



Sociological
Association
Of Ireland

Starts: 08:15
{ on both days }
Western Gateway
Atrium

Department of
Sociology &
Criminology
Socheolaíocht &
Coireolaíocht

College Rd
University
College
Cork
T12 K8AF

REGISTRATION

HOSTS

VENUE

52nd SAI ANNUAL CONFERENCE

8-9 MAY 2025

University College Cork

Programme.



UCC Local Organising Committee Co-ordinated by: John O'Brien

Myles Balfe | Des Fitzgerald | Billy Goodwin | Amin Sharif Isaloo | Julius-Cezar Macarie | Brenda Mondragon Toledo | Tanya Watson



PROGRAMME AT A GLANCE

All times are in Irish Summer Time {IST}

DAY 1—THURSDAY / MAY 8th

08:15	Registration
09:00 – 10:30	Session 1 / Parallel Panels 1 to 5 {P1-5}
10:30 - 11:00	Break
11:00 – 12:30	Session 2 / Parallel Panels 1 to 5 {P1-5}
12:30 - 13:30	Lunch

DAY 2—FRIDAY / MAY 9th

08:15	Registration
09:00 – 10:30	Session 4 / Parallel Panels 1 to 6 {P1-6}
10:30 - 11:00	Break
11:00 – 12:30	Keynote 2 Dr Philomena Mullen { more info }
12:30 - 13:30	Lunch

Afternoon

13:30 – 15:00	Session 3 / Parallel Panels 1 to 5 {P1-5}
15:00 - 15:30	Break
15:30 - 17:00	Keynote 1 Dr Gema Kloppe-Santamaria { more info }
17:00 -	Associated Satellite Event Laura Lee Sex Workers Human Rights Lecture

13:30 – 15:00	Session 5 / Parallel Panels 1 to 6 {P1-6}
15:00 - 15:30	Break
15:30 - 17:00	Session 6 / Parallel Panels 1 to 6 {P1-6}
17:00 -	Associated Satellite Event Led by Doris Murphy

Evening

17:00 - 18:00	Wine reception in Western Gateway Atrium
18:30	Conference dinner in Léa's at the Glucksmann & Social gathering at the Franciscan Well Pub

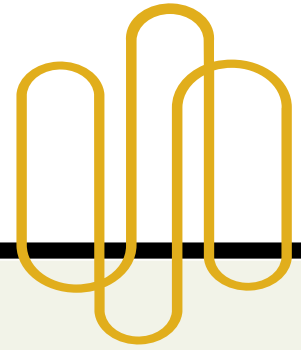
Room Allocation

Session 1	P1 WGB G01	P2 WGB G04	P3 WGB G09	P4 WGB G013	P5 WGB G018	Keynote 1	WGB G05
Session 2	P1 WGB G01	P2 WGB G04	P3 WGB G09	P4 WGB G013	P5 WGB G018	Keynote 2	WGB107
Session 3	P1 WGB G01	P2 WGB G04	P3 WGB G09	P4 WGB G013	P5 WGB G018	Satellite events	WGB G05
Session 4	P1 WGB G01	P2 WGB G04	P3 WGB G09	P4 WGB G013	P5 WGB G018	P6 WGB G05	SAI AGM WBGG04
Session 5	P1 WGB G01	P2 WGB G04	P3 WGB G09	P4 WGB G013	P5 WGB G018	P6 WGB G05	
Session 6	P1 WGB G01	P2 WGB G04	P3 WGB G09	P4 WGB G013	P5 WGB G018	P6 WGB G05	

**FOR ROOM
SCHEDULES
JUMP TO
PAGE 3**

**FOR BOOK OF
ABSTRACTS
JUMP TO
PAGE 16**

KEYNOTE



Keynote—Day 1

Dr Gemma Kloppe-Santamaria

**Violence, Politics, and
the Sacred: A Decolonial
Approach to Religious
Conflict**

THURSDAY // MAY 8th // 15:30 - 17:00 // WGB 107

ROOM SCHEDULE DAY 01 – WGB G01

SESSION

1

DAY 01 SESSION 01 09:00 – 10:30

PANEL 1 - WORK 1: WORKING LIVES

Chair:

- Filip Majetić (Ivo Pilar Institute of Social Sciences) et al – ‘Being a “Protean” Worker’
- Vicki O'Reilly (Technological University Dublin) – ‘Should businesses reflect society? A ‘possible others’ intervention’.
- Amy Healy (University of Limerick) and Seán Ó Riain (Maynooth University) - The impact of Work Organisation on Voting for the radical right
- Ingrid Holme (University of Galway) - Tension points in the postdoctoral talent pipeline: a comparative study.

SESSION

2

DAY 01 SESSION 02 11:00 – 12:30

PANEL 1 - WORK 2: FUTURES & TRANSITIONS

Chair: Amy Healy

- Sasha Noonan (Technological University of the Shannon) - Reflecting on and reimagining the role of professionals in young peoples’ futures.
- Sébastien Antoine (South East Technological University) - The Socio-Linguistic Politics of Global Tech Work in Brazil and India: A Decolonial Perspective
- Xueting Zhang (Trinity College Dublin) - Female, Foreign, and Freelance: The Intersectional Challenges to Professionalise Public Service Interpreting
- Guillaume Negri (Université de Rennes 2) - Arts participation and young migrants’ lifecourse: Strategies and tactics for reshaping one’s identity: a comparative study between Ireland and France

SESSION

3

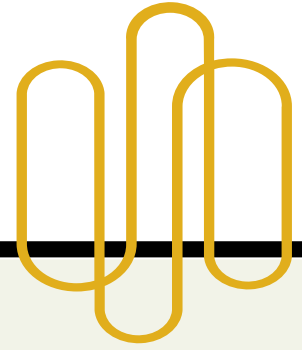
DAY 01 SESSION 03 13:30 – 15:00

PANEL 1 – SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY 1: TECHNOPOLITICS

Chair: James Cuffe

- Talya Deibel (University College Cork) - Workplace Neurotechnologies, Exploitation, and Discrimination: A Socio-Legal Analysis
- Evelien Geerts (University College Cork) - “Why Memes [Analyses] Matter: Critical New Materialisms for Troubled Times.”
- Iarfhlaith Watson (University College Dublin) and Lorenzo Posocco (University of Copenhagen) - Columbus Rediscovered Himself: Unpacking National Identity with DNA Tests”
- Alexander Kladakis (University of Galway) - The Sociology of Scientific Elites: From Intellectual Aristocracies to Academic Ultra-Elites

ROOM SCHEDULE Day 1



ROOM SCHEDULE DAY 01 – WGB G04

SESSION

1

DAY 01 SESSION 01 09:00 – 10:30
PANEL 2 – SOCIOLOGIES OF GENDER & SEXUALITY 1
Chair: Daniel Guigui

- Pat O'Connor (University of Limerick) – 'Athena Swan: the driver transforming inequality in Irish HEIs or institutional peacocking?'
- Egle Gusciute (University College Dublin) et al. – 'Breaking Barriers: Female Farmers in the Transition to Sustainable Agriculture in Ireland'.
- Edith Busteed (University College Cork) - At the Frontline of Climate Activism: An ethnographic exploration of the gendered dynamics within contemporary climate movements in Ireland
- Evie Gilbert (Queen's University Belfast) - Mind the Hermeneutical Gap: Analysing the Epistemic Injustices Surrounding HIV/AIDS and Gay and Bisexual Men in the 1980s-1990s

SESSION

2

DAY 01 SESSION 02 11:00 – 12:30
PANEL 2 – SOCIOLOGIES OF GENDER & SEXUALITY 2
Chair:

- Eeva Sointu (York St John University) - The dangers of going solo: on femininity and masturbation
- Leanne Zarroug (Queen's University Belfast) - "Girls! You shouldn't be fucking them anyways!" An insight into how Black Female Students navigate a predominantly white sexual field
- Shannon Hughes-Spence (South East Technological University) - Out in the club' – young women's experiences of the Night Time Economy
- Luke Roantree and Megan O'Sullivan (Queen's University Belfast) - Queer gan teanga, queer gan anam - The intersection of Irish-speaking and LGBTQIA+ communities in Northern Ireland

AGM @ 12:45 DAY 01

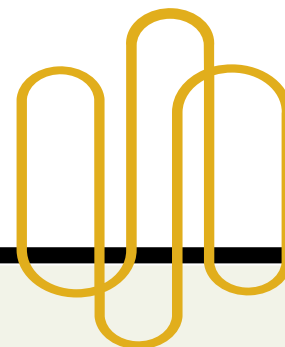
SESSION

3

DAY 01 SESSION 03 13:30 – 15:00
PANEL 2 – THEORY 1: CHALLENGES & POSSIBILITIES
Chair: John O'Brien

- Kieran Keohane (University College Cork) - Social Pathologies of Contemporary Civilization: turning from the darkness towards the light, with Fernando Pessoa and Elana Ferrante.
- Jonathan G. Heaney (Queen's University Belfast) - Wisdom and Emotions: Towards a Relational – Sociological Perspective
- Erin Silver (University of Otago) - Toward an abolitionist modality in sociology
- Quinn Roberts O'Mahar (Ulster University) - Deaths of Despair

ROOM SCHEDULE Day 1



ROOM SCHEDULE DAY 01 – WGB G09

SESSION

1

DAY 01 SESSION 01 09:00 – 10:30 **PANEL 3 – POLITICS 1: NATION, STATE, POWER** **Chair:**

- William Persichilli (Università degli Studi di Messina) - Statelessness, Gender, Minorities. Kurdish Women's Quest for Freedom and Democratic Confederalism for a New Positive Peace
- Michael Murray (Maynooth University) - The politics of fear and 'normal living': power, quiescence and resistance.
- Cydney Sheridan (Maynooth University) - Vigilante Justice and the Rise of Far-Right Nationalism in India: Cow Protectionism and the Citizenship Amendment Act
- Xiaojian Zheng (University of Galway) - Constructing Place Identity in a Non-Metropolitan City of Contemporary China: An Ethnographic Study of Tai'an

SESSION

2

DAY 01 SESSION 02 11:00 – 12:30 **PANEL 3 – HEALTH & ILLNESS 1** **Chair: Myles Balfe**

- Shelley Etkin (University College Cork) - Herbolgies of Repair: Tea Talk
- Meadhbh Hannon (University of Galway) - The Missed Disease': Endometriosis awareness, life disruptions and pain disclosure habits of an Irish university student population
- Jenny Säilävaara (Maynooth University) - Infant Feeding in Finland and Ireland: A Multilayered Contextual Practice

SESSION

3

DAY 01 SESSION 03 13:30 – 15:00 **PANEL 3 – HEALTH & ILLNESS 2** **Chair: Myles Balfe**

- Carmel Hannan (University of Limerick), Ross Macmillan, Elke Hayes, Michael Anyanwu, and Saoirse McLnerney - Cohort Comparisons of the Consequences of COVID on Youth Psychological Wellbeing
- Monica O'Mullane and Tara Kenny (University College Cork) - The Good, the Bad and the Ugly: Reflections on using an action research approach to clarifying and actioning Health Impact Assessment practice in Ireland
- Miriam Dillon (University of Queensland) - Circulating distress within an Advanced Practice Physiotherapy-led clinic

SPECIAL ASSOCIATED EVENT: 17:00 **Laura Lee Sex Workers Human Rights Lecture**

Presented by Dr Caroline West – bestselling author of *Wrong Women: Selling Sex in Monto*, Dublin's Forgotten Red Light District



ROOM SCHEDULE Day 1

ROOM SCHEDULE DAY 01 – WGB G13

SESSION

1

DAY 01 SESSION 01 09:00 – 10:30

PANEL 4 – EXPLORING THE LIVES OF WORKING-CLASS ACADEMICS

Chair:

- Iona Burnell Reilly (University of East London)
- Stephen Baker (Ulster University)
- Keith Murphy (Technological University Dublin)
- Declan McKenna, University of Limerick

Panel Outline: This research project aims to explore the experiences of academics who identify as Irish and working class, using an autoethnographical approach. We intend to collect 13 autoethnographies; each will be an account of the author's life, their experiences, and their journey into becoming a higher or further education professional, in an educational system fraught with elitism and exclusion.

SESSION

2

DAY 01 SESSION 02 11:00 – 12:30

PANEL 4 – CONSPIRACY, CRIME & SUBTERRANEAN WORLDS

Chair: James Windle

- Áine Bernadette Mannion (University College Cork) - "I Think I Have Been Ghosted... Again.": Perspectives And Learnings From Undertaking Research With Irish Judges And Gardaí
- Rian Mulcahy (University of Greenwich) et al. - The Hidden Pandemic: Consequences of and Responses to Qanon
- Aogán Mulcahy (University College Dublin) Police Abolitionism: Critique, Context and Public Safety

SESSION

3

DAY 01 SESSION 03 13:30 – 15:00

PANEL 4 – BELONGING, HUSTLING, ENTREPRENEURSHIP & MANIFESTING: EMERGING DISCOURSES IN EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

Chair: Nicola Ingram

- Ryan Wilkinson (University of Leeds), Kirsty Finn (University of Manchester) and Nicola Ingram (University College Cork) - Against Higher Education Belonging: A Cautionary Tale from an Unloved Sector
- Kirsty Finn (University of Manchester) and Kim Allem (University of Leeds) - Thrifting, meditating and Hustling through the crisis in Higher Education: Financial precarity, entrepreneurialism and student wellbeing
- Kirsty Morrin (University of Liverpool) - To be Against Everything and Nothing: The Case of Entrepreneurship in Education
- Tom Boland (University College Cork) - Transformation Talk: From jobseeking and career advice to manifesting and social theory

ROOM SCHEDULE Day 1



ROOM SCHEDULE DAY 01 – WGB G18

SESSION

1

DAY 01 SESSION 01 09:00 – 10:30

PANEL 5 – POPULISM & THE RISE OF THE FAR-RIGHT

Chair: Maggie O'Neil

- Yasmine Ahmed (University College Cork) - Understanding and mapping the development of the far-right in Ireland
- Rebecca Close (University College Cork) - Imaging/Imagining Reproductive Crisis in Europe
- Titaś Biswas, Catherine Forde, and Vanessa Liston (University College Cork) - Pedagogy as Body Politic: Exploring the Saffronised Classroom Setting as a Fascist Space in the Making
- Jody Ponce (University College Cork) - How the far-right has co-opted the term 'lived experience' to express how they 'feel' about political issues from immigration to trans-rights.
- Amin Sharifi Isaloo (University College Cork) - Artificial intelligence, media and the far-right

SESSION

2

DAY 01 SESSION 02 11:00 – 12:30

PANEL 5 – HOME, BORDERS, MOVEMENT & THE FAR-RIGHT

Chair: Dyuti Chakravarty

- Yasmine Ahmed (University College Cork)
- Masatoureh Fathi (University College Cork)
- Amin Sharifi Isaloo (University College Cork)
- Theresa O'Keefe (University College Cork)
- Maggie O'Neill (University College Cork)

SESSION

3

DAY 01 SESSION 03 13:30 – 15:00

PANEL 5 – DIGITAL PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICES IN ACTION

Chair:

- Ray Griffin (South East Technological University) - Digital PES-in-Action
- Antoinette Jordan (South East Technological University) - From politics to code: the unfolding of EU digital aspirations into practice
- Órla Hayes (Propelor BIC) - Exploring Omni-channel Welfare Experiences in Unemployment Services
- Zach Roche (South East Technological University) - Digitising Exclusion: The Challenges of Modern Unemployment and PES Delivery
- Aisling Tuite (South East Technological University) - Cyborg Futures of Care and Welfare



ROOM SCHEDULE DAY 01 – WGB 107

SESSION

3

DAY 01 SESSION 03 13:30 – 15:00

PANEL 6 – CHANGING THE GENDER (IN)EQUALITY LANDSCAPE IN AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AREAS IN IRELAND: CHALLENGES, INNOVATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

Chair:

- Muireann Prendergast (South East Technological University)
- Aisling Murtagh (University of Galway)
- Martina Roche (Maynooth University)
- Mary Curtin (University of Limerick)

Panel Outline: In this panel, the current challenges to achieving gender balance in agriculture and rural economies and communities will be explored. Also, the gender dimension to recent policy documents following the publication of the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 at European and national level will be discussed, specifically Ireland's latest Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) Strategic Plan 2023-2027.

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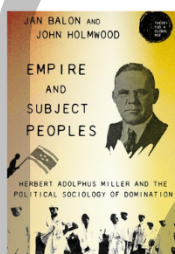


New books



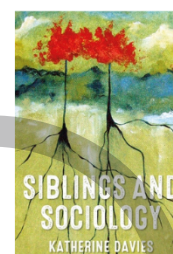
The ethics of researching the far right

Ed. Antonia Vaughan, Joan Braune, Meghan Tinsley and Aurelien Mondon



Empire and subject people

By Jan Balon and John Holmwood



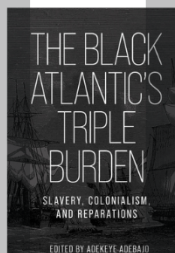
Siblings and sociology

By Katherine Davies



Head in the game

Ed. Stephen Townsend, Murray G. Phillips, Gary Osmond and Rebecca Olive



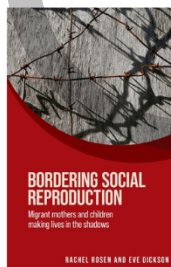
The Black Atlantic's triple burden

Ed. Adekeye Adebajo



Global networks of indigeneity

Ed. Bronwyn Carlson, Tristan Kennedy and Madi Day



Bordering social reproduction

By Rachel Rosen and Eve Dickson



Islamophobia, anti-racism and the British left

By Scarlet Harris



Anti-colonial research praxis

Ed. Caroline Lenette

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KEYNOTE



Keynote—Day 2

Dr Philomena Mullen

**Trapped in the comments
section of offline and on-
line worlds: antiblack-
ness and digital pogrom**

FRIDAY // MAY 9th // 11:00 - 12:30 // WGB G05

ROOM SCHEDULE DAY 02 – WGB G01

SESSION

4

DAY 02 SESSION 04 09:00 – 10:30

PANEL 1 – MIGRATIONS, BELONGING & BORDERING 1: IDENTITY & SOLIDARITY

Chair: Caitríona Ní Laoire

- Aine Lyne (Mary Immaculate College) - Cultural Identity Formation-A participatory approach to working with children
- Mervyn Horgan (University of Guelph) - Civic Action Spheres: Improvising Migrant Solidarity through Public Sociability
- Marc Scully (Mary Immaculate College) - Am I culturally appropriating Irish citizenship?" – discourses of effortfulness and essentialism in negotiations and understandings of Irish citizenship among post-Brexit applicants for Irish passports.
- Aidan O'Sullivan (Birmingham City University) - Irish Reunification and the Irish Diaspora in Britain

SESSION

5

DAY 02 SESSION 05 13:30 – 15:00

PANEL 1 – MIGRATIONS, BELONGING & BORDERING 2: INTERSECTIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Chair:

- Theresa O'Keefe (University College Cork) - Beyond trucks and tariffs: What might a feminist analysis of the UK/Irish border offer?
- Nasrin Khandoker (University College Cork) and Niamh Reilly (University of Galway) - Bordering, Belonging, Beyond Surviving: Critical Readings of Intersectionality in the Nexus of Gender-Based Violence and Migration in Ireland
- Titaś Biswas (University College Cork) - Addressing intersectional inequalities in local governance: Feminist decolonial intervention in producing inclusive participation with migrant women in Kildare, Ireland.
- Noah Agbo (Queen's University Belfast) - Exploring the social support needs of migrant parents of children with disabilities in Northern Ireland

SESSION

6

DAY 02 SESSION 06 15:30 – 17:00

PANEL 1 – MIGRATIONS, BELONGING & BORDERING 3: INTEGRATION, EXCLUSION, CARE

Chair: Theresa O'Keefe

- Zihan Chen (University of Birmingham) - Exploring Urban Migrants' Integration Policies in China Based on LDA: Textual Analysis from Central-Local Dual Dimension Perspective
- Jianfei Niu (University College Dublin) - Confucian Egalitarianism: Gender-role Attitudes of Chinese in Ireland
- Evan Carron-Kee et al. (Economic and Social Research Institute) - Social Distance to Travellers and Roma: A cluster analysis of attitudes in Ireland'.
- Olanike S. Adelakun (Lead City University) - Transnational Reproductive Practices: ART and Cross-Border Reproductive Care



ROOM SCHEDULE Day 2

ROOM SCHEDULE DAY 02 – WGB G04

SESSION

4

DAY 02 SESSION 04 09:00 – 10:30

PANEL 2 – EDUCATION 1: PERSPECTIVES ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Chair: Ger Mullaly

- Caitríona Ní Laoire et al. (University College Cork) - Enabling diverse student voice in higher education: a critical perspective
- Steven Thurston Oliver (Salem State University) - Utilizing Sociological Understandings and Contemplative Pedagogy to Engage Across Human Differences in Higher Education.
- Franciszek Krawczyk (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań) - Two opposite traditions of writing about centre and peripheries of higher education: a comparative analysis of Wallerstein's and Ben David's work
- Lisa Moran (Technological University of the Shannon) - The Discursive Reconstruction of Emotions in Higher Education (HE): A Biographic Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM) Study of Emotional Labour of Female Senior Leaders in Ireland's Technological Universities (TUs)
- Peter Doak (University of Leeds) - Decolonizing the Curriculum: Preliminary Thoughts on the Potentials of Irish Sociological Thought

SESSION

5

DAY 02 SESSION 05 13:30 – 15:00

PANEL 2 – EDUCATION 2: MIGRATION & EDUCATION

Chair: Ger Mullaly

- Yohei Yoshizawa (King's College London) - Effort and Inequality of Opportunity in Educational Attainment: An Application of Machine-Learning to PISA Data
- Yongyi Wu (University of Manchester) - Examining Digital Practice among Chinese Young People in Higher Education: Variations across Class and Gender
- Philip Ryan (Trinity College Dublin) - Pushing and Pulling the New Arrivals: The Irish Government's Approach to Migration and Education
- Adepeju Aderogba-Oti (Lead City University) - Optimizing and Integrating Migrants' Education, Skills, and Competencies into the Irish Labour Market

SESSION

6

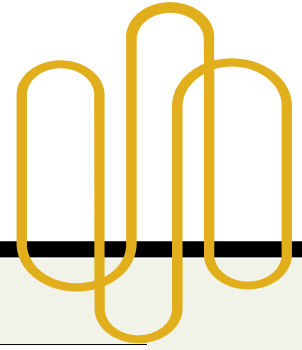
DAY 02 SESSION 06 15:30 – 17:00

PANEL 2 – EDUCATION 3: STRESS & SOLIDARITY

Chair:

- Helen Lowe (University of Limerick) - The Role of Friendships in Social Class Mobility: Are Schools Doing Enough to Foster Cross-Class Friendships for Disadvantaged Students?
- Carol Bruce (Marino Institute of Education) - Work & