

IRISH DIMENSIONS IN BRITISH EDUCATION

REPORT ON 2nd. ANNUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE, 16th February, 1985.

This Conference was aimed at parents, teachers, first and second generation Irish people, Irish community organisations and all those interested in both the process and content of education. The Conference explored current cultural issues and examined social and psychological aspects of ethnic identity with regard to the first and second generation Irish in Britain.

With almost 200 participants attending, representing a cross-section in terms of area, Irish organisations and educational institutions, it would be fair to claim that the Conference was a distinct success.

On behalf of Soar Valley College Irish studies Workshop, I would like to thank the four main contributors:

MARY HICKMAN - Ph.D. researcher at London University, who offered a sociological analysis of the issues of identity and racism in education in relation to the Irish experience in Britain.

Dr. PHILIP ULLAH - Dept. of Psychology, Sheffield University, who spoke on 'Psychological aspects of Identity amongst the Second Generation Irish'.

Dr. Ullah's research was carried out in Birmingham.

Dr. ITA O'DONOVAN - Birmingham University Psychology Dept. who discussed the concepts of ethnic identity and the patterns of adjustment that immigrants may adopt in the "host" society vis-a-vis the Irish in Britain.

BRID KEENAN, B.A., M.Ed., from Tottenham College of Technology, considered the areas of cultural production and reproduction in terms of the multicultural/anti-racist debate and indicated the relevance of these issues to the Irish not only here but in Ireland. (Note: summary unavailable.)

We would also like to express our thanks to 'The Irish Post' for its thorough and enlightened coverage both before and after the Conference, and to local branches of the Irish in Britain Representation Group for their enthusiastic response. Furthermore, we are grateful to all the College staff for their help and co-operation, and to the various Discussion Group leaders:

- Dr. David Ruddell ethnic identity and racism (Bordesley Centre, B'Ham)
- Ms. Emma Thornton learning resources materials (ex-I.L.E.A.)
- Mr. Barry Dufour LEA policy/practice (Leicester Univ. & Rushey Mead Centre.)
- Mr. Brendan Mulkere culture in practice (G.L.C. Irish Commission)
- Mr. Gearoid Mac an Mhaoir Irish Language (Gaelic League, Birmingham)
- Mr. Micheal O'Domhnallain Irish Language (Gaelic League, London)

Finally, we would like to thank all the groups and individuals who supported the Conference and helped to make it both enjoyable and inspiring. Those who signed their names for inclusion in the proposed

STANDING CONFERENCE FOR IRISH DIMENSIONS IN BRITISH EDUCATION

will be pleased to hear that the Lists are ready for distribution and this body will be formally inaugurated at the next Conference in 1986. This body is specifically designed to meet the needs of Junior and Secondary pupils and teachers; it is separate from and sympathetic to the recently launched British Association for Irish Studies which is geared to tertiary interests.

Nessan J. E. DANAHER, B.A., M.Ed., Conference Chairperson and 'Report' Editor; Irish Studies Co-ordinator, Soar Valley College.

(1st November, 1985.)

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 - d) 'The Irish in Britain Integration or Assimilation?' conclusion to Ph.D.; Prof. Liam Ryan, Maynooth College, Nat. Univ. of Ireland.
 - e) <u>'Celtic Archaeology in a Community School'</u>, Ms. Maggie Garven, Head of Archaeology, Soar Valley College.

IRISH DIMENSIONS CONFERENCE 1985 - ATTENDANCE LIST

- Mr. Paul DAVIS, Thames Polytechnic Students' Union, Celtic Society.
- Ms. Virginia STUART, Thomes Polytechnic Students' Union, Celtic Society.
- Mr. Stuart LOWTHER, Thames Polytechnic Students' Union, Celtic Society.
- Ms. Maria O'MAHONEY, Thames Polytechnic Students' Union, Celtic Society.
- Mr. Ben BRUGE, Thames Polytechnic Students' Union, Celtic Society.
- Mr. Fred DAVIS, Thomes Polytechnic Students' Union, Celtic Society.
- Ms. Martine FARRELL, Thames Polytechnic Students' Union, Celtic Society.
- Mr. John FARRELL, Thames Polytechnic Students' Union, Celtic Society.
- Mr. John SCOTT, Thomes Polytechnic Students' Union, Celtic Society.
- Mr. Kieran Mc CLOSKEY, Thomes Polytechnic Students' Union, Celtic Society.
- Mr. Tom HERNON, Thames Polytechnic Students' Union, Celtic Society.
- Mr. Des Mc CURDY, Leicester, Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann, Midlands P.R.O.
- Mr. Pat J. NEARY, Birmingham, Parents and Children's Support Group.
- Mrs. Maura MURPHY, Birmingham, Parents and Children's Support Group.
- Ms. Joan MURPHY, Birmingham, Parents and Children's Support Group.
- Mrs. Pearl GARLWOOD, Birmingham, psychologist, Parents & Children's Support Group.
- Ms. Sile MARTIN, Lancaster University, Fylde College.
- Mr. Tony BIRTILL, Skelmersdale College, Lancs.
- Mr. Gerard MAC an MHAOIR, Sutton Coldfield, Conradh na Gaeilge.
- Mr. David RUDDELL, Bordesley Centre, B'ham, Multicultural Support Service.
- Ms. Carmel KEELEY, London.
- Ms. Bernadette KEELEY, London.
- Mr. Liam DONOHOE, Brent, Irish youth group.
- Mr. Dennis O'BRIEN, Brent, Irish youth group.
- Mr. Seamus TAYLOR, London, Irish Centre, social work officer.
- Ms. Maria DUGGAN, London, Social Work Team, Arlington House.
- Mr. Declan MOLLOY, London, probation officer.
- Ms. Wendy FLEMING, teacher, South Wolds Comp. S. Notts.
- Mr. Robert GILLESPIE, Burton on Trent, S.V. Irish Language course.
- Ms. Edna GILLESPIE, Burton on Trent, S.V. Irish Language course.
- Mr. Brendan COLEMAN, Soar Valley Irish Studies & Irish Language Classes.
- Mr. Thomas LONERGAN, London, Stratford Irish community association.

Discussion Group Nos.	IRISH DIMENSION CONFERENCE 1985 - ATTENDANCE LIST:
2-3	R.P. HARTE, Coventry to meaself total tropped add thousand the
1-3	J.G. HARTE, Coventry
1-3	P.J. HARTE, Coventry
3-4	Ms. Joan INGLIS, Liverpool, teacher
2-3	Ms. Clare WALSH, St. Marks R.C. School, Hounslow Ms. J. MELLING, Multicultural Educ. Centre, Northampton
2-3	Ms. J. MELLING, Multicultural Edde. Genere, Northampton
1-2	Mr. Kevin J. BREHONY, Milton Keynes Mrs. Bridie JOHNSON, Coventry Irish Theatre Group
1-4	Mrs. Bridle Johnson, Coventry Irish Theatre Group Mr. Vincent JOHNSON, Coventry Irish Theatre Group
1-4	Dr. John McGURK, Liverpool Institute of Higher Education
2-4	Rev. J.A. TAAFFE, Birmingham, Irish Welfare and Information Centre
1-4	Mr. Pierre GRACE, Manchester
2-4	Mr. Robert McLAUGHLIN, Stratford Irish Community Association, London
2-3	Sr. Bernardine, Leics, Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace
1-4	Sr. Olivia, Leics, Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace
1 0	Mr. Sean HUTTON, Bridlington, N. Humberside
1-3	Mrs. Maureen BRODERICK, Soar Valley Irish Class, Asst. Teacher
1-4	Ms. Wendy WYNCOLL, Coalville, Leics.
1-4	Mr. Eamonn HUGHES, English Department, Leicester University
1-4	Ms. Judy PEDDLE, Cardiff, IBRG National Secretary
1-4	Ms. Catherine BYRON, Leicester Irish Writers Group
,1 4	Mrs. Noreen HILL, Soar Valley Irish Studies and Language Course
1-4	Mr. Simon BIRD, Nottingham University Anglo-Irish Society
1-4	Mr. Michael McGUIGGAN, Nott. University Anglo-Irish Society
* 1	Mr. Ken LOWLES, Westfield Community Centre, Hinckley, Leics.
2-3	Mr. W.J. DOCHERTY, Burton-on-Trent, Head of English/Robert Sutton R.C. Comp
	Mr. John MARTIN, IBRG National President, Burton-on-Trent
	Mrs. MARTIN, Burton-on-Trent
	Ms. Sadie CARROLL, Loughborough De Lisle R.C. Comp. School
	Dr. Bronwen WALTER, Cambs. College of Arts and Technology
1-4	Sr. Veronica McMANUS, Notts, Sacred Heart Convent
1-2	Mr. Seamus O'COILEAIN, London, Celtic League
1-2	Mr. Michael FUNGE, Highgate, London
2-3	Mr. Michael COLLINS, Highgate, London
	Mr. Steve BRENNAN, GLC, Irish Liaison Officer
	Mr. P.J. Flynn, Manchester Education Committee, Greenheys Centre
The second	Mr. T. DUNNE, Manchester, Charlestown Primary School
1-3	Miss Enda McCARTHY, Leeds IBRG
	Ms. Fionnguala McCARTHy, Leeds IBRG
	Mr. Jimmy McCARTHY, Leeds IBRG
	Ms. Cecilia McGARRON, Leeds IBRG
	Mr. Jerome O'DONOVAN, Leeds (Branch Sec.) IBRG
2-3	Mr. Frank O'DONNELL, Leeds IBRG Mr. Brendan MULKERE, London, Irish Commission for Culture and Education
1-2	Mr. Mark McLAUGHLIN, H.M.I. Dept. of Education and Science, Birmingham
2-3	Ms. Emma THORNTON, ILEA, Learning Resources
1-4	Mr. Dick HUNTER, Workers Educ. Association, Milton Keynes
1	Mrs. Deirdre CANAVAN, IRISH Books Service, London
1	Mr. Bernard GANAVAN, Irish Studies Lecturer, London.
2-4	Ms. Enda O'BRIEN, Worcester
1-4	Mr. Maurice MOORE Coventry Trish Theatre Group: IBRG
1-2	Ms. Bernadette HALPIN, Irish Commission for Culture and Education, London
1-2	Mr. Brian PARSONS, London, GLC Research Officer on Irish Concerns
1-4	Mr. John HUTCHINSON, Leics., Dep. Head, Anstey Martin High School
3-4	Mr. Michael SHEEHAN, Manchester, teacher
1-4	Ms. Kathleen McKEATING, Liverpool
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2-4	Mr. Cooirgo O'PROIN Lander Cuidocabta History and Lang Class, Irish Class
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1-4	M . T. COONEY, Manchester
1-4	Ms. Ann BALDWIN, Manchester Educ. Committee, Greenbeys Centre
1-4	Mr. Tomas O'Briain, London, Celtic League

