



Ollscoil na hÉireann, Gaillimh  
*National University of Ireland, Galway*

**Twelfth Irish Australian Conference**

**From Youghal Harbour to Moreton Bay: Remembered  
Nations, Imagined Republics**

**Centre for Irish Studies, NUI, Galway**

**19-22 June 2002**

**Abstracts Received**

procaire moir  
paxan mairi  
nó n' as b'íat' a'í  
seobuill' elaró

*Ionad an Léinn Éireannaigh*  
Centre for Irish Studies

**The Colonial Career of Richard Robert Madden: The West Indies, West Africa and Western Australia**

*Bob Reece (Murdoch University)*

Dr R.R. Madden is best known for his multi-volume opus, *The United Irishmen: Their Lives and Times*. Many would classify him as little more than a parochial Irish patriot. However, it is important to remember that he had served as a colonial official in the West Indies (1834-37) and in Western Australia (1847-48) where his strong humanitarian sympathies brought him into sharp conflict with the local settler elites. In Jamaica, he clashed with a planter community determined to sabotage the abolition of Negro slavery under the Emancipation Act of 1833. In Western Australia, he clashed with a pastoralist community determined to retain powers of summary punishment over Aboriginal servants. This paper compares Madden's colonial experiences, revealing him as one of Ireland's early pioneers of human rights.

**The Journal and Letters of John Sarsfield Casey (1846-1896):**

**Alias 'The Galtee Boy', Fenian Convict and Land Leaguer**

*Bill Power (Galway)*

In 1866, John S. Casey was sentenced to five years penal servitude for Fenian membership, part of which he served in Portland and Pentonville Prisons. His manuscript diary, 'Journal of a voyage to Australia' on the convict ship 'Hongoumont' has survived, as have letters home to his parents and family in Mitchelstown. His extensive collection of letters refer to a diversity of topics. These include life in the penal colony, other prisoners, his distrust of and then sympathy for Aborigines and his life-long opposition to emigration. Casey returned to Ireland in 1870, following which he entered local politics and became an activist in the Land War.

**Sir Winston Joseph Duggan**

*Eugene Duggan (Galway)*

This paper traces the history of the Duggan family from their origins in Mainguard Street, Galway where John Duggan acted as publican between 1765 to 1827 and James Duggan was a grocer/publican and tobacconist at High Street Galway (now Taffes Public House) between 1786 to 1879. Charles Winston Duggan enrolled in Queen's College, Galway when it opened in 1849 and graduated with an M.A. before becoming an Inspector of National Schools. Major General Sir Winston Joseph Duggan, served in the South African wars, and World War I, before his appointment as Governor of South Australia in 1934, Governor of Victoria 1939-1949 and Governor-General of Australia 1947-1949.

### **Performing Identity in Northern Ireland and Australia**

*Rebecca Pelan (Women's Education Research and Resource Centre, UCD)*

Not surprisingly, examples of drama from Northern Ireland and Australia reveal an attempt to reconcile a hybridised identity, based on sect and race, respectively. In Northern Ireland, much about the notion of identity relates to an attempt to shift it from singularity to multiplicity while in indigenous Australia, the opposite is often the case. By way of example, I will concentrate on a comparison of Christina Reid's *The Belle of the Belfast City* (Northern Ireland) and Louis Nowra's *Radiance* (Australia) where a contrast of the uses of cultural specificity exposes the problematic and fragile nature of identity politics.

### **Peter Carey's Outlandish Irish Outlaws in the Outback: Irish Diaspora Becomes Australian Legend**

*Law Livesay (St Peter's College, Jersey City, New Jersey)*

Peter Carey insists in interviews that *True History of the Kelly Gang* does not glorify a rebel, but rather depicts Australia's struggle to define national identity. Important multicultural themes come into play: Irish diaspora, British imperialism, and Australian mythology. Carey stresses "history" as key to the text, while allowing that "true history" implies an irony to deconstruct *official accounts*. Literally, Ned Kelly is an "outlaw"; however, *official "law"* is imposed by an imperialistic power capitalizing upon marginalized people. The novel critiques imperialism as sharply as Swift's "A Modest Proposal." Akin to Joyce's *Ulysses*, Carey's novel discovers courage within the dispossessed.

### **Eureka: Tax Whinge or Social Revolution? The Descendants Speak**

*Siobhan McHugh (Sydney)*

The 'Eureka affair' of 1854 has been described as everything from a tax whinge to the birthplace of Australian democracy. But how do the descendants of those who fought there see it? In surprisingly different ways, as these extracts from oral history interviews with ten of them demonstrate. Those interviewed are descended from miners arrested/charged in the affray, and from the redoubtable Anastasia and Timothy Hayes. The former is thought to have ripped up her petticoats to stitch the Southern Cross flag which has since become such a potent symbol of protest for diverse groups. The latter was Chair of the Ballarat Reform League which produced a charter which some believe could still form a constitution for a republican Australia. More poet and philosopher than warrior, Timothy Hayes was not present at the dawn affray - his great-great granddaughter believes he was in bed at the time. He was, however, still brought to trial for his role.

### **Catholic Romances and Impossible Journeys: The Life of Eileen O'Connor**

*Mary O'Connell (University of New South Wales)*

Eileen O'Connor endured a lifetime of pain, due in the main part to a severe spinal kyphosis which limited her height and her lifespan. Current disability theory states that disability is not so much as a medical issue as a political one, less a pathology and more an ethnicity. In the ethnicity of Eileen's world, the culture of Irish Catholic Australia, her disability was rarely if ever seen as solely a medical issue. In that religious spiritual culture, Eileen's illness/disability/difference could never be understood or related to as merely physical truths, empty of spiritual meanings or uses. Metaphors of victim and hero abound in the surrounding cultural texts. Except it is not so much the heroism of the Paralympic athlete/warrior, but the heroism of the physically defeated, spiritually triumphant Christ. Eileen O'Connor's community founded in 1913 almost immediately faced opposition from higher Church forces in Sydney. For one thing, Eileen, a lay girl, drew her authority to act from visions of and contracts with Our Lady. She had also forged a spiritual and material partnership with the young MSC priest Edward McGrath. McGrath was effectively exiled from Australia for twenty five years as a result of their innocent but deeply subversive partnership. The Hamlet like figure of Archbishop Kelly presides over this drama of passionate friendships, spiritual ardour and rebellious youth. Despite or because of the Irish Australian Church's desire to belong to an Australia forged from all its elements; to co-create a new world where Irish were not excluded, marginalised, impoverished and silenced; in the interests of that great vision, certain Irish visionary elements were silenced from within.

### **Free Women on a Savage Frontier**

*Pat Jacobs (West Australia)*

In 1907 a group of Irish Sisters of Saint John of God, from County Wexford, arrived at Beagle Bay Mission in the Tropical North-West of Western Australia. They were the first of a small number of Irish and later Australian Irish women who persisted against astonishing odds, to make a powerful contribution to the unique multicultural Kimberley society. This paper explores some of the factors that enabled the Irish women to survive and work with the Aboriginal and Asian people in Broome, Beagle Bay and Lombadina, during the height of the pearling industry, on one of the most violent and cosmopolitan frontiers of the Australian experience.

### **Irish Women Religious in Australia**

*Deirdre Bryan (Boston College)*

This paper considers the Irish female religious's participation in both Irish congregations which expanded to Australia, and indigenous Australian congregations in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. I will focus on Marie Martin and the foundation of the Medical Missionaries of Mary for work in British West Africa. As background, I discuss the expansion into diasporic and later, non-Christian, missionary work which includes Irish women religious's experiences in Australia.

**Virgin Worship, Desire, Sex and Gender:  
Irish Visionaries and their Anthropological Investigation**  
*Chris Eipper (La Trobe University)*

Why do Irish Visionaries and their disciples worship the Virgin Mary? Do they secretly desire their mothers, want to have sex with their fathers? Do they come from father-ineffective families? Or, if that's not the problem, might it be control of female sexuality? Why ask such questions? Can they be taken seriously? Does Michael Carroll's comparative psychoanalytic account of the cult of the Virgin Mary really warrant being applied to and tested against the Irish Marian movement? The paper will address these matters from the standpoint of Michael Allen's comprehensive ethnographic account of the movement as it developed in the latter part of the Twentieth Century.

**Irish land Selectors in Rural Victoria in the Nineteenth Century**  
*Charles Fahey (La Trobe University)*

The published Census of Victoria has often been used to identify where the Irish settled in Victoria. Historians using this data have noted the tendency of Irish settlers to move to rural or bush regions. Unfortunately the census did not cross-tabulate place of birth by occupation, and studies from the published census can tell us little about how the Irish fitted into the economy of rural Victoria. This paper will assess the role of the Irish in the great migration onto the Northern and Wimmera plains of Victoria after the passing of the 1869 Free Selection Act. The farming and land holding careers of Irish settlers will be explored through land settlement files, municipal rate books, probate records and the records of births, deaths and marriages.

**The Apotheosis of Peter Lalor**  
*Anne Beggs Sunter (University of Ballarat)*

Peter Lalor was an important figure in 19th Century Australian political life. He led the Eureka Rebellion against the Colonial authorities in Ballarat, Victoria, in 1854, and a year later was elected to Parliament, and became a business entrepreneur and eventually Speaker of the Victorian Parliament. I am interested in the creation of a legend around this man, who came from a notably nationalist family in Ireland. His name has been celebrated in poetry, stories, film and songs, and stories have been passed down through families connected with the Eureka Stockade. How far from the facts of his life has the legend of Peter Lalor moved? My investigation embraces the oral culture of both Australia and Ireland.

**From Connerville, County Cork to Connorville, Van Diemen's Land:  
The Irish Background and Colonial Career of Roderic O'Connor (1784-1860)**  
*Larry Geary (UCC)*

Roderic O'Connor was born at Connerville, County Cork in 1784. He migrated to VDL when he was forty years old, and for the remaining thirty-six years of his life played a prominent part in the colony's political and social affairs. At the time of his

death in 1860 he owned 65,000 acres and leased another 10,000. This presentation traces his and his family's history.

**"A Gang of hobos" - Arthur Lynch at War:  
Completing the Australian-Irish-South African Triangle**  
*D.P. McCracken (University of Durban-Westville)*

Thousands of Australians fought for the British cause in the Anglo-Boer war of 1899 to 1902; one Irish-Australian fought for the Boers. This paper will look at the wartime experiences of that one: the interesting figure of the linguist, journalist, engineer and medic, Arthur Lynch. It will trace Lynch's involvement with the advanced Irish nationalist set in Paris in the mid-to-late 1890s, and his decision to sail to South Africa at the end of 1899 to fight for the South African Republic in the Anglo-Boer war. The paper will attempt to untangle the conflicting images of Lynch at war. Was he a Johnnie-come-lately, a looter and trader in stolen and luxury goods; or was he a good and brave soldier who refused to kowtow to the undoubtedly powerful 'Irish establishment' in the Boer republic? Lynch's commando, or the second Irish Brigade as he grandly styled it, was small, short-lived and not very Irish, but it did see action in the Natal campaign. What this action was, and how effective it was will be discussed, as will Lynch's controversial retreat out of Africa and back to Paris. The London treason trial and death conviction of 1902 will be discussed in relation to the hostility which Lynch's war effort evoked among his many British and Irish enemies. The paper will be based on the writings of Lynch himself and the comment of contemporaries as well as on recently discovered commando papers.

**Cannibalism in Furphy's *The Buln-buln* and *The Brolga*:  
An Annotator's Debt to Joyce and Bakhtin**  
*Frances Devlin Glass (Deakin University)*

Despite Sterne and Cervantes, the writing of metafiction with its problematisation of both mimesis and of notions of realism is thought to be a postmodern practice. This paper seeks to enlist Irish-Australian novelist, Joseph Furphy, as an important early Australian experimental metafictionist who uses heteroglossia to open up the race issue. The problems of glossing 'Cannivals', and Furphy's deployment of a cannibalism narrative at the heart of *The Buln-buln* and *The Brolga* (finished by 1907 but published posthumously in 1948) raise many complex cultural and literary issues. First, there is the issue of the reliability of the nineteenth-century ethnology and the contemporary denial in postcolonial anthropology of such practices, and the question of what (race defamatory) cultural agendas such narratives may serve; further there is the always tricky business of reading a novel in which an unreliable and comically treated narrator is both the focaliser and himself a metafictionist. This paper, which draws on methodologies used in relation to *Ulysses*, will argue that Furphy's short text mobilises metafictional devices in order to problematise current race theory.

**The Politics of Literary Patronage, Ireland 1907-1914**

*Peter Koch, (School of English, University of New South Wales)*

This paper will explore the cultural politics of the Irish Literary Renaissance between the years 1907 and 1914. Focusing on the poets of the period, it will enquire into issues of nationality, language, patronage, publication, reviewing and audience in terms of the pressures that were brought to bear on young writers to subscribe to particular modes of expression at a time when George Moore was concocting his brew of fact, foible and fiction in *Hail and Farewell* (1911-1914) for the coffee tables of England, Europe and America.

**A Woman's Place: Irish Australian Women in the Novels of Ruth Park, Ciena Rohan, and Ann Clancy**

*Frank Molloy (Charles Stuart University, Wagga Wagga NSW)*

During the second half of the twentieth century, a number of writers have addressed women's role in Australian society. While popular novelists, such as Ruth Park, Ciena Rohan and Ann Clancy, are primarily concerned with telling a good story, they do not ignore the social contexts that impinge on the lives of their characters. In a number of novels, significant Irish influences shape the women's lives in particular. Principal among these is a strong tradition of family life which, especially for young women, restricts them from realising individual potential. For some, a life beyond family is difficult to contemplate. This paper will examine a range of novels and their female characters, and speculate on the origins of the authors' views on women.

**A Gene Pool for Haemochromatosis Research: Irish Immigrants in Australia**

*Chris Whittington (University of British Columbia)*

Hereditary haemochromatosis (HHC) has the highest incidence amongst the Irish. Up to one in four persons in Ireland may carry one copy of the C282Y mutation. Two copies of this mutation is the genetic blueprint which may lead to HHC. The high concentration of persons of Irish descent in Queensland and Australia has provided a solid basis for past and ongoing research into HHC. Such research has helped thousands and has the potential to help millions worldwide.

**Blokes and Sheilas: A Health Problem on the A-gender.**

*Christine Caleidin (Dept of Human Services, South Australia)*

*Michael Bentley (Hills Mallee Southern Regional Health Service, South Australia)*

The presenters will discuss implementing gender equity into women's health and men's health policies using international perspectives, in particular from Australia and Ireland. 'Blokes' and 'Sheilas' as an allegory will be used to explore the difficulties of pursuing gender equality in a dominant culture where the men's health discourse focuses on the health issues of individual 'blokes' and often ignores the continuing needs of women and other men of difference - the 'sheilas'. Introducing the relational concept of gender to this discourse is a challenge. The presenters propose that meeting this challenge has positive implications for a fair and just society.

#### **Women in Medicine in Ireland and Australia**

*Margaret Ó hÓgartaigh (St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra)*

This paper will examine two hospitals, one in Ireland and one in Australia, which were established by women. It was not unusual for women to establish hospitals. This had been done in the nineteenth century to facilitate women's access to the medical profession. In 1896, Victoria Hospital, Melbourne, was founded by women. The first venereal clinic for women and children was set up in hospital in the 1920s just as St. Ultan's Hospital for Infants in Dublin, which was founded in 1919, was expressing concerns about the problem. This paper will explore the impact of these two hospitals.

#### **The Native and the Otherworld: Aspects of the Collection of Culture and the Construction of Indigenous Tradition in South-East Australia and Southern Ireland**

*Ted Ryan (La Trobe University)*

This paper will examine various cultural themes in the material collected in South East Australia and southern Ireland, focusing on the supernatural and other connections with the other world in discussions of community life. This material will be set in the context of the establishment of the disciplines of Anthropology in Australia and Folklore in Ireland.

#### **Memory and Cultural Identity: Collecting Folklore in Australia**

*Anne O'Connor (Academy for Irish Cultural Heritages, University of Ulster)*

In this paper, I wish to raise some questions, such as: is it possible to discern the contribution of Irish folklore to the folklore of Australia, and is it possible to thereby identify an Irish-Australian cultural identity? What is the role of memory, an 'active shaping force', in the remembering process? To what extent can the role of folklore be seen as an elucidation of the process of garnering identity and identification: through the telling of particular stories versus others, through the remembering of certain traditions instead of others, and arguably, through the asking of certain questions instead of others of certain people in particular places at particular times. And perhaps it is only possible to discern particular ethnic elements in any nation's folk tradition when a general survey of the diversity of elements within that culture is underway. All of which comprises a complex process, allowing memories and traditions to remain current through communication and performance, thereby shaping and constantly re-shaping an ever-changing cultural consciousness.

#### **Hidden Symmetries of Celtic Knot Decorations**

*Tessa Morrison (School of Fine Art, The University of Newcastle, Australia)*

The construction methods of the exquisite Celtic Knot works which illuminate the pages of the Book of Kells has been examined in detail over the last hundred years. These constructions generate continuous symmetrical patterns yet the symmetries of



the knot works are restricted by the alternating crossings of the thread. However, these crossings have underlining symmetrical patterns of their own. Multithreaded Motifs in the Book of Kells, geometric, figurative or zoomorphics also have interesting underling symmetries, which are coursed by the alternating crossings of more than one thread and these symmetries are often obscured by the decorative detail. The purpose of this paper is to reveal these hidden symmetries of the Celtic Knot works.

#### **The Decline of the Irish Language: Denials Past and Present**

*David Lucy (Swinburne University of Technology)*

This paper discusses the history of the decline of the Irish language. This is followed by a consideration of this matter in some influential standard histories of Ireland and the Irish diaspora. The author argues that inaccuracies have been presented by such influential authors as Roy Foster, Patrick O'Farrell and Reg Hindley and there is a risk that unchallenged these views will take on the status of historical "truth".

#### **Irishwomen and Aboriginal People and the Law in Colonial Australia**

*Trevor McClaughlin (Macquarie University)*

The paper will explore the ways in which and the extent to which Irish women and Aboriginal people can be considered members of a subaltern class in colonial Australia. In some respects, though obviously not to the same degree, both may be considered 'ideal' subjects for anyone interested in subaltern studies. By 'subaltern' we mean 'everyone who is subordinated in terms of race, gender, class, even religion and culture'. Colonialism contributed to the development of a British, white, male, cultural superiority complex that both de facto and de jure excluded Aboriginal people and Irish women from the dominant culture. British culture was perceived as superior to that of Aboriginal people, Irish women, Chinese, Kanakas, and 'Others', thus undercutting the universalist tendencies within British law. Using legal history-records of court cases, judges' notes, newspaper reports and the like, the paper will assess whether or not Aboriginal people and Irish women were always at a disadvantage in dealing with a 'white', colonial legal system. Perhaps, now, we should complicate the picture further by exploring colonialism's heterogeneity, variations in the intensity and quality of racism, the fluctuating nature of the relationship between colonial subject and colonizer, the variability of colonial ideologies, Irish women's and Aboriginal people's agency, even the extent to which they collaborated or were complicit in the British imperial enterprise? Aboriginal people and Irish women were both colonized and members of the subaltern class but not necessarily in the same ways, at the same time, or to the same degree. In attempting to uncover a richly diverse history of Aboriginal people's and Irish women's relationship with the law, the paper hopes to elucidate issues about race, reconciliation, gender and identity that are facing Australia and Ireland today.

