

# ENDING

**Anthropological Association of Ireland Conference 2020**  
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**Hosted by Dublin City University**  
**on Zoom**  
**[anthropologyireland.org](http://anthropologyireland.org)**

## **PAPER & POSTER ABSTRACTS**

Yes, the newspapers were right: snow was general all over Ireland. It was falling on every part of the dark central plain, on the treeless hills, falling softly upon the Bog of Allen and, farther westward, softly falling into the dark mutinous Shannon waves. It was falling, too, upon every part of the lonely churchyard on the hill where Michael Furey lay buried. It lay thickly drifted on the crooked crosses and headstones, on the spears of the little gate, on the barren thorns. His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead.

**Conference Keynote****Joseph Webster (Cambridge University)****“Anthropology-as-Theology:****Violent Endings and the Permanence of New Beginnings”****26 November at Noon**

This paper examines the temporality of dispensationalist imaginings of the apocalypse, with a particular focus on their acutely violent character. In doing so, I offer a critique of new literature emerging from within the Anthropology-Theology dialogue, arguing that anthropological understandings of millenarianism might best be advanced by deliberately surrendering to the theological claims of our interlocutors, rather than by seeking to ‘dialogue’ with them. Beginning ethnographically, the paper notes that, for the Brethren and for Jehovah’s Witnesses, the most convincing signs of the imminent apocalypse are violent ones. Deploying what I call ‘Anthropology-as-Theology’ to analyse dispensationalist images of violent endings, I ask two questions, namely, what are the temporal effects of violent imaginings, and what exists on the other side of such violence, after its perpetration? By adopting an ‘Anthropology-as-Theology’ perspective, what we gain is a new vision of human endings. This perspective, I suggest, reveals millenarianism to be temporally omnivorous insofar as its theology lays claim to all of time, greedily swallowing up every manifestation of ‘the event’ via its intentionally immodest insistence upon the eternal omnipresence of permanence.

**Theme Keynote: Ending Anthro/The University****Chandana Mathur (Maynooth University)****“New proposals for anthropologists in the age of extinction capitalism”****26 November 5.45 PM**

Having already borrowed from the title of Kathleen Gough’s landmark 1968 essay calling on anthropologists to address global circuits of power and exploitation in their work, I feel emboldened to join her in being “both obvious and argumentative” in my consideration of those same circuits at the present historical moment. Especially now, when they have occasioned intersecting crises that could threaten our very survival, it is time again to think aloud about the ways in which an emancipatory anthropology might now face up to these large-scale forces.

**Theme Keynote: Ruined Places?****Cian O'Callaghan (Trinity College Dublin)****"Ambivalent ruination: possibility and precarity in Dublin's rubble"****27 November 3.45PM**

Dublin is in ruins, but the forms and impacts of ruination are continually shifting. Following the 2008 property crash, the city was characterised by the stark imprint of vacant and unfinished remnants of a real estate bubble. But the return of the property market has initiated ruination of a different kind; fabricating material and social conditions that have exhausted the possibilities for cultural infrastructures, affordable housing and forms of sociality "otherwise" (Povinelli, 2011) to mainstream neoliberal logics. Responding to ambivalent processes outlined in the theme of "Dublin in Ruins", this paper will attempt to do two things. Firstly, the paper unpacks the conceptual and experiential ambivalence of ruins. Drawing on recent work in disciplines such as Geography and Anthropology, the paper sets out an approach to considering ruins and 'vacant' spaces as active, lively, and heavily contested components of urban life. Secondly, drawing on an empirical analysis of contestations over the reuse of Dublin's vacant spaces in the period following the 2008 crash, the paper elaborates on the techniques through which an initial set of possibilities in vacant spaces were gradually replaced by new modes of what Isabel Lorey (2015) calls "governmental precarization". The emergence of this new regime of governing through precarity, however, also produces new forms of resistance mobilised around shared precarity. The paper shows how Dublin's ruins became a key area of governmental intervention, producing an increasingly bland commercial urban landscape but also new subjectivities that oscillate self-precarization and its refusal through politicising shared precarity.

**ENDING**

## PAPER AND POSTER ABSTRACTS

**John Barry**

### **Bookending growth: empire, ecocide and Ireland**

Sir William Petty, the 17th century colonial administrator in Cromwell's army in Ireland, was the first to articulate what we now can 'economic growth' as state policy. In this way, economic growth, 'the greatest story never told' in terms of its ubiquity and capacity to be a form of ideological 'commonsense', has its origins in colonial Ireland. Inextricably linked to empire, extractivism and capitalism, over the centuries economic growth has been a 'core state imperative', especially in the post-world war II cold war context. This paper surveys the historical and Irish roots and evolution of this concept, together with contemporary green critiques of economic growth as an outdated objective that is increasingly ecocidal, inequality producing and undermining of planetary health and human flourishing. As a 'poster child' for neoliberal, globalising capitalism, this paper analyses economic growth an ideology amongst economic and policy elites in Ireland and in other countries. More recent iterations of the growth discourse at state, media and business elite levels include notions such as 'green growth', 'smart growth' and the 'circular economy', alongside more standard neoliberal policies of attracting FDI to Ireland with low corporation tax rates. In relation to the latter the ideological 'commonsense' of growth can be observed in the popular as well as elite support for low corporation taxes, and the persistent media discourse of policymakers and politicians 'wearing the green jersey' to keep Irish competitiveness and low taxes from European interference, and projecting a view of 'Ireland Inc'. Exemplary here is the on-going legal dispute between the Irish state and the EU Commission over Ireland's refusal to level 8 billion euros in taxes from the Apple Corporation. It is almost as if 12.5%, the 'official' corporate tax rate (though many corporations have paid much less) should now be inserted into the Irish flag, such is the cultural/popular as well as policy/elite support for this pro-growth tax regime.

This paper proceeds with an analysis of the need for post-growth, post-carbon and post-capitalist policies and strategies that can address the planetary crisis that has its roots in a growth/accumulation dynamic that has also passed a threshold of being a net benefit to the majority in society. On this latter point, the phenomenon of 'jobless growth', observed in Ireland in recent years, will be discussed. The paper concludes with suggestions for post-growth policies which it is claimed can reduce socio-economic inequalities that growth perpetuates rather than reduces, which would also open up opportunities for the liberation of society and human labour from the 'tyranny' of growth (Barry, 2019). This dethroning of economic growth, 'the one true social policy' of neoliberalism as Foucault noted, while perhaps heralding the end of the social world as we know it, is not the end of the world. Beyond the domination of the cultural imaginary of growth lies a different type of abundance, free time and emancipation.

**Patrick G. Barry**

## **How Ritual Commemoration Is Sustained in the Age of COVID-19: Examining Ritual Adaptation in Irish Republican Easter Commemorations Using Social Media**

When the COVID-19 Pandemic hit Ireland, it threatened to end the 'decade of commemorations' and disrupted the usual Irish Republican Easter commemoration rituals. While Sinn Féin cancelled their official commemorations, people found ways to commemorate despite the restrictions, begging the question, are commemoration rituals 'essential'? But, how do people commemorate when they can't leave their homes, and how do anthropologists study rituals when traditional fieldwork is no longer an option? When I heard that Queen's University Belfast was ending all fieldwork, I was forced to adapt my research to ensure that the end of fieldwork would not end my dissertation. My research topic became focused on how ritual commemoration is sustained during a lockdown, and what this suggests about these rituals.

