at the museum, which they felt had been ‘customised’ as if still occupied. For example, in one house a jacket had been left on the back of a chair as if the occupants were only momentarily away. This shows a connection to the people of the past. Miller has linked modernisation and urbanisation to a standardisation in housing (Miller 2010:85), so it can be seen that a preference for diversity in housing and the rural are related in that they are both viewed as an antidote to standardised modern living. This demonstrates visitors’ idealisation of the past, which includes a preference for authenticity. I found this idealisation to also exist in the visitor experiences of pottery and craft-making.

Pottery-Making

The Ewenny Pottery was the most popular site at the museum relating to traditional crafts. The connection between pottery and tradition is clearly displayed through the artefacts shown. These include a wassail bowl. ‘Wassailing’ was a pre-Christian New Year tradition, described as a means through which to ‘induce wellbeing’ (for the New Year) (Peate 1935:81). The display of pottery as a part of Welsh folk culture

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Craft-making
It is not just the techniques and tools involved in craft production that are significant, but also the objects in themselves. Clay and the potter’s wheel do not have an innate meaning but through use visitors understand the ‘object’s meaning [to be] the effect it has on the world’ (Pearce 1994:12). Pottery is meaningful because it creates a link between the visitor, the past and a sense of folk national identity. The past and history as a basis for identity has been theorised by Winter - ‘a shared past of Welsh heritage it is still recognised for its ‘aesthetic, historic... social values’ (Vecco 2010:321).

Welsh Identity and Memory through Food
Another popular way in which visitors engaged with traditional industries was through purchasing bread at Derwen Bake House. This Bake House draws upon the theme of traditional village life. One (Welsh) parent told me that she bought gingerbread for her children at the bakery emphasising that her mother and grandmother would bake often. Thus, she linked the consumption of hand-baked produce with family memories. The connection between food and memory has been theorised by Sutton in his ethnography of the Kalymnos, Greece in which he argues that food is a way in which memory of place can be evoked, reminding that person of their identity which is based on that place - 'Eat in order to remember the Kalymnos' (Sutton 2001:2). Much earlier, Locke 1690 (quoted by Noonan 1980:164) had proposed food as a memory-criterion for identity evoking how memory was linked to place and therefore identity.

An additional example in which identity is grounded in place is through the notion of identity based on descent. This is based on the myth of genealogical descent that the Welsh people are descendants of the Celts. St Fagans features a Celtic Village where people can engage with crafts using traditional ‘Celtic’ methods. Re-enacting history in this way ‘shapes audiences’ understanding of the past’ (Magelssen 2011:2). However, the type of housing used in the Celtic village was also found in England, demonstrating that there was no singular ‘Welsh’ identity even as far back historically as the Iron age. Eriksen (2007:5) supports the idea that globalisation is not recent and that there has been a mixing of cultures for many centuries. This means that identity is based on a common yet constructed history. The Museum ‘operates as a space in which it is possible to identify competing definitions of ‘Welshness’... close examination reveals evidence of the on-going process of remembering and the remaking of cultural memory in response to the demands of the present’ Mason (2011:254). Memory plays an on-going role in visitor constructions of national identity.

Special Events
The ritualistic marking of passing seasons is another way in which the museum reaffirms Welsh identity. Such customary activities are linked to identity affirmation (Hermanowicz et al 1999:197). The celebration of Beltane, at the museum, an Irish and Manx festival for May Day is an example. This event is held in recognition of Wales as a Celtic nation through its connection with other Celtic nations. ‘Celtic’ is an ethnic identity. ‘Ethnic boundaries are better understood as social
Contextualising Identities

The contexts in which the museum operates must be considered when examining issues of national identity. ‘Objects are given meaning in socio-historical contexts’ (Fabian 1979 in Svasek 2011:88). Relevant contexts include the politics of contemporary Wales and also museum practice and power relations within this sphere. At the museum, the Welsh as a group are ‘defined from within’ (Barth paraphrased by Eriksen 1993:37). By this I mean that visitors interact with what is on display at the museum, ultimately using what they find in order to reflect on national identity. However, the visitor does not have totally free agency as what they see at the museum is determined by wider contexts. These contexts are financial, historical, cultural, social and circumstantial. ‘There is discrepancy between national ideology and social practice’ (Eriksen 1993:99). This demonstrates how there is a difference between nationalist and ideological representations and reality. I will consider Welsh nationalist discourse and how the museum interacts both with this and other identities in order to create an impression of how people view the Welsh nationality. ‘Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness; it invents nations where they do not exist’ (Gellner 1964:169 in Anderson 1983:6). A singular ‘Welsh’ identity does not exist, so representations are contested.

Interaction between groups: Ethnicity and Belonging

The fact that there are multiple cultural identities displayed at St Fagans supports the assertion that when studying a group, (in this case ‘The Welsh’), it is ‘social interaction and social organisation that are important, and not just cultural content’ (Eriksen 1993:2), seeing it as simplistic to equate cultural content directly with membership of a national group. At St Fagans, interaction between groups is facilitated in the ‘Belonging’ display, where there was collaboration between curators and members of communities from which artefacts originated. This was especially evident in displays concerning religious diversity. Common religion has been implicated as a pre-condition for the emergence of a nation (Gellner 1986:xxv). Religion is important to the idea of Wales as a nation because of the significance of the publication of the Bible in the Welsh language by William Morgan in 1588. The emergence of print commodity has been noted as being significant in the development of ‘national consciousness’ (Anderson 1983:37). The role of the Bible in the preservation of the Welsh language demonstrates that religion was important in the emergence of consciousness of national belonging in Wales but a common religion is not necessarily vital for feeling part of that nation, as many religions are represented in the depiction of one nation.

St Fagans takes into account not only the presence of those from other nations in Wales but also the presence of Wales globally. Wales is not an isolated unit and has a presence and links at a global level. ‘Wales, Land of the Red Dragon’ is an exhibition organised by National Museums Wales at the Three Gorges Museum in Chongqing, China. This exhibition is intended as an introduction to Wales, with an emphasis upon Wales’ links to the wider world, notably through industrial trade. Industrial development is another factor that has been theorised as being a precursor to nationalist thinking in that it leads to ‘conceptual convergence’ (Gellner 1983:113). Nationalist thinking involves the consciousness of self/other. ‘Humanity is divided into nations, each with its own character, history and destiny’ (Smith 2009:61) and this convergence allows a nation to see itself as distinct from other nations. This leads to an increase in sense of identity through contrast with different nations. For example, Pitchford, (2001) has examined how Welsh nationalist representation is deliberately constructed in opposition to ‘English’ identity. This dichotomy is shown at the museum in rural/industrial contrasts and language differences.

There is a tension between nationalistic representations and those representations which acknowledge a plurality of people who feel they are Welsh in spite of not being originally Welsh but having incorporated this identity into their own over a period of time. Nationalism can be defined as an ideological
movement to attain and maintain…identity (Smith 2009:61). Thus it is inaccurate to portray one national identity as a polar opposite to another, as many people feel that they are represented by more than one national identity. There is no singular ‘Welsh identity’. The museum has recently attempted to rectify this situation through incorporating additional identities into its representation of Wales, such as that of Welsh speakers who are not originally from Wales.

What visitors view to be authentic depictions of Welsh identity is determined by people in authority - ‘Authenticity is not about factuality. It is about authority’. (Crew and Sims 1991:163 in Svasek 2011:133). Museum display ‘reproduces the agency of commissioners’ (Svasek 2011:85). I have however demonstrated that visitors still have a voice within this authority framework.

Acquisition of Objects
Museum staff often acquire objects through opportunism. The donation to museums of personal objects raises questions about the value of objects. In many cases, objects are seen as having increased value if they are placed in a museum (Svasek 2011:74) and a curator explained this increased value as being a potential motivation for donating to the museum collection, although one assistant whose father donated some marbles to the museum said that he did so in order to leave his mark at the museum, so that he could feel part of it. This relates to Mauss’s (1967) principle of the ‘spirit of the gift’. The gift possesses the essence of the giver. The principle of gifting is relevant to buildings. Buildings are only acquired when they are donated, often by the family of the building’s deceased owner. The movement of traditional industries from their original context to the museum setting (‘museumification’) has been discussed by Debarry (2004:122). Comparisons can be drawn between Debarry’s study of Le Creuset, a French town centred on a family industry and the creation of a museum with the passing of the owner of this industry as is the case for many buildings at St Fagans.

Conclusion
In conclusion, through experiences, visitors add their voice to the museum’s conversation regarding the nature of the ‘Welsh nation’. Museum users are also its critics (Hein 2000:50). Social constructivist approaches have conceived of identity "as an idea or discourse rather than as an empirically observable social ‘unit’ defined by features such as dress, language, or customs" (Tilley 1997:511 in Davis 1999:25). The notion that it is social interaction that should be emphasised shows that identities are constructed through discourse and debate by social actors (in this case, people who engage with the museum, from staff and visitors to higher authorities such as the state and funding bodies). 'The nation cannot be reduced to a single unitary definition' (Fenton 2003:179 in Skey 2011:11) and these people define the Welsh nation differently.

I have illustrated how different forms of tangible and intangible heritage are used to build a multi-faceted version of Welsh identity at St Fagans. Visitors engage with artefacts and material culture through making 'traditional' crafts. Visitor manipulations of objects evoke memories, which function to reiterate their sense of identities. The museum space is intended to recreate 'Wales in miniature', with buildings from each county being represented. St Fagans has changed from explicitly being a 'folk' museum, exhibiting articles of an idealised folk culture meant to be an 'authentic' version of Welsh culture, to representing both those who feel culturally Welsh and also people who live in Wales today. The rural, folk version of Welsh identity is still present, but this is not static. Rather, the past is used as a resource through which to base identity in the modern world.

Clifford (1988:244) has pointed to the exhibition as a means of preserving minority cultures ‘in an increasingly globalised world’. In this article, I have shown that there has also been a greater emphasis placed upon the relationship of Wales to the wider world. Equally, the museum has incorporated multi-religious identities into its portrayal of modern Wales. Wales is thus not represented as an isolated unit but rather one that is interacting with other cultures and identities.

Rousseau (2005:686) has shown how the presence of leaders (in this context, those with authority in the museum framework) results in a decline in a sense of shared identity. Conversely, I have shown how a more democratic approach, where all visitors can participate in activities, has led to an increase in a sense of shared identity. By feeling included in museum representations through engaging with visitor experiences available, people are more likely to share a sense of Welsh identity. 'Heritage sites are ‘cathedrals of identity’ (Adams 2005). Thus we can see that to an extent, the museum refines identities so it can classify them (industrial, refugee, Welsh-speaker and so on) in an attempt to accommodate multiple meanings of one national identity as it evolves in contemporary society.

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Notes

1 ‘Wael hael’ means ‘to be whole’.
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