1-4	Mr. Padraig O'CÜNCHUIR, London, Celtic League			
1-4	Mr. Patrick REYNOLDS, Green Ink Writers Group, National Pro, IBRG			
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2-3	Mrs. Maureen DANAHER, St. Jose phs R.C. Junior School, Leicester			
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1 2	Mr. John DUHY, Soar Valley Irish Language Course			
1-3	Mr. Michael COLEMAN, Soar Valley Irish Studies/Lang.Course; Comhaltas.			
1-3	Mr. Seamus COLEMAN, Asst. Teacher, Soar Valley Irish Lang. Course			
1-3	Mrs. Mae BEDFORD, Leicester Irish Community Centre Project			
1-3	Mrs. Maureen CAPPER, "Donegal Set" traditional dancers, Leicester			
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2	Ms. Mary HICKMAN, Ph.D research, London University			
1	Dr. Philip ULLAH, Dept. Of Psychology, Sheffield University			
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	Ms. Brid KEENAN, M.A., Tottenham College of Technology			
1	Dr. Ita O'DONOVAN, Dept. of Psychology, Birmingham University			
	Ms. Frances DIGBY, M.A., English Department, Soar Valley College			
1-4	Mr. Ivan GIBBONS, Editor of 'Irish Studies in Britain'			
1-3	Mrs. Hilda McCAFFERTY, Irish Studies in Secondary Curriculum			
-4	Mr. Barry DUFOUR, Leic. Univ; Multicultural INSET, Humanities Lecturer			
2-3	Mr. Marty CASEY, Blackburn, Minority Ethnic Group Support Service			
1	Rev. Bobby GILMORE, Irish Chaplaincy, London			
2-3				
	Ms. Mary EVANS, Bishop Challenor RC School, Birmingham			
1-4	Mr. Cormac McKEEVER, Harrow IBRG, Teacher			
1-4	Ms. Nuala EEFTING, Harrow IBRG			
1-4	M. J. CULLEN, Harrow IBRG			
2-4	Mr. Karl McCLOSKEY, Gaelic Society & PGCE Course, St. Marys C., Strawberry			
1-4	Mr. Martin JOYCE, Southwark IBRG Hill			
1-4	Ms. Jacqueline JOLLEY, Southwark IBRG			
1-2	Mr. Michael KNEAFSEY, N.E. Lancs IBRG & Michael Davitt Branch, Comhaltas			
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1-4	Miss Maura CASSIDY, Coventry, sales executive			
1-4	Mrs. Elizabeth CASSIDY, Coventry			
1-3	Mrs. Anne SWEENEY, Leicester, Irish Studies and Language Course, S.Valley			
1-3	Ms. Mary COSGROVE, Leicester, Irish Language Class, S. Valley			
2-3	Mr. Michael O'DOMHNALLAIN, London, Conradh na Gaeilge			
2-3	Maire bean ni DHOMHNALLAIN, London, Conradh na Gaeilge			
	Mr. Jim KING, Manchester, National Chairperson IBRG			
-3	Mr. Phil Mac Giolla Bhain, Leeds IBRG			
3	Mr. Edward DOHERTY, Rugby			
1 0	Miss DOHERTY, Rugby			
1-3	Mr. Pat GEARY, Leicester, Soar Valley Irish Language Class			
1-2	Mr. Seamus CONWAY, Birmingham, Conradh na Gaeilge			
3-4	Mrs. Philomena CONWAY, Birmingham, Conradh na Gaeilge			
1-4	Mr. Finbar CULLEN, London, Haringey IBRG			
1-4	Mr. Peter KANE, Coalville, Leicestershire County Councillor			
	Ms. Sandra MAHONEY, ex-Leicester University			
	Ms. Susan PIKE, Teacher, Soar Valley College, Humanities			
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	Ms. Maeve WILKINS, Finchley, Labour Party, Irish Workshop			
	Mr. Tom BARRY, Coventry, Henley F.E. College			
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	Mr. P. MOONEY, Hounslow, Middlesex			
	Mr. Micheal O SE, London, Conradh na Gaeilge (Phadraig Ui Chonaire).			
	Mr. Alan O'DWYER, Birmingham.			
	Ms. Aine bean nhic Gearailt, Lambeth IBRG.			
	Mr. Deasuin MAC GEARAILT, Lambeth IBRG.			
	Mr. Barry DONNELLAN, Lambeth IBRG.			
	Mr. Frank WALSH, Lambeth IBRG.			
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	Ms. Rita LEWIS, Waltham Forest Irish Project.			

'THE INVISIBLE IRISH' Racism, Education and the Irish in Britain.

In debates about multi-cultural issues within education in this country the Irish do not figure prominently. If discussed at all, this involves some acknowledgement of separate Irish cultural identity, but no acceptance that the Irish are subject to racist practices. Hostility, maybe. A few Irish jokes. The inevitable price of the situation in Northern Ireland, of the British 'having to keep the peace' is the implication. This blindness to the actual position of the Irish in Britain reveals the limitations of multi-culturalism with its emphasis on ethnicity.

Multi-culturalists talk about the desirability of cultural autonomy for different minorities, but write little about the endemic racism of British society. To some degree the racism experienced by the various Black communities in Britain is recognised, but it is primarily attributed to misplaced prejudice. The emphasis of the ethnicity approach is that Britain is now a plural society. It is this which must be understood and requires changes in attitudes if ethnic tensions are to be diffused. The extent and structure of racism in this country is masked by focusing attention on the ethnic minorities and 'their' problems in gaining facilities for cultural expression.

The point is that Britain has always been a plural society. This is not something that suddenly happened in the 1950s. Although for many people Britain means Greater England, it is in fact based on the incorporation of Wales and Scotland, and has for centuries depended on the importation of migrant labour: for its armies, agriculture, industry and service jobs. This labour has been drawn primarily from Britain's colonies. These are forced migrations to the country which colonized and underdeveloped the migrants' homeland in the first place. The chief source of these labour migrants for the past two hundred years has been Ireland.

The Irish who came to Britain in the nineteenth century are assumed to have assimilated. Those who have migrated since 1945 are often categorized as upwardly mobile and suburbanized. Because the Irish are white and Britain is presumed to be a religiously tolerant society, they are deemed not to experience any problems that constitute racism. In fact: many of the Irish and their descendants continue to be concentrated in low-skilled

and low-paying occupations or not employed at all; evidence of housing discrimination towards the Irish persists; racist treatment by the police and legal apparatus is clear-cut; in the media the Irish are either the butt of jokes or often subject to censorship; while in most schools a travesty of Anglo-Irish relations is taught as history. Why has so little attention focused on these circumstances for the Irish in Britain? A full explanation is not possible here, but some reasons can be suggested.

The Irish in Britain have been rendered invisible. At first this seems a very contradictory statement to make. For example, on television one of the most visible individuals is the ubiquitous Terry Wogan. However, Wogan and other Irish people like him who have become acclaimed are treated in this manner on terms set by the British for such recognition. This means that being Irish can only be expressed within certain parameters. A facility with the language is allowable, because after all, it is the language of the conquerors. An ability to amuse has always been indulged; the 'Stage Irishman' has long antecedents. What is not permitted is any comment, question or reference which would break the consensus that exists on Britain's relations with Ireland and the Irish.

This consensus is based on the conviction that exists of the dominance, superiority and rationality of being British compared with being Irish. Within the consensus, Mrs Thatcher can praise Bob Geldof as an example of British 'grit and determination', or certain sports commentators can hail Barry McGuigan as the renewal of hope for British boxing, without comment being passed. A consequence of the consensus is that to question the role of Britain in Northern Ireland or to suggest that the war there is not about tribal hostilities but the inheritance of colonialism and British rule risks being hounded for breaching a bi-partisan orthodoxy of amazing strength. One long-term effect of this consensus for the Irish in Britain is their exclusion from serious consideration in histories of the development of the working class and non-appearance in most sociological analyses of modern Britain. The Irish are absent because they are not seen but subsumed under that most generic of categories: British.

This invisibility of the Irish is neither an accident of history nor proof that they have been assimilated. There is no impetus in British society towards the smooth integration of labour migrant groups. They are either incorporated (which involves very different processes) or else labelled 'other' and contained and restrained. Both practices are racist. It is in this context that the experience and current position of the Irish in Britain

must be viewed. There is space only to indicate certain aspects of the history of the Irish in Britain which give some insight into how the Irish have become invisible.

In the nineteenth century, for the British State the Irish were a very visible and 'problematic' minority. They were labelled as poverty and disease-ridden, and as prone to crime and disorder. Their support for Irish nationalism and adherence to Catholicism (Irish Catholics have formed a large majority of those migrating to Britain) meant that they were suspect as citizens. The working class as a whole were viewed as in need of moral reform, but the Irish were regarded as 'a less civilised population spreading themselves, as a kind of substratum, beneath a more civilised community'. The Irish, forced to live in certain areas by the jobs which they did, by their inability to afford anything but the cheapest accommodation, and by the hostility they encountered, responded by protecting their own communities. This was most frequently exhibited in their resistance of the police, the mid-nineteenth century being the period when the police force began to make the Irish a specific object of their activities.

In Ireland in the 1840s, the British State had a clear policy of rapprochement with the Catholic Church as one means of containing the movement for the repeal of the Union. In Britain the channelling of funds to the Catholic Poor School Committee, set up in 1847, reflected a similar rationale in government policy. This was a period of rapidly increasing Irish emigration to Britain because of the Great Starvation and of joint action between Irish nationalists and the Chartists. In these circumstances, the one social agency which gained ready acceptance in the Irish areas was the Catholic Church. The English Catholic Church, composed in the main of members of the aristocracy and gentry, had two overriding concerns: to preserve its recently acquired legitimacy and to become a respectable force in society. It was soon apparent that any growth in numbers was going to be the consequence of Irish migration rather than any mission of reconversion the Church might launch in Britain.

The building of elementary schools was a direct response by the Catholic Church to the existence of this Irish congregation. The dual concerns of the Church ensured that the objectives of Catholic schooling were the prevention of 'leakage' (drift from the faith) and the production of good British citizens from pupils who were almost entirely Irish or of Irish descent. Crucial to this policy was Cardinal Manning, who from the 1860s-1890s articulated the main task of the Church as coming to terms with and

co-opting its Irish members. He saw the schools as vital to this process. By the time there was another substantial increase in Irish migration to Britain, from the 1930s onwards, a nationwide network of Catholic schools had been established. These 'institutions of containment' increasingly stressed an identity of Catholicism which denied Irishness and encouraged moderate aspirations. This was evident earlier, and in a more uniform manner, in the secondary schools compared with the primary schools.

This strategy was assured a measure of success, because where else were most Irish Catholic parents to send their children? These were the only schools where they would meet others like themselves, be trained in their religion, and be offered the prospect of some advancement. In a real sense Catholic schools were 'our schools'. However, there was a cost involved. In these schools, apart from religious education, the curriculum has always conformed to that of other state schools. This was the result of conditions laid down for the receipt of government grants from the 1840s onwards, and more recently because of the requirements of examination boards. Therefore where Ireland is dealt with, it is usually an Anglo-centric account of 'The Irish Question'. Frequently no teaching about Ireland takes place because it is a 'difficult' or 'sensitive' subject. This is both despite and because of the continuing preponderance of pupils of Irish descent in a large number of Catholic schools.

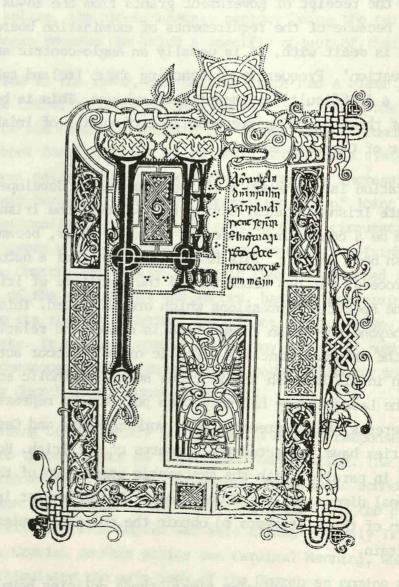
Catholic education is one example of the means which developed to contain and incorporate Irish migrants. During this century the Irish, while continuing to be a convenient source of surplus labour, became included in the British body politic. This has not been part of a natural and inevitable process, but has necessitated the sacrifice of Irish identity, other than the specific expressions which are tolerated. This means that public life beyond the Irish communities is easier and relatively less painful for the Irish migrantas a Catholic or as a Labour activist. Full participation in all British institutions such as Catholic schools, trade unions and the Labour Party has only been possible by repressing the assertion of Irish interests. Being predominantly working-class and Catholic, these other identities have reflected the concerns of the Irish. However, this has happened in parallel with the systematic preclusion of the expression of any national dimension. The Prevention of Terrorism Act is the latest manifestation of these attempts to obtain the political quiescence of the Trish in Britain.

In various ways and at particular times, these policies have been resisted

and undermined by the Irish. One such period has developed since the hunger strikes of 1981 with the formation of organizations like the IBRG. Within education, the demands for adequate funding for and the provision of the necessary means to perpetuate Irish culture, are vital. But they are only one side of the equation. Combating the racism which structures the lives of the Irish in Britain and buttresses repressive British policies in Northern Ireland means that changes are necessary in all schools, not just the ones in which there is a sizeable proportion of second-generation Irish. Educational changes which acknowledge that it is the racist structures and orthodoxies of British society which are the problem, not the Irish.

> This is a revised and condensed version of the talk given at the Conference.

MARY J. HICKMAN



PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF IDENTITY AMONGST THE

SECOND GENERATION IRISH *

The question "Who am I?" is one of the most fundamental questions we are every likely to ask ourselves. For this reason social psychologists have paid a great deal of attention to the notion of identity: how it develops, what happens when circumstances prevent its normal development, and how it affects our interpersonal relations with other people. The issues surrounding identity for the British-born children of Irish people is a lively topic within the Irish community in this country. The purpose of my research was to place these issues within a social psychological framework. What psychological meaning does identity have for the second generation Irish?

An important distinction to make is that between personal identity and social identity. The former refers to the characteristics we have which make us unique as individuals: our name, age, size, hair colour, etc. In contrast, social identity is the identity we derive from being members of social groups: miners, peace campaigners, Freemasons, Manchester United supporters, etc. According to psychologists, we are motivated to belong to groups which we like because this gives us a positive, or favourable, social identity. Some groups in society, however, are consensually defined as low status, or negative, groups: the unemployed, poor people, blacks, gays, etc. Members of such groups are likely to have negative social identities; they feel inferior to those who are members of higher status groups. In order to avoid these negative feelings, members of low status groups may attempt to leave their group for one of a higher status. In cases where this is not possible, they may collectively redefine their group as a high status one. That is, they develop pride in their group and emphasize its distinctiveness. Thus members of ethnic minorities, instead of trying to be more like members of the indigenous population, take pride in their ethnic origin and emphasize those features of the group which make it unique: the ethnic language, or perhaps cultural traditions. Similar psychological processes are likely to have been at work in the establishment of the Women's Movement, Gay Rights, and so on.

It is probably accurate to say that British society and culture defines the Irish as a low status group. There is ample historical evidence of negative Irish stereotypes stretching back centuries in time. Today the Irish are portrayed throughout the media as violent, stupid, and untrustworthy. In my research I set out to answer two basic questions: Do second generation Irish feel that they belong to a group which is consensually defined as a low status group? And do they engage in psychological strategies to avoid the negative feelings which can result from this?

I found ample evidence to provide an affirmative answer to the first of these two questions. Almost all of the second generation Irish adolescents I spoke with felt that English people viewed the Irish in negative terms, and they would often experience racism directed against themselves as a result of this. "The jokes are normally fired at me", one girl told me, "I sometimes feel uncomfortable, like they all start saying the Irish are thick or someone will call me an Irish so-and-so."

Unlike the members of racial minority groups, the second generation Irish can use the strategy of psychologically leaving their group as a means of avoiding such unpleasantness. They can call themselves 'English' rather than 'Irish', and distance themselves from those things which are likely to emphasize their Irishness. In a survey I carried out in Catholic secondary schools, almost one-fifth of the second generation Irish

^{*} This is a summary of the Paper read to the 1985 Conference by Dr. Philip ULLAH of the Psychology Department, University of Sheffield.

described themselves as English rather than Irish. Such people were also more likely than the others to report that they would sometimes hide the fact that they were of Irish descent, and that they felt annoyed if anyone referred to them as Irish.

In contrast, a further fifth of the sample described themselves as Irish rather than English, and it appeared that these people were using the alternative strategy of developing pride in their group rather than attempting to leave it. More than 90% of them reported feeling proud of their Irish origins, compared with only 12% of those describing themselves as English. They also attached significantly more importance to the preservation of traditional Irish music and dancing, and the Irish language. However, although these features of Irish culture were used by the second generation to emphasize the positive and distinctive features of the Irish, this aim was more readily achieved by reference to a less formal aspect of Irish culture: the "crack".

I would like to argue that the "crack" was more than just the flavour of a night out with the Irish. Instead it constituted an integral part of the minority group identity of the second generation, one which allowed them to make their Irish identity a positive identity. This was achieved in several ways. Firstly, the "crack" provided them with a sense of collective identity, in distinction to the English. One boy said: "The crack" is the atmosphere. You feel at home. If you go to an English nightclub you're just a number, whereas at an Irish nightclub you seem to be a name." Secondly, it allowed the second generation to compare themselves favourably with the English. The "crack" was something which only the Irish possessed, and which made them that much better than the English. Another boy told me: "It's a great crack when you go to the Shamrock, you really enjoy yourself. If you go to some discos with English people, it's not the same. You don't have the same crack, and the atmosphere isn't the same." Finally, the "crack" allowed the second generation to develop their own stereotypes of the English. The latter, lacking the ability to create the "crack", were seen as boring and reserved. "They're really half-soaked", one girl said of the English - "They've got no fun in them; no life." By portraying the English in such negative terms these second generation were able to make even more positive their own identity as Irish people.

Despite the development of this movement towards ethnic pride, the question of their identity still presented many problems for the second generation. The majority of my sample described themselves as 'half English, half Irish' and were neither deeply embarrassed by nor deeply committed to their Irish origins. Issues surrounding the question of identity tended to be related to other factors. For example, the experience of anti-Irish prejudice, often name-calling and taunting, would lead some people to feel torn between being Irish and being English. "I don't know which side to go on" one boy told me. Also, their own sense of identity tended to be related to where they were at any particular time, and what they were doing. "If I'm in a club like this or in Ireland" said a young girl, "I feel Irish. But if I'm at school feel English". Paradoxically, although they would feel more Irish when they were in Ireland, the Irish there would look upon them as English, creating further confusion. However, although such identity confusion has traditionally been linked to increased psychological distress among the second generation of ethnic minorities, I found no evidence of this in my sample. The second generation Irish were able to "switch on or off" different identities according to different situational demands, and so cope with any problems

This is a currency of the Paper rend to the 1985 Conference by

this might have caused. Similar patterns of behaviour have been noted among the British-born children of Asians.

In conclusion, the question of identity for the second generation is one which forms a substantial part of their psychological development. Almost all tend to subjectively experience themselves as members of a low-status minority group. For some the embarrassment is such that they refuse to have anything to do with the Irish. For others this is a spur to developing pride in their Irish origins. For all of them there is the need to comply with the competing demands of two, overlapping cultures.

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* A number of O'BRIEN publications are suitable for use in Irish Studies in British schools.

See list enclosed.

An interactive model of immigrant adjustment applied to the Irish in Britain

One of the most common ways that people classify themselves and others is in terms of ethnic origin - they place themselves and others within a specific ethnic group. For true ethnicity to exist three elements need to be present: 1) self-identification; 2) identification by others; and 3) shared activities. Thus, the difference in physical appearance often termed racial is not the difference per se but whether the difference is considered socially significant.

The Irish and the English cannot be distinguished by physical characteristics nor the Flemish from Walloon. However, both groups consider themselves to be different and perceive their common environment in a different manner. The importance of culture as an integral part of ethnic identity cannot be over-emphasized. Culture consists of the assumptions with which people in a particular group approach their world; they pass these assumptions to each new generation. Individuals who have a common culture develop similar behaviour patterns. Ethnic groups develop a unique culture, a set of presuppositions that evolve in a succession of collective adjustments to the historical situations in which people find themselves.

Social scientists viewing ethnic groupings in the United States assumed that over time processes which they called absorption, assimilation, and acculturation would eliminate the relationship between national or ethnic origin and economic condition. This ideology was known as the 'melting pot theory'. In essence, what was proposed was that ethnic groups should abandon their identity in return for material rewards. Ethnic groups should assimilate, become American and gain social status, security and a good standard of living. The problem with this approach is that it is value-laden and naive. Firstly, it implies that there is something implicitly superior in the host culture, and secondly, it assumes that the ethnic groups will always be able to achieve their desires within the host society. We know that in the 1960's a wide selection of ethnic groups have demanded recognition in the United States with regard to a greater share in opportunities, and also Irish Americans, Jewish Americans and Polish Americans lobby for political support.

The problem with the melting pot theory is that the host society is seen as an unchanging backdrop against which immigrants are supposed to adopt various strategies of assimilation. This approach is totally misguided. The model which I propose takes an interactive view of immigrant adjustment—it clearly states that the patterns of adjustment that will evolve will be the result of the interaction of the ethnic group/s and the host/wider society. Strategies of adjustment are proposed for the ethnic groups and the wider society (guest/host). Immigrant adjustment is seen as having three strategies: alienation, adaptation, and assimilation; the host society is seen as having three strategies: rejection, participation, and acceptance. These strategies will evolve between guest and host as a result of their interactions, and also to be considered dependent on such important factors as length of residence and state of economy of the wider society. My research shows clearly how different strategies adopted by host societies affect the pattern of adjustment that evolves for immigrants.

* This is a summary of the Paper delivered to the 1985 Conference by Dr. ITA O'DONOVAN of the Psychology Dept., University of Birmingham, and reproduced with her kind permission.

The purpose of the research was to investigate the social and family attitudes of the first generation Irish in England and to make a comparison with a sample of Irish people of approximately similar age, education, occupation, social class and rural/urban background who had not undergone In this way it was hypothesized that the the experience of emigration. influence of education and earlier socialization could be measured against the secondary and different experiences of migrating within one's cultural hearth (Dublin) or migrating to a new cultural environment (Birmingham). There were forty people in the English sample of first generation Irish and forty people in the comparable Irish sample, all were single when they migrated from their rural background either to Dublin or Birmingham. Interviews took place in the home and consisted of a 72-question questionnaire, an attitude survey looking at stereotypes, and a value survey. Interviews were of $1\frac{1}{2}$ hour duration. The sample was controlled for sex, age, education, social class, occupation, rural/urban background and marital status.

The thrust of this paper is to show how the differential experience of living in Dublin and living in Birmingham resulted in the Dublin Irish adopting a strategy of assimilation to Dublin/Irish society, and the Birmingham Irish adopting a strategy of adaptation to English society. reason for the groups adopting differential strategies is shown to be that the host societies displayed differed adjustments to the minority groups concerned. The Dublin Irish host society displayed a pattern of acceptance to the guest group, while the English society displayed a pattern of participation to the minority group. Before continuing with the results of the research, which clarify the above statements, here are short definitions of the terms: i) assimilation is conceived as representing a subjective and objective change in the immigrant. The objective change means the individual participates in economic, cultural, political and social activities of the wider society. The subjective change implies that the individual begins to interpret his world in the same way as the native-born. ii) Adaptation suggests that the individual makes an objective change to his new environment, i.e. participates economically, socially, etc., but he makes no subjective change to the values and norms of his new environment. iii) Acceptance as a host adjustment involves allowing objective participation by minority groups and, in addition, the individuals in the host society open up their own self-concepts to include an awareness and acceptance of the values and traditions of another culture. iv) Participation refers to a willingness to accept the immigrant in the political, social, economic and cultural life of the host society. This may be permitted without any subjective awareness of the culture and belief systems of the immigrant by individuals in the wider society.

The interactive model of immigrant adjustment when applied to the research shows that the strategies that evolved were a result of the interaction between guest and host in their differential environments. Let us look at the Birmingham/Irish group (B/I) experience first. The B/I stated that their reasons for coming to England were economic, and in this they did not differ to the Dublin/Irish (D/I) group. The initial activities of the B/I were heavily oriented toward Irish cultural activities, sport, music, dancing, but not the Irish language. They suggested that the Irish language was of no commercial use in England. They made it clear that they were aware of their Irishness and did not have to speak the language to know this. The B/I were also aware of the negative stereotype that exists in English society with regard to the Irish. They coped with this attitude by withdrawing into their own ethnic boundaries.

In contrast, the D/I were not at the same disadvantage. While traditionally native-born Dubliners have referred to their country cousins as 'culchies', Dublin in the 1950's and 1960's was expanding rapidly because of internal migration from rural areas to the capital. This influx meant a constant atmosphere of growth and change. The D/I group were free to decide on whatever activities interested them; the research shows clearly that these were not specifically of an Irish cultural nature. So, at the beginning of the migration experience the D/I had started on a path of assimilation because the host society were open to the concept of acceptance. The B/I had begun a pattern of adaptation in response to the English society adopting a strategy of participation.

Irish society has changed rapidly in the last twenty years: traditional values on abortion and contraception have been questioned; equal pay for women has been officially accepted; the marriage ban on women in the Civil Service has been removed. Education curricula for primary and secondary schools have been re-organized with particular reference to the importance of Europe to Ireland. The special relationship with Britain will, as far as one can see, always be important, although other nations, however, are significant elements in the Irish economy. Research by MacGreil (1977) shows that Dubliners are willing to accept country people into their families and rank them high in order of preference. The research here showed that the D/I group held similar views to Dublin Irish society on such issues as abortion, contraception, practice of religion, and Northern Ireland. Thus, we can postulate that the D/I group in this research has assimilated to Irish society, while the Dubliners have displayed a pattern of acceptance to their rural migrants.

The experience of the B/I group is in sharp contrast - this group found themselves in a society where divorce, abortion, and contraception were legal. The attitudes that the B/I group displayed to these issues were not the same as English society's view. In addition, the B/I group differed on these issues to the D/I group, being more conservative. So we can see that the B/I group differ both to English society and to Irish society on these issues.

The problem of Northern Ireland was another area which showed the influence of the host society's attitudes on the B/I group and on the D/I group. The B/I showed more uncertainty to the British claims that the Irish Government is not trying hard enough to catch IRA members after they have committed offences. The D/I displayed more confidence. It should be remembered that the D/I are aware of the British media view of the Irish Government but they are not subject to the daily presence of English society's view. With regard to solutions for the problems of Northern Ireland the D/I overwhelmingly support the official Irish Government view of the need for tripartite involvement. This view has been replicated by MacGreil (1977) and Raven & Whelan (1976). The B/I group showed ambiguity, the majority being in favour of a tripartite solution but a significant number indicating other arrangements, ranging from the United Nations imposing a solution to the Irish Government imposing a solution. All suggestions were of a lawful nature between nations. Here again, we can see the influence of English society's view of Northern Ireland and the Irish affecting the attitudes of the Irish in Britain. All respondents were aware of the negative stereotype of the Irish and the pressure the Northern Ireland problem brought to their daily lives. The B/I adopted a strategy of adaptation to life in Britain because English society adopted a strategy of participation to the Irish. Most of the B/I group stated that English people did not really understand the problems of Northern Ireland.

Having analyzed the Questionnaire, a Progressive Conservative Catholicism Scale (PCCS) and an Ethnic Identity Scale (EIS) were constructed. The research showed that the B/I group were more conservative on the PCCS and that they maintained a higher ethnic identity on the EIS than the D/I Living in Birmingham has resulted in preserving, or even strengthening, the traditional Catholic values and the cultural tradition aspired to by the early leaders of the Irish nation.

The research into stereotypes showed that the B/I have maintained an ideal view of Irish people, and that they closely identify with this image. The research further suggested that the B/I use history and the ethnic associations with their concomitant cultural activities to inculcate in their offspring a strong Irish identity, a strategy not adopted by the D/I. successful this strategy is may be judged from a study of children's stereotypes, where an independent sample of 13-year-old second generation Irish children from Birmingham displayed a positive view of Irish people, together with a high self-identification with Irish people. In contrast, an independent sample of Dublin Irish children saw themselves as similar to Again, a differential environment can both Irish people and English people. be seen to interact with groups and result in contrasting interpretations.

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REPORT FROM IRISH LANGUAGE DISCUSSION GROUP (Minutes taken by Micheal O'Domhnallain, Conradh na Gaeilge, London).

- 1. It is the second generation that tend to predominate in Irish language classes.
- 2. It is a great pity that those parents who do have a knowledge of Irish don't necessarily bring up their children to speak Irish.
- 3a. Often it is the children who stimulate their parents interest in Irish.
- b. How do we break down the barriers about the language amongs the parents themselves?
- 4. How far do the second generation regard Irish as having a second grade status as so many of their parents do?
- 5. When the Government took over the teaching of Irish in Ireland it replaced enthusiasts in voluntary bodies with teachers whose judgement of the value of the language was based on its value in getting you a job etc.
- 6. Often teaching in the past was tokenist eg. you might be taught your name in Irish but you sensed your teacher felt there was no real value in the language.
- 7. Irish speakers in the Gaeltacht don't want to be ghettoed because they are Irish speakers: is that likely to become true here?
- In this country we need a base where people can go and speak Irish two or three times a year at weekends and also in the summer.
- 9. It is vital that there be plenty of opportunities to speak Irish once one has learned it, otherwise one soon forgets it. Need to form networks of small groups who will speak Irish to each other and include their children.
- 10. How does one get children to join Irish language classes in the numbers that go to music or dancing classes?
- 11. What place is there for the Irish language inside the school system?
 No real conclusion reached.
- 12. A language can only survive if its spoken in the home.
- 13. Need to have a movement arise which would tackle the problem of persuading people to speak Irish in their homes with an almost religious fervour.
- 14. It is not enough for Irish to have merely a token pressence, it must be a spoken language.
- 15. Even if all Irish adults learnt to speak Irish, all would be lost if our children don't learn it.
- 16. We'll only get the children when we have got the parents, and we'll only get the parents when we get the whole community interested in Irish.
- 17. We need to stress the <u>positive</u> aspects of parents getting their children to learn Irish. We need to say NOT "do you want your child to learn Irish" but rather "Wouldn't you like your child to be bilingual".

- 18. It is very important that we reach out to the GAA and Irish dancing classes and persuade them to use at least some Irish to their children.
- 19. We must unequivocably challenge the state view of Irish and its attitude towards Irish. It is not enough just to keep pockets of Irish alive.
- 20.a If you don't have Irish you may as well give up your nationality.

 b For many people the language is inextricably linked up with the political situation of the Irish.
- 21. Reference to success of Canadian, French immersion courses in schools for children whose first language is English. It is not enough to learn and speak Irish for just 2 or 3 hours per week.
- 22. The Irish community here can influence the status of Irish in Ireland especially if its children become Irish speakers.
- 23. We need to find ways to make the second generation aware of their language. One suggestion was to introduce them to Irish language literature in translation through the school syllabus and exams.
- 24. Importance of the media was stressed: references to the BBC's excellent Scots Gaelic TV course 'Can Seo' which is now available on video. Why can't we have the Irish equivalent eg 'Anois is Aris' on British T.V?
- 25. We need to make use of community radio for a start.
- 26. We need to concentrate on the Irish in Britain and not keep looking to the situation in Ireland.
- 27. Teaching methods in teaching languages' have greatly improved over the years and we need to make use of them in teaching Irish. Thus we need courses for teachers in how to teach first.
- 28. Our hope is with the young gneration who e.g. in the 1960's rejuvenated Irish traditional music once they had come to realise its value.
- 29. Finally, reference was made to the Welsh medium primary school in London. If the Welsh can do it why cannot the Irish.

Conclusion:

The main themes were:

- a) The importance of whatever Irish you know at every opportunity.
- b) The importance of teaching Irish to children and of finding positive ways of getting their parents to encourage this.
- c) The need to get the Irish language into the media.
- d) Importance of as soon as possible setting up a summer school in this country where people can go and speak Irish in a pleasant environment.

policy report on the irish community

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ETHNIC MINORITIES COMMITTEE

That this report be referred to the Inner London Education Authority and other London education authorities for consideration of paragraphs 26 to 32, in particular:

 that action be taken to include courses and degrees in Irish Studies in in-service training for teachers (Paragraph 31).

(ii) that links be established between Irish academic institutions and their counterparts in London (Paragraph 31).

(iii) that work be commissioned to develop teaching aids and other educational materials in this area (Paragraph 31).

(iv) that teachers centres be supplied with teaching packs and other information on Ireland and this provision be made available to resource officers and school advisers (Paragraph 31).

(v) that provision be made for the introduction of Gaelic games and An Ghaeilge (the trish language) as optional subjects in those schools with a significant number of Irish students (Paragraph 30).

That officers submit this report to the London boroughs, the Department of Health and Social Security, the Department of the Environment, Manpower Services Commission, London Area Health Authorities, Home Office (Prison Service) and the Metropolitan Police for their information.

That this report be sent for information to London's Irish organisations and groups.

(i) That the Committee recognise the Irish as an Ethnic Minority Group and to adopt the following definition of Irish for such purposes; persons who come from, or whose forbears originate in, Ireland and who consider themselves Irish.

(ii) That the London Boroughs be requested to adopt the definition of Irish given above for the purpose of ethnic monitoring.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE STAFF COMMITTEE

That the Controller of Personnel be requested to report on the introduction of Irish as an ethnic category as outlined under recommendation 4.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE ARTS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

(i) That full recognition be given to Irish arts and cultural activities in London as being the product of a distinct national culture to be dealt with as a priority by the Community Arts Sub-Committee.

(ii) That Irish advisers be appointed to the Arts and Recreation Committee to ensure sufficient priority be given to Irish Arts (*Paragraph 56*).

Irish Groups and Organisations Consulted Irish in Britain Representation Group Federation of Irish Societies Connolly Association Irish Video Project Information on Ireland Irish in Islington Project Waltham Forest Irish Project Irish Studies in Britain Green Ink Writers Irish Community Arts Irish Cultural Activities in London Friends and Relatives of Prisoners Rough Justice Irish Chaplaincy Scheme Irish Women's Centre London Irish Cultural Commission Battersea and Wandsworth Irish Committee Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann Gaelic Athletic Association

ethnic minorities in London

* We gratefully acknowledge permission received from the Greater London Council, the copyright holders, to reproduce the sections on Education and Culture from the document 'POLICY REPORT ON THE IRISH COMMUNITY - ETHNIC MINORITIES IN LONDON' (1984, ISBN 7168 14641). The full Report is available from the GLC, County Hall, London, SE1 7PB.

EDUCATION

Education is important to all children in that it influences their behaviour both inside and outside of school and generally teaches them to conform to the uniformity of thought prevalent in their society. For an Irish child school should endorse their sense of Irishness which is an integral part of their family life and cultural environment. The previous pattern has been for Irish children to attend Catholic primary schools in areas of high Irish settlement. These schools usually had a high ratio of Irish pupils and teachers. At this level of education cultural integrity was usually preserved. However, with the demise of Catholic practise in the Irish community and the break up of traditional housing and employment patterns in many areas this is no longer the case.

Secondary education is more likely to be divorced from the Irish community. Although in some schools Irish children are in the majority this is not usually reflected in the staff or in the curriculum. At present history in secondary education is presented from an English viewpoint. Not only does this imply bias but it also leaves large areas of history uncovered which are important in understanding Irish social development, but are supposed unimportant to British history.

Some historical events are particularly significant to the Irish people. For example the 'Great Hunger' of 1840/47 in which three quarters of the population died or emigrated and which was responsible for the great diaspora of the Irish nation and final destruction of Gaelic Ireland. Because English people are usually unaware of Irish history conflict often occurs within the classroom. A teacher may assert in the accepted English fashion that the starvation of the Irish people in the 1840's occured because of the failure of the potato crop and that this was due to the primitiveness of Irish agriculture. An Irish child who knows that during this time Ireland was producing enough food to feed three times its actual population and that this food was impounded by the British army at the behest of alien landlords will be confused and uneasy. A confident child may question the teachers authority and pursue their point of view in the classroom. Another child may say nothing at this time but may later question their parents version of events.

The child is bound to be aware of the popular image of the Irish as uneducated and may take an instance of this sort as confirmation of Irish stupidity and conclude that the image is a true one. Whatever the result, the child undergoes an unpleasant experience and through self doubt they may begin to distance themselves from the community.

An Chapilga (the Isiah larish studies and courses in An Ghaeilge (the Irish language) have become available in higher and adult education the primary and secondary levels of education remain untouched by these developments. These latter levels are the most important for the cultural survival of the Irish child. Some Irish National qualifications are still not accepted in Britain. Where Irish Travelling children go into schools it is important that teachers recognise them as an ethnic minority with a valid culture and history. It is suggested that provision be made for the introduction of Gaelic games and An Ghaeilge as optional subjects in those schools with a significant number of Irish students. Teachers must also recognise that schools can have a pivotal role in resolving conflict between Travellers and the resident population, and should take steps to deal with anti-Irish and/or anti-traveller abuse as they would with other forms of racism.

The Irish Consultative Conference (EM 614) recommended the following course of action in the GLC area:

- (a) that links be established between academic institutions in Ireland and their counter-parts in London. Cultural exchange takes place at this level;
- (b) Courses and degrees in Irish studies be established as in-service training for teachers;
- (c) Work be commissioned to develop materials in this area for schools;
- (d) A materials resource centre be established with books, films, etc, for teachers. Education packs for teachers would be useful;
- (e) The Irish Cultural Centre could provide a resource to parents in terms of archives and library facilities;
- (f) Teachers centres must be supplied with information on Ireland;
- (g) Provision should be made for resource officers and school advisers working in this area;
- (h) Access to the schools (for Travelling children);
- (i) Recognition of their (the Travellers) way of life, customs, and culture and awareness and respect for their aspirations;

The Ethnic Minorities Unit's funding of the Irish video project helped enable that project to begin working with teachers' centres with the aim of increasing awareness of Irish Identity and the problems faced by the Irish Community. However, despite the well articulated course of action proposed at the consultative conference with the Irish community in May 1983 little progress is evident in this area. There is a definite need for serious consideration to be given to the specific educational needs and aspirations of the Irish community in London.

CULTURE

Irish Culture cannot be examined in isolation from the circumstances which prevailed in its development over the last five hundred years. From the 1580s Irish culture, which had survived the strictures of Anglo-Norman invasion and rule including anti-Irish legislation as embodied in Poynings Law and the statutes of Kilkenny, was subjected to a new assault of unparalled ferocity and duration. The Irish were derided as barbarians in the works of Shakespeare, Spenser and Deryck and Irish culture judged as equally worthless.

During the next 350 years culture for the Irish became extremely important as a means of expressing resistance; often it was the only form of resistance possible. Irish culture still plays this role in present times in that it remains a legitimate and legal outlet for feelings and opinions otherwise prohibited. Irish cultural activities bring Irish people together enabling the community to maintain its strength and cohesion and enables the community to resist the erosion of its identity by the dominant culture of England.

The role played by Irish culture in preventing the acquiescence and assimilation of the Irish into the host culture has not been ignored by the Establishment of this country. Although Irish culture has traditionally been denigrated by the English in both England and Ireland the more acceptable and accessible parts of the Irish cultural tradition have been removed from their political and historical setting and annexed by the English Establishment.

While the works of writers of the stature of Yeats, Wilde, Joyce and O'Casey are frequently taught in schools and are to be found in libraries their Irishness is diminished, they have become 'English literature'.

The process of annexation has become automatic. A Guardian review described the well known Irish poet: Seamus Heaney as a British Poet. Heaney's refutal of this denial of his Irishness was met with irritation and scorn in the correspondence which followed.

The response of the Guardian's readership who are predominately middle class white Anglo Saxon protestants to Heaney's resistance of the process of appropriation is interesting in that it suggests that Heaney's maintenance of his Irishness was in itself offensive to Guardian readers. Certainly one of the main criticisms of Heaney and his work from English critics has been his unwillingness to condemn the Irish Republican movement.

Irish culture is a part of the normal life of the Irish community, it is accessible and participative. Irish artists and performers, however much their skill may be appreciated and valued, are not elevated to an elite status; they remain a part of the community. This has ensured the survival of Irish Culture, it is a living tradition with each generation participating in it. Even those areas of London which in terms of the Irish community are neither particularely strong or well organised are able to support schools of traditional Irish dancing. The process of annexation weakens this relationship elevating Irish performers and artists to the level of cult figures of media personalities and distancing them from the Irish community and therefore from its context and origin.

57 It should be pointed out that those who would consider themselves of an anti Imperialist/Establishment persuasion feel able to act in this way. The Ragged Trousered Philanthropist, a novel by Robert Noonan, is acknowledged as a classic of socialist writing. Noonan wrote under the pseudonym of Tressel and his work was not published until after his death. Noonan was born in Dublin, and was, according to his daughter who survives him, an ardent Irish Nationalist who fought in McBrides Irish Brigade against the British army in the Transvaal. Until his centenary year in 1983 Noonans Irish origin and politics were totally ignored by the English Labour movement and in probability would have remained so if not for a vigorous campaign by surviving members of his family, the Irish Post newspaper and concerned groups and individuals in the Irish community. Given this situation and the lack of any acceptance of Irish Arts and culture by the arts establishment it is important that the council gives support to Irish cultural activities and events in London.

Irish cultural heritage is very rich possessing, in addition to an internationally known and respected musical tradition, the oldest sports in Europe and the second oldest European living language. Organisations promoting all aspects of Irish culture exist in the Greater London area and are well supported by the Irish community and growing numbers of other Londoners. However these are voluntary organisations relying entirely on members support in terms of resources. Provision should be made for Irish cultural bodies to have access to local government facilities including sports grounds and recreation centres. Council support would enable such organisations to respond fully to the demands placed upon them, which at present they are often unable to meet due to financial restrictions, by the community.

The question of how to best assist Irish cultural groups and the need for discussion on how to deal with Irish applications was initially raised in E/AR13. While some progress has been made in terms of support for the Brent Irish Cultural Centre and the Irish Video Project there seems to be a lack of coherent policy to meet the needs of the Irish community in this area.

Currently a number of Irish groups have applied to Arts and Recreation for grant aid. It is important that these applications are given priority as the current system seems to exclude Irish projects from Ethnic Arts. A policy report considering the needs of the Irish community would be welcome. Irish advisers should be appointed to the Community Arts Panel as a matter of urgency.

A MINORITY EXPERIENCE - THE IRISH

goes far beyond this. For instance, the cultural education' refers exclusively to in a diverse society. Moreover, while noting that the cultural diversity of Britain rish make up the largest single immigrant of Catholics in this country are of Irish origin, the study of Irish culture, while and the racism faced by black people in this country was to some extent faced As we have mentioned in this report, t is too often assumed that the term 'multiblack children and is only relevant in schools with a significant number of pupils from African, Caribbean or Asian backthat all children must be prepared for life relations between black and white people are central to our considerations, it is worth group in Britain today. As a large number relevant to all schools, may be of particular concern in Catholic schools. Moreover the history of the Irish parallels the African, Caribbean and Asian colonial experience, grounds. We have argued, to the contrary earlier by the Irish community.

Il characterised the Irish as wild, godless also referred to the 'wild Irish'. By the established. In the mid 19th century type and created the image of the 'Irish man and the ape. Today the stereotype is perpetuated in humour and in some of the media coverage of events." Northern Irish lokes and 'paddy-bashing' have as violent, illogical and stupid was well Frankenstein, the 'white negros' who were the missing link between civilised a long history. In the 12th century Henry and in need of civilisation in order to justify his invasion of the island. Queen Elizabeth Darwinian theories of the correlation between skull shape and the level of evolution were combined with this stereo-19th century the stereotype of the Irish

The study of Irish history and culture could, therefore be an integral part of any approach to education for a diverse society and particularly appropriate in Catholic schools. However, as we argued earlier in this report, we are not suggesting the inclusion of a separate Irish studies course for children of Irish origin. Rather, we are suggesting that an Irish perspective

might be integrated into different parts of the curriculum taught to all children and influence the general ethos of the school. Children of Irish origin would be helped in this way to discover their own roots while other children would be given the opportunity to learn about different cultural experiences which in varying ways parallel or contrast with their own.

Good Practice

All that we have said about education for a diverse society in general applies to the specific example of attempts to incorporate an Irish perspective into the curriculum and ethos of the school. However, this particular dimension of education has approaches which deal directly with the history, traditions, culture and religion of the Afro-Caribbean and Asian communities. Notable exceptions to this are the initiatives taken in Coventry and in one south London secondary school.

England and Ireland, the use of themes range of multicultural topics. They inhistory, comparing schools and towns in ation of the arts, crafts, literature, drama a project was launched to further explore now these topics could be integrated into the English primary school system. Two teachers worked in three primary schools LEA, the Department of Education and Science and the Irish Department of developed and the recommendations they made, would be appropriate to a wide cluded studying migration and family such as 'water' studied in relation to the In 1978 a group of Irish educationists for developing Irish cultural themes, Irish history, language, music and literature in with the full co-operation of the Coventry Thames and the Shannon, and the explortranslation in Coventry schools. In 1981 met in Coventry to explore the potentia approaches and music of the two nations. The Education.

In London an Irish Activities Group was formed in March 1979 and an ILEA conference held at the Centre for Urban Educational Studies. The London Borough of Brent has also formed an Irish

initiatives in London have been in the field of adult education, one south London their opinions. The study of Irish history important aspect of this development was Advisory Service. Although most of the enge and introduced the study of Irish history in the third year. Teachers at the school felt that while no other historical issue has dominated the news so consistently in recent years, the children they taught were able to respond only in the terms dictated by the popular press as they had no other knowledge on which to base in the school provided the opportunity to examine racism and cultural stereotyping and was felt to complement Afro-Caribbean and Asian history. A particularly the chance it created for children to learn to recognise bias in contemporary and secondary school has taken up the chalhistorical sources.

Findings from School Visits

ondary schools we visited had less than 10% of pupils of Irish origin while the vast majority had between 20% and 50% of one teacher who was attempting to raise awareness of Irish issues by objecting to ately defended her Irishness, which she said was ignored unless a scapegoat was needed, for example when the IRA was in the news. In general, however, it would be fair to say that the headteacher who commented, "My parents were Irish, but I don't set much store by it," spoke for the Only two of the fifty primary and secchildren from Irish backgrounds. We met Irish jokes made by pupils and staff. At another school, a sixth form girl passionprevailing attitude.

We encountered almost no evidence of the use of Irish literature, music ordrama in the curricula of either primary or secondary schools. Although the 'Irish

that it is better not to discuss racial issues as this might 'stir up trouble' in what is generally in the context of violence in Northern Ireland. Surprisingly, we found hat Irish history was rarely taught. We rish issues because of the political con-This in itself had parallels with the view schools to help children reflect on the munity in the past, or to explore how this experience might assist the Irish community to understand and support the studies lessons in some schools, this was encountered some reluctance to deal with roversy surrounding Northern Ireland. There seemed to be little attempt in most prejudice encountered by the Irish comquestion' had been discussed in social otherwise felt to be a peaceful situation. black communities now facing similar problems.

Our impression was that even schools which were aware of the need to educate their pupils for life in a diverse society and which had taken some steps towards implementing such a policy, had not yet considered this in relation to their pupils of Irish origin, and were largely unaware of the resources and assistance available in this field.

In reflecting briefly on the Irish experience and its relevance to Catholic schools we do not in any way wish to diminish the importance which must be attached to African, Asian and Caribbean cultures. Ideally, of course, education for a diverse society involves the incorporation of a world perspective. In practice, some choices will have to be made and material selected from the wide range available. In our opinion an argument can be put forward to show that Irish culture provides a valuable source which should have a place alongside others in any attempt to broaden the educational experience.

We gratefully acknowledge permission received from the Catholic Media Office to reproduce the section above (on the Irish) from "LEARNING FROM DIVERSITY - A CHALLENGE FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION" - Report of the Working Party on Catholic Education in a Multiracial, Multicultural Society (July 1984). The full Report is available from the Catholic Association for Racial Justice, 5 Henry Road, London N.4; price £2.75 (pp 76-77).

The conference organisers acknowledge with gratitude permission received from Prof. Liam Ryan (Sociology Dept., Maynooth College, National University of Ireland) to reproduce the following text:

THE IRISH IN BRITAIN: INTEGRATION OR ASSIMILATION?

'Summary and Conclusion' from 1973 Ph. D. Thesis by Rev. W. Ryan entitled 'ASSIMILATION OF IRISH IMMIGRANTS IN BRITAIN' (St. Louis Univ./Sociology).

One of the most surprising findings of the present study was that a majority of Irish immigrants in Britain have successfully integrated with the host society and that a sizeable minority have reached the further stage of assimilation. The Irish today exhibit the following characteristics: a third are at various levels of accommodation, that is they have established themselves economically and residentially and conform to the basic social norms of Britain but without becoming fully part of the new society and without losing their Irish identity and Irish cultural traits; of these, however, a small minority have failed to reach even the more elementary stages; a further third have achieved integration into British society in that they are involved in the full social, civic, political, religious, and economic life of Britain, have achieved some degree of occupational and residential mobility, but without developing any allegiance to Britain and without loss of Irish cultural identity; a final third are well on the way toward identificational and cultural assimilation with their adopted country.

Time spent in Britain, socio-economic status, occupational and social mobility, level of education, town or city rather than rural origins were found to have a positive relationship to a high rate of assimilation. In addition, it was found that women assimilate faster than men, and those in smaller towns in Britain faster than those in large cities such as London. Those who live in areas where there is a high concentration of Irish-born (over 10%) have a low rate of assimilation, as do those who maintain regular contact with Ireland such as an annual holiday or reading Irish newspapers. Countrary to the findings of other studies, the present investigation finds that age at the time of emigration, membership of ethnic associations, and regular attendance at religious services do not affect the rate of assimilation, In fact, it was found that those who attend Sunday Mass each week have a higher rate of assimilation than those who do not, but this is explained by the low rate of Mass attendance among unskilled males. In their case, the casual nature of their employment in the building trade seems to add a "casual" dimension to all aspects of their lives in Britain.

One of the most important factors affecting all aspects of integration and assimilation is the ability of many immigrants to delude themselves that they will eventually return to Ireland. Some do return, but they are a small minority. For the majority, the desire to return becomes a comforting illusion which in the early years after migration makes tolerable inadequate housing conditions and the burden of loneliness. At the time of emigration, only 17% of respondents had intended to remain in Britain permanently. By the time our survey was taken, this percentage had risen to 51%. This inability to define their situation in a realistic manner is one aspect of the general post-war problem when many Irish immigrants came to Britain with and image of the society drawn largely from myths and travellers' tales and could never quite adjust to the reality they found on arrival.

Indeed, the emigrants failure to define reality realistically was in large measure due to the unwillingness of the whole Irish nation to accept the reality of emigration itself. The greatest single monument to that unwillingness has been the failure of successive post-war governments in Ireland to provide help and services for emigrants. While the Catholic Church and many voluntary groups struggled with inadequate resources to deal

with the more serious personal and social problems inherent in the emigrant situation, the Government stood idly by in the belief that to provide help for emigrants would be politically inexpedient. This, of course, was also a myth, probably the most serious one of all affecting Irish emigrants over the past generation. We should, at least, be able to learn from our mistakes, and now that Ireland has become part of a European Economic Community with its policy of a free flow of labour among member countries, the Irish Government should ensure that if Irish workers start on their mass migrations again, the cities of Europe will not be littered with bits of Irish humanity as the cities of Britain have been in the past thirty years.

In any case, this is now unlikely. The post-war stereotyped emigrant to Britain, young, unskilled, with limited education, arriving off the boat-train with little money, no job, and nowhere to live, has pratically ceased to exist. Undoubtedly many did fit this stereotype, but the new emigrant is one armed with at least a high-school diploma, more likely to travel by air to London or Liverpool, and has a fair knowledge of where he is going and what his expectations are.

The marginal situation in which many immigrants found themselves in Britain has also begun to change. It is probably true to say of post-war Irish immigrants that they spent the first ten years wondering what Britain thought of them, the next ten not caring what it thought of them, and that over the past five years have suddenly discovered that it isn't thinking about them at all. The Irish, in short, have become part of Britain, almost an indistinguishable part of it. As one of our respondents stated: "I had completely forgotten that I had an Irish accent until the Northern Ireland bombs made the British conscious of the Irish again." The present crisis, especially the bomb campaign in London itself, has emphasised for the average British citizen that the Irish are a separate and distinctive ethnic group, and while it lasts will have a detrimental effect on further integration and assimilation.

Further more, because of the present crisis, the Irish themselves are likely to emphasize even less than in the past their own cultural traits. The majority are, in fact, likely to adopt the "apathetic solution" of avoiding being known as either Irish or British preferring to avoid situations in which their uncertain loyalties might create conflict. Because of this, the Irish are likely to continue even more definitely the pattern of integration and assimilation that has been characteristic of them, namely absorption as individuals bringing with them many interesting personality traits but contributing none of the characteristics of the group or of the society from which they come, and therefore leaving British social structures, institutions and culture basically unchanged. It is a little disconcerting to realize that as more Irish-born become assimilated into the melting-pot of a multi-racial British society, their only cultural contribution will have been a collection of Irish surnames which will continue to re-emerge in future Labour and perhaps even Conservative cabinents, in the professions, in trade unions, in the Catholic hierarchy, and in every aspect of life in Britain.

An interesting descriptive account of the Irish in Birmingham (written also in 1973) can be found in the article 'Culture and migration: the Irish English' by Paul Harrison in 'New Society', 20.9.73, Vol. 25.

The analyses in Ryan's conclusions and Harrison's article no longer hold true in their entirety; they need revising and up-dating to take account of later research and developments within the Irish community over here.

CELTIC ARCHAEOLOGY IN A COMMUNITY SCHOOL

(This is an expanded version of an article in Irish Studies in Britain, 1984)

Soar Valley College, as part of its multicultural policy implementation, decided to run an Irish Studies Course for adults during the Autumn Term of 1983. It was to be called "A Sense of Ireland" and to consist of ten lectures covering topics such as History, Literature, Archaeology, Politics, Emigration and Traditional Culture, with the final meeting taking the form of a Ceili. The course was designed for adults who were interested in Irish culture. The response was over-whelming and over forty people enrolled.

I was asked to contribute by giving two lectures, one being the Prehistory and Archaeology of Ireland and the other entitled the Early History of Ireland and the impact of Christianity. The major problems arose when I began my research. It was soon obvious that the majority of British Archaeology books made little or, in some cases, no reference to Irish Prehistory and Archaeology.

The College Irish Studies Co-ordinator, Mr. Nessan Danaher, prepared a teachers in-service package which included a detailed resources section. Similarly the <u>Irish Studies in Britain</u> Journal, which is published twice a year (edited by Ivan Gibbons, Addison Press, 83, Frithville Gardens, London) contained a section on Teacher material. From both these publications I was able to obtain the names and addresses of publishers who could supply the necessary information and resources.

From Alto Production Studies (new address at the end) six film strips were purchased. They are Passage Graves of the River Boyne, The Bronze Age in Ireland, the Celts, The Early Christians, the Vikings and A Future for Our Past. These films are exceptionally good quality and cover the topics thoroughly. The accompanying notes are very detailed and also contain extra background information for teachers.

Another filmstrip, entitled <u>Holy Places of Ireland</u>, was purchased from Folens Environmental Library (Tallaght, Co. Dublin). The filmstrip concentrates on the monastic sites of Clonmacnoise and Glendalough. The content was carefully selected to show the building phases, architectural features and growth of the monasteries from the simplicity of the early monk's cells to the elaborate decorations of the 11th and 12 Centuries. The <u>Folen Environmental Library</u> was also able to supply books and wallcharts on a variety of topics, such as Stone Age Ireland, The Bronze Age, Gold in Ancient Ireland, The Iron Age and The Early Christians.

A book which proved to be very informative was The Celtic Way of Life, obtainable from the Dublin Humanities Curriculum Development Project,
O'Brien Press, Dublin. Unlike the Celts in England, who were subjugated by the Romans, those living in Ireland had remained largely unaffected by outside influences. "The Celtic Way of Life" includes information concerning Celtic customs, laws, festivals, folklore, family life and Celtic culture which flourished long after the Romanization of the Celts in England.

Use was also made of local resource centres in Leicestershire. The Leicestershire Libraries and Information Services at Thames Tower loaned several books covering a wide range of topics concerning Ireland. The Archaeology department at Soar Valley makes frequent use of the resources which are available from the Leicestershire Museums Loan Service. There are several display cases of archaeological artifacts, reconstructions and replicas for use in schools. Many of the cases are designed so that the material can be handled. Two such cases were used during the Irish Studies Course and proved to be very successful. One contained a display of a selection of Palaeolithic and Neolithic flints. The other contained replicas of Bronze Age axe-heads showing the development from flat axe-heads to socketed axes.

Pupils from Soar Valley who eneter for the Mode 3 Archaeology Examination are expected to carry out some form of Experimental Archaeology. As a result the Archaeology Department has an abundance of various replicas, produced by the C.S.E. candidates, such as pottery made in Neolithic, Bronze and Iron Age styles, as well as spindle whorls, a loom and an assortment of Iron Age costumes. All these items, together with the other resources mentioned, were arranged into a display.

Many of the course participants were also willing to provide resources and information. One member of the group, Des McCurdy, had been brought up on Rathlin Island before coming to Leicester. He had lived near the site of a Neolithic porcellanite axe-factory and brought along an assortment of axe-heads in various stages of manufacture, from axe-blanks to complete polished axes. Another member of the group, Seamus Coleman, was interested in the origins and meanings of Irish placenames. He volunteered to read out a list of placenames in Gaelic and translate the meanings.

The Irish Studies course was very successful and has now expanded into a 30 week annual programme. The repercussions emanating from the course have been endless. As far as Archaeology teaching at Soar Valley is concerned, Mr. Croft, my colleague, and I have decided to re-structure our courses. In view of the information which emerged during the research stage into the Archaeology and Prehistory of Ireland, we feel it is important to include it in the British Prehistory courses at C.S.E. level. Similar research is being made into the Prehistory of Scotland and Wales and the information which emerges will also be incorporated into our courses. In this way we hope to present our pupils with a more accurate and balanced view of the Prehistory of the British Isles without placing the emphasis upon the Prehistory of England. The Humanities Department at Soar Valley (which integrates History, Geography, Economics, Religious Studies and Archaeology) has also decided to include Celtic studies in the Lower School courses and the resources obtained for the Irish Studies course will be used to provide some of the Archaeological information required.

POSTSCRIPT

Following the establishment of the Irish Studies Course in 1983 and the involvement of the Soar Valley Archaeology Department it was decided to continue researching into Irish History in order to develop ideas and materials for 1984/85. The archaeology topic for 1984 was that of the VIKING SITE AT WOOD QUAY IN Dublin; we developed contacts with the preservation group called the 'Friends of Dublin' and Rev. Prof. Francis Xavier Martin (U.C.D.), who were trying in vain to save the site from destruction.

Excavations at Wood Quay revealed it was the largest Viking trading post outside Scandinavia. The remains of the original wooden structures of the site (the quay-side, houses and shops) had been preserved in the waterlogged conditions, giving archaeologists a complete picture of life in Viking times. Unfortunately, the site had been chosen by Dublin Corporation for the building of new civic offices and despite the long legal battles between Fr. F. X. Martin and the Corporation the site has been destroyed. Prof. Martin lent the College a mass of material concerning Wood Quay - a rare example of close co-operation between secondary and tertiary levels!

Another development which has taken place is that of the planning of a new G.C.S.E. course in Archaeology. Members of the Council for British Archaeology (Schools Committee) have, after representations from this College, decided to include Celtic Archaeology (Irish or Scottish or Welsh) as one of the Options which students may choose from.

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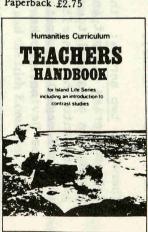
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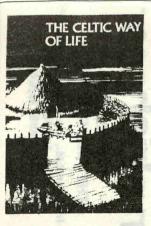
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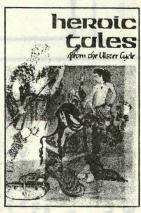
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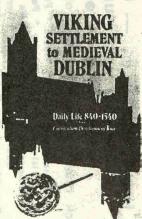
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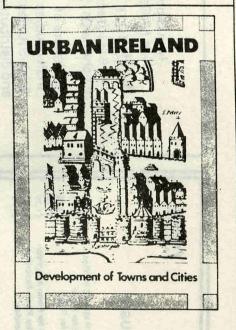
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