After years spent researching Republicanism in Belfast and building the connections to engage in traditional ethnographic fieldwork, I had to adapt to the ending of the research methods that most anthropologists consider to be the foundation of what we do. We often spend months or years in the field familiarising ourselves with the physical environment, observing social interactions, and establishing rapport with potential gatekeepers and research participants. So for us, being forced out of the field can be a culture shock. Studying social behaviour online may not be a new concept, but using online methodological approaches to examine rituals is uncommon. With Republican commemoration rituals, we would ordinarily expect to see parades, gatherings at memorial gardens, and other ritual acts performed while congregating in public spaces. The lockdown measures meant that these rituals could not be performed as expected, but they did not end the rituals themselves. Instead, rituals were preserved using social media, where individuals could commemorate together while apart.

Being forced out of the field led to examining ritual, which has been studied so comprehensively, in an unconventional way. As a field site, social media can flatten both space and time. With an environment like Facebook, one can use the logic of the medium to develop new research methods to replace more traditional ethnographic approaches. I coded commemoration content on Sinn Féin Facebook pages and mapped it to create a better picture of the relationship between online content and the 'real' communities where modified forms of commemoration occurred. I also analysed commemoration posts from a qualitative perspective to better understand the changes in how individuals engaged with the ritual's usual symbolic capital. With my findings, I argue that rituals are 'essential' and are sustained, despite great challenges, because they sustain our social selves. In my proposed presentation, I will discuss how rituals are sustained during a pandemic and what can be learned about rituals by examining how they resist the challenges of a global pandemic. I will also discuss adapting methodological approaches to social research when traditional ethnographic fieldwork is not an option.

**Tom Boland**

**The End of the World and Eternal Life: Popular Ethnographies by Mark O'Connell as Contemporary Eschatology**

After the crisis of representation, post-truth and the problematisation of all disciplinary knowledge, works of popular non-fiction may count as ethnography of contemporary experiences, or alternately as cultural productions articulating contemporary social anxieties. In any case, Mark O'Connell's best selling works on post-humanism and ecological disaster create tantalising ethnographies – *To be a Machine* and *Notes on an Apocalypse* respectively – with thick description, travel to far-flung locations, interviews with key informants, reflexive auto-ethnographic self-positioning and so on. Disciplinary considerations aside; what do these texts tell us about the contemporary moment? Firstly, vast contemporary events and processes are both experienced as subjective transformations and distant spectacles. Secondly, both key actors in these processes – from advocates of the 'singularity' to eco-warriors – and their distanced observers tend to reach towards myths and theological models to story their experiences, from Faustian bargains to achieving enlightenment to the final judgement. Thirdly, despite the numbing experience of repetitive announcements, whether end of history or truth or nature or just the daily pandemic stats or the dire revelations of the acceleration of ecological collapse, there are multiple narratives available to make sense of the seeming eternity of the contemporary moment.

**Evropi Chatzipanagiotidou & Fiona Murphy**

**Crafting Ends: Displaced Livelihoods, Entrepreneurial Subjectivities, and the Politics of Loss**

The paper is drawn from a British Academy-funded project that examines the politics of labour in the context of Syrian refugee lives in Istanbul, Turkey. It argues that the notion of refuge is inextricably bound both conceptually and in practice to crossovers of multiple endings. We focus in particular on the concept of 'social entrepreneurship' and the ways, in which it emerges in state and humanitarian practice as an ameliorative solution to loss and displacement, engendering notions of ends and new beginnings. Through the case of Knitstanbul, a women-led Syrian social enterprise in Istanbul that produces crafts, we follow the social and material struggles of dealing with loss and constructing livelihoods in a context of protracted displacement. Knitstanbul engenders a particular kind of 'hopefulness' for many of the participants, through the act of crafting material objects as well as new socialities and spaces of affectivity. This is, however, a fraught space of possibility and hopefulness that is structured by contingent political forces and societal supports which sees many asylum seekers and refugees struggle on a daily basis in the very act of making their lives more liveable through such endeavours. Moreover, we argue here that the idea of the 'innovator' in many refugee projects speaks to a broader market-driven rhetoric that individualises and quantifies 'loss' and is circulated as a discursive tool of producing particular (gendered) personhoods and docile (refugee) bodies. This process involves a kind of moral selving through the forgetting of old skills and acquisition of new ones. Participants have to reinvent themselves as entrepreneurial and innovative, not only to be able to knit, but also to attempt to craft many kinds of ends through perpetual cycles of uncertainty, precarity, and rightlessness.

**Steve Coleman**

**Dawn of the Liminoid – an excursus in honor of David Graeber.**

Victor and Edith Turner's concept of liminality can be found all over the humanities and social sciences, used by theorists who never realise that the Turners banished their world from "the liminal" forever - liminality only exists in "pre-industrial societies," where ritual processes are obligatory - liminality is a social-structural phase, ritually expressed.

Few people think about the fact that for the Turners, liminality comes back from the dead as "the liminoid," which at first glance seems merely an aspect of optional, fun-filled, leisure and artistic activity. But "the liminoid" is really a gaping maw which swallows all culture, imagination, even solemn religious ritual and pilgrimage, rendering everything optative, individualised, and seemingly trivial, in postlapsarian societies, globally. But beyond that event-horizon lies revolution.

The Turners' apparently dystopic, insanely productive, and unabashedly allochronic concept produces a theory of work and industrially-managed leisure, but also of the wild spaces on the outskirts, of what happens to the energy that capitalism fails to control, of what becomes of the moments that slip through managerial fingers, the fragments of leftover free territory in our dreams. But what happened to the non-optative, the obligatory, when it too crossed the great divide? Did "work" also heave itself into that gaping maw? Why are we so unfree in our liminoid world? And what happened when the global pandemic suddenly turned the world right-side up? And why do all the classic studies in "performance theory" describe societies which are balanced on a knife-edge between one side and the other of that great divide, as we are now, once again?

**Elżbieta Drażkiewicz**

**Scientific Intimacy: The Changing Relationship with Medical Data at the Time of COVID-19 pandemic**

As the coronavirus started to spread in Ireland, the epidemiological data became the most sought-after information in the country. This paper will examine the ways in which COVID-19 redefined the intimacies of the relationships that health professionals and the members of the public have with medical data. It will focus on Irish examples and explore how the context of the pandemic turned numbers from abstract cognitive tools into important and affective tenets of social lives that dictated the moral values and conditions of sociality. It will examine the role of enumeration and metrics in mediating new forms of intimacy with state and society.

**Ute Eickelkamp**

**Wiyaringu: On endings in Central Australian desert thought**

Generally speaking, Australian Aboriginal desert cosmologies emphasize the idea of everlasting abiding presence and eternal return. However, if the predominant religious orientation is conservative and aimed at sustaining the structural order of the Dreaming, as individuals, people assert their own ideas, creativity and volitional autonomy from a very young age and in all parts of life. Much less noted than such complementarities – of autonomy and relatedness, differentiation and association, tradition and innovation – are vernacular discourses about endings. And yet, these are plainly there, including in the context of the vernacular Christianity. In this paper I consider how the Anangu at Pukatja might speak of endings today and why. I attend to certain conceptual ramifications, including the question if endings form part of another complementarity (beginnings, or eternity?)

**Shvat Eilat and Ori Katz**

**A matter out of recognition: The contestation of the lack of cultural scripts in the cases of missing persons and stillborn burial in Israel**

Comparing two ethnographic studies, conducted by each of the authors, of stillborn burial and of missing persons in Israel, we wish to ask how social categories are constructed in the absence of cultural scripts. Firstly, we explore the encounter of the people who have been left behind, in both case studies, with a lack of recognition and cultural language\script, and thus show how social expectations about birth and death create a "double absence" (of both the loved-ones, and cultural guidance about the new status). Then, we move on to highlight the places where actors from both fields borrow cultural scripts from other arenas to cope with this double absence. In this way, they anchor the importance of giving recognition and bringing closure to their liminal state. Lastly, in the case of missing persons, the actors are giving voice to a new category: "missingness." By that, they bring relief to a tension created between the potentiality of continued life and the possibility of death. Simultaneously, in the case of stillborn burial, the mothers try to expand existing categories to include their stillborn in the body politic. In contrast, the state and burial apparatus insist on genderize and Judaize their stillborn under known taxonomies. Expanding the categories to include their stillborn is done through a tactic of "arguing with the state". Describing the unmediated encounter with the "presence of absence" and the attempts to construct a new category based on an absence ridden with social meanings and context, can help understand the processes of acquiring recognition and increasing the visibility of liminal categories of being. Looking as endings as a prolonged and entangled process, that is not only embedded in socialites but transforms them, we wish to make a contribution to the discussion on life's thresholds. We claim that thresholds are not at all static but are moved from within, to get them closer to an end, and by that carve new articulations and social entities thereof. In the Israeli context, our study shows how specific hierarchies of civil and colonial value can shape the way individuals struggle for recognition and visibility in the public sphere.

**Conner Habib & Una Mullally**

## **Utopia Ireland: the Process at the End of the World**

In our presentation, we seek not to present an academic paper, nor a critique, but a project and a proposition.

As anti-work feminist theorist Kathi Weeks points out, we live in a time where critique has overwhelmed proposition. She offers, as the best proposition, utopia. Utopia represents a move away from critique, which is limited by present conditions, and locates itself in the imaginary, which, though shaped by contours of social and material conditions, is nevertheless so distantly limited as to seem limitless.

As such Utopia Ireland announces, if not the end of critique, then the shift towards proposition. Utopia Ireland is a project that works on the premise that while achieving utopia is an impossible task, striving towards it is nourishing. To that end, Utopia Ireland seeks to set in motion a process in Ireland which perpetually reorients people back to the ideals of utopia.

Our project, already in its initial phases, is based loosely on Rudolf Steiner's "threefold social organism" and through an ontogenesis inherent in each step, reflects the development of the human organism itself. Rather than the establishment of a state, an abstract political process, or kingship that seeks to draw the heavens down to earth (see *On Kings* by Graeber and Sahlins), we instead seek to give life to dynamic and living process. The process is contoured to create breaks and flows of interaction, namely by cultivating separate "spheres" or "organs" within which people meet with utopia in mind: the cultural, political, and economic. As these organs gain their own strength, they will begin to communicate with each other. Since we're engaged with a living process, at the ends of linearity, we seek to be guided by the unfolding and developing entity of the process itself.

At a moment when much discourse is orientated around the notion of "collapse" and "the fall of...", the conclusivity of "ending" can overlook what is also simultaneously beginning. If anything, "endings" are manifestations, with "beginnings," of more vibrant multi-sphered forces. During the social upheaval in France in 1968, students asked French psychoanalyst and philosopher Jacques Lacan for direction. He replied that they didn't really want revolution, but that they were seeking new masters. We agree, and so instead seek to end the typical approaches to change that rely on revolution and merely borrowing the substances and gestures of the state and institutions whose blinkered nature we wish to walk away from. We seek a more human – and therefore anthropological – process.

It is our understanding that a process can generate healthy economic, political, and cultural thought, feeling, and will, and to end the constant deployment of failed strategies. Utopia Ireland can therefore stand as a real alternative to the institutions currently in power, instead of recreating their problems through replication; and ultimately make irrelevant the unintentional, polluted, and meaningless processes currently in place.

**Fiona Hallinan and Kate Strain**

**Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is: On darkness and the study of endings**

This presentation will explore darkness both as an allegory for endings and as a real site of political possibility. Through a written essay and set of instructions for listeners, the talk will use curatorial strategies to alter the experience of light of the audience for the duration of the talk. The text presents darkness as a site of ritual and encounter with the other, illustrating this with examples from archaeological research in caves and darkness, critical theory, phenomenology and the role of light in the development of modernity in the context of cities.

This paper is presented in the frame of the project of Ultimology, the study of things that are dying, and will be contextualised through a brief introduction to its concept, background and methodologies, including the ongoing On Death reading group that has led to a mapping of affective processes. At the end of the paper we will invite the audience to participate in a short group discussion.

**Adrienne Hawley**

**The eschatology of the family in the welfare state: An ethnography of the UP1 form**

Taking Paul Dourish's injunction to anthropologists to go 'where the action is' (2001); an underexplored area of state-family interaction is in social welfare forms. In these curious places, the state negotiates with individuals around their family status, relatedness and accounts are offered, negotiated and accepted. As such they are remarkable sites where the performance of family is rendered concrete and laid bare to bureaucratic administration.

Here, I explore anthropologically, the experience of the UP1 application form for Irish unemployment benefit. Across 20 pages, in question after question individuals pour themselves into administrative categories manageable by the state. Forms such as this represent new spaces for ethnography (Ingold, 2018; Augé and Colleyn, 2009). The mundane act of filling out a form is a deeper negotiation between the family and the State, where as the author of this dialog (Bakhtin, xx) gently governmentalizes the family. Categories of family and the social are rendered anew across the form, a lover becomes a partner, home becomes a habitual residence, unthinkingly or perhaps worse thinkingly asking unemployed people for their occupation, line by line, check box by check box, the form performs the State's vision and concept of the family. As such, it represents the sublime embodiment of state performance, kinship and relatedness.

The parsing of questions, language, category, data and their engagement across the form reveal the conflict, complexity, ambivalences and agnostics that surround the State as it attempts to wrestle the problem of family and care administratively in the forms rich social drama (Turner, 1974). In this I eschew considering this as another manifestation of Foucauldian technology and power, rather, I explore this terrain for its micropolitics with empathy for the author and applicant. Unpicking the language games (Wittgenstein, 1953) the bureaucracy and its concerns; as well as the needy with their hunger, reveals the form as a site in which state care unfolds and takes the family out of the picture. As such, this practice reveals the welfare state's eschatology of the family, a place where the family ceases to be the foundation of care, families are judged, and dispatched.

**Laura Louise Heinsen**

**Legitimizing Death: The case of second-trimester selective abortion in Denmark**

This paper explores a particular kind of corporeal ending: Second-trimester abortion for fetal anomaly. Through the case-story of one expecting Danish couple, who chose to apply for abortion following the diagnosis of Down's syndrome in week 21 of pregnancy, I show how pregnancy termination in Denmark is ambiguously configured both as 'abortion of a futile fetus' and as 'killing of a child'. The emergence of the notion of 'killing' in my fieldwork as an emic term was highly puzzling, prompting me to ask: If we normally associate the terminology of 'killing' with illegitimacy of abortion, what kind of 'legitimation work' (van Wichelen 2019) then is involved in ending unborn life? Of the 15.000 medically induced abortions performed annually in Denmark, approx. 800 abortion are done after the legal limit of free abortion in week 12 of pregnancy, of which 80 % are performed due to the detection of a fetal anomaly. This means that on average, two pregnancies are terminated because of inborn abnormalities each day. While the vast majority of abortions are performed on unwanted pregnancies, second-trimester termination for fetal anomaly is most often the result of wanted pregnancies that become unwanted during pregnancy. Thus, such terminations could be seen as selective reproduction, referring to practices that aim to prevent or promote the birth of particular kinds of children (Wahlberg and Gammeltoft 2017). Unlike in the US as well as countries such as Ireland and Poland, where abortion politics continues to be a politically contentious topic, abortion in Denmark has since its liberalization in 1973 generally been socially and ethically endorsed. Regarded by many as the quintessential image of women's emancipation from male patriarchy, ending fetal life thus takes place in a cultural climate in which pregnancy termination is depicted as a reproductive right. Indeed, Denmark constitutes a unique case study for intensified high-tech reproductive medicine that has turned fetal 'quality control' (Rapp 2000:126) and hence 'therapeutic' abortion into routine events. Since the implementation of routine prenatal screening in 2004, offering a 1st trimester risk assessment for chromosomal anomalies and a 2nd trimester malformation scan to all pregnant woman, regardless of age and risk profile and free of charge, the overall uptake rate is estimated to be at least 90 %, and since the roll out, babies born with Down's syndrome has dropped with more than 50 % (Schwennesen and Koch 2009:70). Notwithstanding these figures, such terminations are in many cases experienced as infant loss (Statham 2002; Risøy 2010), as I aim to show through the case. Taking analytical departure in Didier Fassin's concept of 'biolegitimacy', in the paper, I tentatively propose a conceptual framework for understanding the socio-moral-material work labored to legitimate the production of fetal death. The paper builds on ongoing multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork in Denmark, focusing on how second-trimester selective abortion is negotiated, authorized, effectuated and experienced in the nexus of biomedicine, law, and the private.

**Thom Herzmark**

**Decolonising Salvage Ethnography at the Continuing End-Point of Adivasi "Culture": Koya self-representation and anthropological practice in rural Andhra Pradesh, India**

Against the backdrop of "de-tribalisation" (land alienation, cultural homogenisation, and decline in Koya language), a new challenge faces adivasis in Andhra Pradesh - the prospect of large-scale displacement from the Koya speaking region, due to a hydro-electric dam on the Gōdāvari river. Koya culture (samskrithi) appears to be approaching a new end-point.

A relic of a newly-endangered methodological approach, my doctoral fieldwork involved 2 years living with Koya shifting cultivators in a hilltop village North of the Gōdāvari river. My thesis explores transitions from livelihoods based on forest agriculture to greater dependency on state Affirmative Action and precarious migrant labour. I argue that Koyas' perception of their cultural difference is solidified by contestation over limited state support as the colonial anthropological category "Scheduled Tribe: Koya" retains purchase in determining entitlement to Affirmative Action and shapes popular ideas of community identity. The narrative of transition becomes a foil for a nuanced story of interpenetrating ideas of distinction and difference: through identification within a governmentalized framework of recognition, Koyas' sense of their "distinctive culture" is reified, as their inclusion in the regional economy and society is premised on a reiteration of their "backwardness".

In this paper the context of an impending cultural end-point is the catalyst to thematise tension within the Koya community around different notions of Koya culture, as struggles for autonomy take shape at different scales of social life. Declining yields from agriculture lead Koyas in isolated villages to monetise resources in increasingly transactional ways to enter emerging cash-crop economies, while educated members of the community hold gloomy and despairing outlooks for their collective future - enacting a view of cultural difference as a currency to leverage greater access to state support. Meanwhile, pockets of Koya advocates and activists - many of whom trained in anthropology - are engaging in forms of salvage ethnography to preserve Koya language, religious festivals and customs (Koya Sampradhayam). But what is at stake in framing struggles for autonomy in such essentialist terms?

This paper analyses cultural revivalist movements by comparing dances performed in adivasi cultural festivals with dances performed during seasonal village festivals. I draw on ethnography with Koyas who operationalize self-exoticised ideas that eulogise adivasis as "aboriginal" and "deeply indigenous", to argue that contemporary salvage ethnography must be understood in relation to historical constraints on self-representation of adivasis and suggest a de-colonial reading of strategic essentialism. Out-dated anthropological categories undergird claims to autonomy and visions of adivasi futures. Hence the paper addresses the continuing role of anthropology in circulating ideas about culture, and shows the discipline is implicated in the narrow idea that cultural entities can die out. In contemporary Koya self-representations the end of traditional cultural practices is publicly mourned while new politicised and commodifiable ideas of Koya cultural identity are ushered in.

**Pauline Garvey & Daniel Miller**  
**Making Good Use of Death and Disease**

This paper is concerned with the reversals that can be observed both in how Irish people deal with death and funerals and more recently in their response to Covid-19. Anthropological studies of death in Ireland have focused on its role in the formation of social practices, specifically how funerary arrangements such as at the 'wake' versus the funeral can be considered as separate events. Wakes, Taylor argues, are 'counter cultural', and cause dissonance between institutional clerical agendas and local or community ones (1989, see also Graham 2019). They can be considered rehabilitative, ie allowing the deceased to be retrieved from relative anonymity and 'transformed into local legend'. Is that why James Joyce's favourite maxim was 'Death is the highest form of life' (Witoszek and Sheeran 1989:28)

As part of 16-month ethnographic fieldwork with older adults in Dublin city and county for the ASSA project (the Anthropology of Smartphones and Smart Ageing) this paper questions why our research participants are avid participants of funerals, but reticent on the subject of death. Funerals are generally recognised by research participants to be important ritual events in Ireland and many older people avidly followed death notices online. RIP.ie is a website that lists every funeral taking place on any particular day, with details of how to get there and times of associated events. People expect to go to funerals of friends, neighbours and relatives, and missing a funeral can cause family rifts for long after the event. At the height of the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, one frequent complaint in the national media related to the prohibition of having more than ten people attend the funerals of family members.

In previous studies of the funeral we find a particular emphasis on reversals, such as tensions between ecclesiastical authorities efforts to solidify the congregation in contrast to the community's focus on strengthening communal ties and values (Taylor 1989), and a shift from focusing on the loss to society of a death to the positive development of sociality associated with the wake. An analogous shift may be reprised by our observations of events following the Covid-19 pandemic. A disaster that could have focused upon loss and the destructive impact on community of lock-down can be shown to have been re-configured by our research participants as an opportunity to assert their normative values as members of what we call The Good Citizens of Covid-19. Our argument is for the parallel between these two examples of how our participants manage to foreground that which creates sociality as opposed to that which diminishes sociality. Taking the argument further, however, we see how with Covid-19 the reversal leads to a situation where it is the people themselves who may become an oppressive constraint on those who do not conform to their strictures of what they regard as the proper response to Covid-19 and good citizenship.

Graham, Barbara. *Death, Materiality and Mediation: An Ethnography of Remembrance in Ireland*. Vol. 7. Berghahn Books, 2016.

Taylor, Lawrence J. "Bas InEirinn: Cultural constructions of death in Ireland." *Anthropological Quarterly* (1989): 175-187.

Witoszek, Nina, and Patrick F. Sheeran. *Talking to the Dead: A Study of Irish Funerary Traditions*. Vol. 117. Rodopi, 1998.

**Antoinette Jordan**

**Clumps of people raised the cheer of the gratefully oppressed  
An ethnography of technologies at the end of the individual**

This paper reports on recently commenced ethnographic fieldwork of government software of a profiling tool for a Public Employment Services (PES). Around one third of European countries, including Ireland, use these kinds of statistical profiling tools to ration care to the unemployed - streaming them based on their proximity to the labour market. The development of these tools follows PES organisational logics to develop an objective system for sorting people, process efficiencies, and unburdening the taxpayer by reducing deadweight interventions. As the tool takes shape, the cooking up of the system between data scientists and public administrators to the gentle exclusion of front-line workers, the unemployed and non-economists researchers becomes ever more evident. This paper explores the process of datafication floating away from an individual as they are made a category or type of person for the purposes of being cared for, losing their agency and selfhood, focusing on the how the individual comes to an end in their data.

In this paper I start to report on an ongoing ethnographic project that studies the development of a European-wide profiling tool for a PES. The work consists of significant long-form field work that incorporates observations, interviews, detritus, and flaneuries, of the people and things who give life to profiling. It follows the technology of population administration out of the databases and into the lives of people, in turn tracing how they enact the outcomes of the logics to which they are subject to. My work traces the microsocial cascade of flattening people into numbers (Verran, 2001), cleaving these numbers from the people who render them up into statisticised agglomerations of populations, to be divided by profiling algorithms into good and bad. This tracing is surrounded by forces, actors and happenstance that scaffold the numerical formation of problem populations, ensnaring people without their subjectivity.

Early as analysis is, as the fieldwork is in process, the work hints at two contributions. First it renders up the microphysics of biopower (Foucault, 1976), detailing what were speculations around how individuals are turned into populations as a practice of government and governmentality. This microphysics flays Foucault's formulation of biopower aspiring to show the practices that rework, mutate and technologise a population, drawing on what Haraway (1997) reworded as technobiopower. Second, and more specific to the context, the study offers an understanding of befuddled instincts of contemporary welfare, the instinct for care, security, inclusion, and to bestow gifts; and the almost opposite instinct not to deprive people of their personal agency, to allow them to fall and live with the consequences. These two instincts, are resolved as a matter of practice in the public administration of welfare, but are never resolved in theory. In this, the study shows how individuals and systems of care are ended by blunt force technology, guided by the cold dead hand of neoliberal responsabilisation.

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**Marta Kempny**

## **Covid-19 and the end of migrant hypermobility?**

Globalisation and hypermobility around the globe, migrants in NI could freely travel back and forth between their country of origin and the receiving country. However, the recent coronavirus crisis has affected global mobility in the form of various travel disruptions, restrictions and blockages. As coronavirus circulated assisted by global travel, the securing of airports and air travel have become of crucial importance in the containment of disease. As Sheller aptly puts it 'we have seen the emergence of new global regimes for managing mobilities – especially as control of borders, airports, and entire urban zones become key points of containment' (2016:25). One can argue that Covid-19 has reinforced the existing mobility regimes. This has put into question the issues of migrant mobility. In this paper I will examine how the recent situation with Covid-19 has affected mobilities of migrant women in Northern Ireland.

This research is located at an intersection of analytic auto-ethnography and ethnography among other migrants. It draws on findings of 30 in-depth interviews with different migrant women originating from different geographical areas (US, Argentina, India, Poland, Romania, Hungary, Spain) to show a multiplicity of ways in which Covid-19 has affected migrant women in NI. It also draws on the author's reflections kept in a form of diary as the pandemic evolved. It applies an intersectional perspective, pointing to multiplicity of factors that shape migrant women experiences.

At the beginning the author will focus on uncertainty and waiting prevailing in migrant women narratives regarding their mobilities in the context of Covid-19. The paper will then will examine how economic and social factors restrict migrant women mobilities. More specifically, it will show how questions of class, and place of origin (European, non European) have affected women's mobilities. It will discuss how coronavirus has reinforced uneven mobilities or existing mobility regimes as some women's mobilities are more likely to be restricted than the others. On one hand, it will examine how some women overcome obstacles, cross multiple borders to visit their homeland, often navigating complex geopolitical topographies. In doing so, the author will also address the issue how some women took advantage of the country's close proximity to the Republic of Ireland and of the issue of still 'invisible border'. The paper will furthermore reflect on how women's immigration status and the questions of looming Brexit further exacerbate question of unequal mobilities.

The paper will conclude that women's mobilities are often interrupted or disrupted due to Covid-19, rather than stopped altogether, leading to 'blockages' or 'coagulations' (Adey 2006; Marston et al. 2005) in their mobilities.

**Daithí Kearney**

**Representing Endings: The raison d'être of folk theatre?**

Developing initially from a grassroots movement in the 1960s, Siamsa Tíre, The National Folk Theatre of Ireland was established in 1974 underpinned by an unpublished plan compiled by Fr Pat Ahern and Patrick O'Sullivan in 1972. Siamsa Tíre may be viewed as a response to urbanisation, modernisation and globalisation as the customs and ways of life in rural Kerry were in danger of coming to an end. In the original production, *Fadó Fadó*, Siamsa reflected the cultural traditions and work practices of rural Ireland through music, song, dance and mime. Drawing on the memories of Ahern and some of the cast members, it incorporated an old butter churn, represented milking cows by hand and the dancing style of the Munnix tradition, a remnant of the dancing master tradition. Endings become a recurring theme in productions by the company – the decline of the corncrake inspired a celebrated scene incorporated into *Sean agus Nua*, *Oileán* reflects the leaving of the Blasket Islands and living at the ending, *Tearmann* focuses on hunger and the death of both people and traditions, and *Moriarty* is motivated by the death of the philosopher. Emigration is featured in a number of productions including *Ding Dong Dederó*, *Imigéin* and *Oileán*. Serendipitously perhaps, the premiere of *Turas* coincided with the retirement of Seán Ahern, an original cast member who performed in over 40 summer seasons. This paper also examines the role of endings in the year that there was no summer season for the first time in six decades and facing a future challenged by the impact of COVID-19. Despite all of these endings, there is a need for a new beginning.

**David Kretz**

## **Translational action as a response to the end of a human world**

Anthropologists, more so perhaps than other social scientists, are constantly facing challenges of translation. Hanks and Severi (2014) have recently organized an effort to move the very concept of translation centre-stage in anthropological theory. I am deeply sympathetic to their effort, yet I also believe the attempts they assembled to this end did not harvest the concept's full potential. One of the reasons for this, to my mind, is that they focus almost exclusively on translations as synchronic transfers between mostly stable, contemporaneous worlds. To the contrary, I think the concept of translations will be most useful for anthropology (and beyond) if it is developed with an emphasis on diachronic transformations of worlds in moments of crisis. This paper thus seeks to propose a concept of translational action as a response to the end of a human world. If we (provisionally) understand worlds as those social, material, and symbolic structures that constitutively allow their inhabitants to be and do certain things it becomes clear that the loss of these structures, the end of a world entails, consequently, an enduring ontological and practical incapacitation. What may one hope for at the end of a world, particularly in cases of comprehensive and sudden world-loss? Many Western philosophers since the Romantics have answered: for a great poet, broadly understood as creator of new worlds. My larger project, after proposing more properly theorized concepts of world and world-loss, next pursues an intellectual history of the figure of the poet as paradigm of historical agency in Western thought. I will not go down this road in my talk. Instead, I want to present some material from the second half of my project where I propose the figure of the translator as an alternative guiding paradigm for thinking responses to the end of a world. In this talk, I will do so in two steps. First, I propose a concept of translational action on the basis of a careful study of the phenomenology of translation in its ordinary, literary sense, thus 'operationalizing' the concept for social theory. Secondly, I flesh out this concept and defend its usefulness for anthropology by reading three ethnographic case studies through the lens of 'translational action.' Carlos Fausto and Emmanuel de Vienne (2014) propose to read the leader of a messianic cult among the Kalapalo on the upper Xingu as achieving a series of 'translating acts'; I argue that a proper understanding of translation shows that this cult-leader was no translator of worlds but more properly a poetic creator of worlds and that 'translating acts' is a misnomer. Anne-Christine Taylor's (2014) analysis of shamanism among the Jivaro Achuar, in the borderlands between Peru and Ecuador, on my reading, presents us with a case of direct competition between poetic and translational responses to the end of a world. Finally, Jonathan Lear's (2006) study of the ethical life of the Apsáalooke of the North American Great Plains and the changes it underwent during the forced transition from a nomadic to a sedentary way of life gives us an idea what a successful translation of worlds could look like.

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- Is 'Empty Spain' an endgame, or the wrong game?

**Jeremy MacClancy**

**Is 'Empty Spain' an endgame, or the wrong game?**

Today, large parts of the Spanish interior have a lower population density than Lapland. In Spanish public and political life, 'Empty Spain' (la España vacía) has become a common term of debate, a newly perceived problem in need of an acceptable solution. Yet, what is involved here? The concept can be, and is attacked on a range of different grounds: conceptual, political, demographic, sexist, multicultural, etc. In my presentation, I wish to draw out the various dimension of this popular phrase, questioning its presumptions, especially its notions of 'nation', 'countryside', 'history', and the passed-over ills of urban immigration. Recently formulated government policy to 'tackle this problem' emerges as overly uniform, silently nationalistic, and blinkered to potential developments. All the while, yet to be investigated are the lived reality of being an aged isolate, the last person left in a village empty of people; of Middle East refugees learning to be shepherds; of counterurbanites renovating abandoned hamlets according to their negotiable dreams. The Spanish interior is not empty: it is full of disparate ideas and actions. It is not ending: maybe an uncoordinated series of new beginnings.

**Brian McGahey**

**“C’est la vie” Living with COVID: Experiences from a French long-term eldercare facility**

“Nous sommes en guerre,” (We are at war), Sœur Christine declared bluntly as I entered the small reception office to begin my shift. Following French president Emmanuel Macron’s introduction of a curfew in nearby Paris and other large metropolises across the country the night previously, anticipation of a wider nationwide lockdown was palpable. This fear of a reintroduction of measures against “l’ennemi sournois” (the insidious enemy) was particularly pronounced at the nursing home, which had only recently begun to allow visitors to enter. For the residents of the EHPAD, a long-term elder care institution where I am conducting ongoing fieldwork, ran by an order of nuns known as Les petites sœurs des pauvres (Little Sisters of the Poor), confinement (lockdown) perdured long beyond that faced by the rest of society. From March until the beginning of September, residents were confined to their bedrooms; allowed neither visitors nor any internal or external displacements. The reprieve of short breaks outside, of the slow re-opening of bars and cafés and the brief return to a masked verisimilitude of life as it once was that emerged over the summer, took far longer to permeate the walls of most eldercare institutions. Yet, life was not in stasis for residents of these homes. Like elsewhere, in such times, the proclivities of daily life have entered a liminal state, as older adults try to temper their old routines and desires with constantly updating health advice and preventative measures against COVID-19 to eke out a new way of living near the end of their lives. In this paper, I will outline the contours of a newly emerging “good” old age within nursing homes engendered by lockdowns, PPE and social distancing as Brian McGahey University of Copenhagen understood by government policy, care work and older adults’ experiences. In particular, I will focus on the reframing of isolation and withdrawal from social activities by older adults. While the suggestion of a “loneliness epidemic” in the past was presented as a potential danger to older adults due to its deleterious health impacts (Gerst-Emerson and Jayawardhana 2015; Holt-Lunstad et al, 2015), COVID-19 has couched isolation from others as a necessary preventative measure for their safety. Taking seriously Robert Desjarlais’ (1997) call for a critical phenomenology “that can help us not only to describe what people feel, think, or experience but also to grasp how the processes of feeling or experiencing come about through multiple, interlocking interactions” (p.25), I examine the multiple life worlds of older residents and their daily practices as they go about their lives without many of the community and family engagements that were available to them months ago.

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**Máire Ní Mhórdha**

## **Living after “The End.” Abortion rights activists, emotional labour, and the demise of the Eighth Amendment**

This paper comes in response to this conference’s theme of “Ending,” specifically the questions, “what is it like to live at ‘the ending’ of something? What is it like to end something?”

In May 2018, abortion rights activists in the Republic of Ireland achieved what until then had been almost unimaginable: the repeal of the Eighth Amendment (by a whopping two-thirds majority), a subclause in the Constitution that asserted “the equal right to life” of the foetus with the pregnant person, and was thus a de facto ban on abortions of any kind. The Amendment had been inserted into the Constitution in 1983 following intense political pressure by right-wing Catholic lobby groups, terrified that *Roe v Wade* in the United States and the gradual liberalization of access to contraception could lead to the introduction of legal abortion in the Republic.

“The reverberations of what is first and foremost an Irish victory for women’s reproductive rights will be felt across the world,” declared the Observer editorial on the day of the win, “offer[ing] hope to the 1.25 billion women globally who have no access to safe abortion.”

By January 2019, abortion services had commenced, following the passing of the Health (Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy) Act in December 2018. Although this law fell short of campaigners’ demands on a number of grounds (including the continued criminalization of abortion outside particular circumstances, and the inclusion of a medically unnecessary three-day waiting period for access to termination, inter alia), it did meet the fundamental stipulation for “free, safe, legal” abortion of the Abortion Rights Campaign, while the losing No side lamented it as of “one of the most liberal abortion regimes in Europe” (O’Brien 2018).

While some campaigners immediately proclaimed that “the North is next!” (a reminder that, in 2018, abortion was still unattainable north of the border, and remembering the massive solidarity displayed by northern kin during Repeal), the accepted view was that this victory was largely the end of the road of abortion campaigning in Ireland, and any further demands were emanating from a marginal radical feminist point of view.

Ronit Lentin’s (1994) declaration that, “I’ll be a post-feminist in post-patriarchy,” would summarise the views of many of the grassroots feminist activists who campaigned, I argue, particularly in the six-year period from 2012 to 2018. So, what was it like to live through such a struggle, and such a victory, and what did living in its aftermath, when it seemed like this blow to the patriarchy was “the end,” particularly in terms of abortion rights demands, feel like? For this paper I draw on data from the project, “What works? Sharing best practices in how civil society organisations use the Internet in organising and building for socio-economic rights and trust,” that interviewed 25 Repeal activists from across the country to understand how they used digital media for organising, building alliances, and dealing with conflict. I also reflect on my own experience as an activist in the campaign from 2016 to 2018, as I explore its aftermath: the burnout and exhaustion, the attempts for repair and accountability from a campaign that demanded of those involved so much time, so many resources, and labour of all kinds, in particular, that most invisible but critical form, emotional labour.

Virginia Paganelli

## THE NEOLIBERAL PRISON Agency at the time of Corona Virus

During the Covid-19 outbreak many countries adopted quarantine as a measure to deal with the epidemic. Entire populations locked in the walls of their homes to survive in the name of their own (biological) life. Although it is not a guaranteed right, having a home is a prerogative to fall within the boundaries of the law. Even before Covid-19, not having an address excluded people from the legal system. However, not in terms of illegality, but rather accessibility. Before the epidemic not having a residence and an address precluded access to many services and the same existence as a being contemplated by the system. During these quarantines, not having a home and staying on the street became illegal. What this paper aims to analyse are the choices made by many countries to deal with the pandemic emergency, such as quarantine. In particular, how they fully reflect the neoliberal period in which we live and lead to exacerbate its dynamics and solidify mechanisms and processes already underway for many years. To name a few, the privatisation of the city turned into a commodity and a non-place, the disintegration of collectivism and of the perception of collective power, the increased self-efficacy and the reduction of the individual agency, the moralistic and meritocratic rhetoric. However, what has been introduced in a drastically worrying way is the harmful potential of "making community". By making gatherings murderous, the collective agency should go against the law and morality to manifest itself. Gathering is illegal and public places, which are not frequentable and thus forbidden are, therefore, eliminated because they are "no longer needed". Not questioning anymore the productive capitalist logic - where only necessity and goals make sense, all the rest may not exist and is not important (i.e. I can go out to shop or to work, but not just to sit on a bench). The neoliberal rhetoric has led to a hyper-responsibility of the individual who, omnipotent, is the cause and solution of all his problems and can now also individually have an enormous power over his (alleged) community. Plague spreader or responsible citizen: this seems to be the choice. A choice that leads the actual community to divide, insult and accuse itself of endangering lives. However, contributing to the biological death of other people is not something new. We are immersed in a world full of structural violence that often lead to the biological death of "the others". But in this case, the cause-effect link is not perceived, as it is neither the actual community nor its agency. All these neoliberal containment measures are taken in the name of safeguarding biological life. Measures that will increase the damage in terms of (biological) life and quality of life, due to the exacerbation of structural violence.

**Pavle Pavlović**

### **End or beginning: new technologies, old shortcomings?**

What after the apocalypse? The peak of the crisis caused by a virus COVID-19 pointed out to us severe shortcomings. Science based on positivist principles is fatigued, it is too slow, methodological pluralism leads to chaos, scientific conclusions are quite contradictory. This leads us to seriously ask about her capacities and current condition. In this re-examination, one thing to which we must attach greater methodological, anthropological, and generally scientific interest is the phenomenon of Big data. The emergence of new technologies accompanied by a greater influence of computational and more rigorous approach deviates from the classical interpretative-positivistic division. Big data as its most prominent representatives indicates on possibilities but also on caution. Possibilities of a new, faster, more systematic modern science on one side, and on other questions of its ethical issues. The so-called paradigm shift towards a better social science freed from theory is a myth for now because the more serious scientific existence has so far been neglected in that area.

This paper attempts to create a model that is in line with this new Big data approach which we will re-examine in the recent future by laboratory fieldwork. Here we place special attention on Garfinkel's common-sense world but in a slightly different way where morality is based on ethical rules which are exogenous and established on official norms and rules. By this, we will establish a framework for further examination of are values created and maintained during knowledge production within Big data approach based on the impact of researcher's bias. This will be one of the ways by whom we will determine how the new approach "works" when it comes to the most sensitive part of social science process and that is the defense against scientism.

**Alexandra Philbin**

**The end of Irish: how the end of the Irish language is constructed in the TG4 documentary *Gaeltacht 2020***

In April 2020, the Irish-language television channel TG4 released a documentary titled *Gaeltacht 2020*. With its title, and with the presenter claiming to approach the issues in the series without bias, it aimed to provide a comprehensive and impartial account of the state of the Gaeltacht in 2020. The two-part series presented a message of urgency: the issues shown to affect the official Gaeltacht region - unemployment, emigration, lack of access to State services, improper planning - threaten the Gaeltacht's very existence. The existential threat to this region, recognised for the presence of more Irish speakers than other areas of the country, is then expanded. The end of the Gaeltacht is shown to mean the end of the Irish language itself. What starts as 'there is a lack of jobs, and therefore, people will leave the region' becomes 'there is a lack of jobs, and therefore, people will leave the region, and as a result, the Irish language will not survive'. This paper concerns itself with this second formulation; a formulation that depends on linguistic ideology. In this paper, I approach the official Gaeltacht region as a site of ideological work (Gal and Irvine 2019). With the Gaeltacht as the centerpiece, I analyse the various perspectives on this site that are shown through the interviews in *Gaeltacht 2020*. I focus particularly on how the interviewees and the documentary as a whole connect the possible end of the Gaeltacht to the possible end of the Irish language. I argue that this connection depends fundamentally on a linguistic ideology of difference between the Gaeltacht and the regions outside of it. This linguistic ideology of difference represents the Irish language outside of the Gaeltacht as largely non-existent. Where it is acknowledged in the series that the language does exist outside of the Gaeltacht, it is presented as being spoken by the wrong kind of Irish speakers or by speakers who have a less legitimate claim to the title 'Irish-language community'. Using Gal and Irvine's (2019) work on the semiotic process involved in linguistic ideology of difference, I show how this ideology is constructed in *Gaeltacht 2020*, focusing on the four aspects of this process: rhematization, axis of differentiation, fractal recursivity and erasure. This paper is based on research that I carried out for my thesis as part of the MA in Linguistic Anthropology at Maynooth University.

**Kayla Rush**

**Violent Delights: The Case for Imagining Apocalypses through  
Ethnography-as-Science-Fiction**

If, as Bryant and Knight (2019) argue, humans are future-oriented beings for whom future-orientation is 'part of ... how we experience everyday life' (p. 201), it follows that engaging with our research participants' future imaginings must, of necessity, form a vital component of ethnographic research. We must, then, take seriously the imagined futures and foretold apocalypses of our ethnographic others. However, the future and its endings have, on the whole, remained under-theorized within anthropology, and ethnographic orientations to futures remain under-developed, even within the somewhat more permissive arena of creative ethnography.

In this paper, I present one possible way forward for engaging seriously with imagined endings as narrated by research participants. I discuss and reflect upon my own experience authoring a creative ethnographic text in which I imagined a fantastic apocalyptic future for public arts funding in Northern Ireland (Rush 2020). I suggest that the affordances of science fiction provide a ready-made space in and through which such imaginings might be told, while also, perhaps, allowing readers to take our participants' future concerns more seriously than when presented in traditional writing. At the same time, I caution that this is not a task to be undertaken lightly, as careless apocalypses can be acts of violence against those whose stories we seek to tell.

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**Rina Schiller**

**Musical Endings (poster)**

I propose to compose a poster presentation for the AAI conference on "Endings". It will be about Musical Endings and their interconnectedness with the wider society, which have all come to an abrupt end in mid-March 2020 because of Covid-19 safety regulations.

This has a lot of implications for individuals on various levels. I will look at effects on mood and health (Joshi 1963), identity (Stokes 1994), community coherence and development (Rosenberg ed. 1993), physical implications on musicians' playing skills (Blacking ed. 1977), on effects of stress and anxiety because of Covid-related changes, and on limitations for academic music research (personal communication).

Music is not just something to be consumed but - more importantly - something to be made, which has implications on community coherence. Groups that had regularly met (on a weekly, fortnightly, or monthly basis) will lose touch with each other, which is likely to lead to long-term changes in individuals' activities and relations, and thereby to the breakup of communities. Mental suffering will result from not being able to contribute music to wakes and funerals of friends who die during periods of pandemic lockdown restrictions. Care home inhabitants will come to feel even more isolated by losing out on entertainment that was normally provided by musician volunteers. For people who are used to regularly attending community folk dance events it will have physical consequences because they will miss out on their regular dance workout.

And of course there will be economic damages. Many musicians, especially community musicians, are self-employed and depend on this already meagre income from their freelance work. Rishi Sunak's recently suggested solution that retraining would be the best option for musicians has thoroughly been refuted by Professor Duncan Morrow (BBC Radio Ulster, Sunday with Steven Rainey, 11 October 2020), who convincingly explained that we all will need more music over the coming months, rather than less, to support mental health in society.

Even music shops will suffer financial damage because they will lose out on sales of consumables during lockdown periods, which put restrictions on ensembles and orchestras to meet for rehearsals and all their other group activities.

Whenever the world recovers from this pandemic all community music structures will require to be thoroughly rebuilt from the very bottom. The poster will illuminate how the same detrimental elements affect all community music activities, albeit with different areas of emphasis.

Review poster at: <http://anthropologyireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Rina-Schiller-Musical-Endings-2020.pdf>

**Thomas Strong**

## **The end of intimacy**

Unmarked, in English 'intimacy' tacitly conveys good feeling – warmth of a kind – captured in the embodied spatial imagery of 'closeness.' To be close to someone is to care for them, to experience a feeling of mutuality. But after COVID-19, 'closeness' can no longer be taken for granted to mean mutual concern – to the contrary. This paper offers a commentary on an apparently emergent ethical rival of 'intimacy': proximity. I argue that 'proximity' detaches ethical or affective bearing from the way it conventionally has been spatially indexed in practices of bodily comportment and reasoning about public and private space. Thus, 'distance' can no longer be held to mean 'distant': spatial distance between persons might have once meant disregard, disdain, or fear – as when the depressingly proverbial pedestrian crosses the street rather than pass too close to the ethnic minority about whom she holds racist beliefs. Today, moving away from someone *may* mean something else altogether: a gesture of solidarity, or of common cause. Physical distance between strangers, or bubbled isolation between kin, cannot be reduced to signifying the absence of consideration for the other. Instead, we are in a system of bodily relations where systematic and reflexive social distancing makes the spaces of public relating the scene of something like the anxiety-inducing mother-in-law/son-in-law avoidance protocols detailed in the ethnographic record: my avoidance of you makes you more centrally constitutive of my personhood than would casual indifference to our proximity. And yet, at the same time, the demands the pandemic places upon us portend a future that feels unimaginable: courtship (otherwise known as hook-ups) without intimacy of any kind, lest the persons involved 'recklessly' breathe on each other. What will become of any activity involving physical closeness in the future, and what will such acts come to mean? The example of HIV affords a vantage from which to view society reassessing the meanings of 'intimate acts' (their values, their 'risks' and 'dangers'). The value of the proximate relations characteristic of public and private domains, and the relation between public and private itself, are undergoing some kind of transformation. This paper is offered as a further consideration of the specific "ethics of proximity" that current calamities (COVID-19, climate collapse) appear to demand.

**Maruška Svašek**

**'Hello, Can You Hear Me?'**

**Endings and Beginnings in Covid Times**

This paper reflects on academic labour in Covid times through the lens of 'multiple endings and beginnings'. It will discuss (1) confrontations with, and appropriations of, digital technologies, (2) new kinds of sociality, temporality and spatiality in conference and teaching/learning environments, and (3) questions around vision, visibility, sound and audibility. The reflections will be based on my own experiences between March-October 2020 as conference organiser, conference participant, MA and PhD supervisor, module convenor, lecturer and Director of Internationalisation.

**David Whyte**

**The End of Neoliberalism or the Resurgence of a Catholic Nationalist Political Economy: Covid-19 and the Community Response in Rural Ireland**

Changes in the conduct and regulation of social relationships during the Covid-19 crisis in the Republic of Ireland has uncovered the legacy of Catholic nationalism in Irish capitalism. On the 27th of March 2020, the full extent of the Covid-19 lockdown measures was announced. Restrictions on socialising, business, and travelling more than two kilometres from the home were enacted, as were an emergency unemployment payment of €350 per week and a ban on evictions. A policy called the Community Response – a partnership of public and private, for-profit and non-profit, voluntary and professional institutions – was created. Commentators in the media and the academy rushed to their newspaper columns and twitter profiles to proclaim this ‘new normal’ the End of Irish Neoliberalism. However, some of the key organisations involved in the Community Response have other-than-neoliberal histories and are still shaped by their genesis as Catholic organisations in a revolutionary early 20th century Ireland. Drawing from ethnography of community development practices in a rural Irish region, I argue that if the current ‘responsibilisation’ of Irish neoliberalism indeed constitutes an ending of some sort, then it is as much anachronistic as it is novel, characterised by the continuation and resurgence of the Catholic nationalist ideology that has been intimately connected to Irish capitalism since the foundation of the state. Rather than providing commentary as neoliberalism crumbles, then, it will be necessary to understand the uniqueness of this Irish political economy and the particular issues at its core in order to imagine a fairer and better functioning post-Covid Ireland.

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story of the heroic death of Jim Bludso, a Mississippi riverboat captain who “weren’t no saint”—he had two wives in different river towns and was “A keerless man in his talk . . . / And an awkward man in a row.” In lines 21–24 his “religion” is outlined: “And if ever the Prairie Belle took fire— / A thousand times he swore, / He’d hold her nozzle again the bank / Till the last soul got ashore.” The *Prairie Belle* does catch fire, and Bludso is as good as his word at the price of his life.

15.813 (458:20). **Bluebags** – Slang for police constables (whose trousers were blue and often ill-fitting).

15.814/17 (458:21/24–25). *Mr Phillip Beaufoy/Matcham’s Masterstrokes* – See 4.502–3n and 4.502n.

15.829–30 (459:6–7). **the laughing witch hand in hand** – See 4.513–15 (69:12–14).

15.834–35 (459:12). **Mr J. B. Pinker** – Joyce’s literary agent in London; see Ellmann.

15.835–36 (459:13–14). **the usual witnesses’ fees** – A cliché expression for the lowest possible pay for a respectable day’s work.

15.836 (459:15). **bally** – Dodging the curse *bloody*.

15.837 (459:15). **jackdaw of Rheims** – “The Jackdaw of Rheims” is one of the verse legends in Richard Harris Barham’s (1788–1845) *The Ingoldsby Legends* (1840). A jackdaw steals the cardinal’s ring, admits the theft, and is canonized as “Jem Crow.” “Jackdaw” is contemptuous for a talkative and foolish person.

15.840 (459:18). **University of life. Bad art** – The source for this cliché is not known.

15.844–45 (459:23). **the hallmark of the beast** – See 15.209n.

15.847–48 (459:25–26). **Moses, Moses, king . . . in the Daily News** – An obvious parody of “Moses,” as recorded in Leslie Daiken, *Out Goes She; Dublin Street Rhymes* (Dublin, 1963), p. 17: “Holy Moses, King of the Jews, / Bought his wife a pair of shoes. / When the shoes began to wear, / Holy Moses began to swear. / When the shoes were quite worn out, / Holy Moses began to shout.” The London-based *Daily News* was in the forefront of the “new” or yellow jour-

nalism at the beginning of the twentieth century.

15.854 (460:1). **Street angel and house devil** – A proverbial expression for a person who is courteous in public and boorish in his home.

15.861 (460:9). **Mary Driscoll** – The Blooms’ maid when they lived in Ontario Terrace, Rathmines.

15.865 (460:14). **of the unfortunate class** – That is, a prostitute.

15.868–69 (460:18). **six pounds a year and my chances** – The average wage for a scullery maid at the turn of the century was four to six pounds a year, with an extra allowance for tea, sugar, and beer (“her chances”).

15.878 (461:2). **Play cricket** – Slang: “play fair.”

15.893 (461:18). **\*Your lord** – The proper form of address to a judge in court is “My Lord”; to a member of the watch, “Constable.”

15.895 (461:21). **\*George Fottrell** – See 12.1872n.

15.898 (461:24–25). **water-lily** – In the language of flowers, symbolic of purity of heart or elegance.

15.902 (461:28–29). **the memory of the past** – See 13.438–39n.

15.903–4 (462:1). **A sevenmonth’s child** – Popularly assumed to be at least a disadvantaged weakling, if not actually retarded.

15.910–11 (462:9). **the Loop line railway** – See 5.138n.

15.914–15 (462:13). **Dockrell’s wallpaper at one and ninepence a dozen** – See 8.171n.

15.916 (462:16). **pensums** – Rare for school tasks or lessons.

15.919 (462:18). **boreens** – Anglicized Irish: “little roads or lanes.”

15.920 (462:20–21). **\*Britanniametalbound** – Britannia metal was an inexpensive alloy of tin, antimony, copper, and sometimes zinc used to give decorative “class” to inexpensive furniture. It could be tinted and would take a high luster.

**Carlee Wilson**

**Tribal governments in the U.S. and blood quanta**

The critiques of Indigenous blood quantum enrollment policies in the United States are not new in Indian Country and academia, but the underlying question of why these blood quantum policies are still upheld today has yet to be answered with in-depth research.

This paper works to answer the question of why tribal governments within the U.S. continue to use the colonial-introduced concept of blood quantum to define indigenous identity today through the use of conflict theory and a decolonized lens.

I propose a series of hypotheses that explain the purpose of U.S. tribal nations' continued use of blood quantum policies in the light of increasing critique and discourse around its problems, one of which is concerned with long-term survival of our Native populations and cultures. I argue that further research is required in order to address the systemic issues upholding the practice of blood quantum policies. I submit the series of hypotheses and the research that leads to their creation in order to arbitrate the inability to represent all indigenous voices and meet with the large number of tribal nations.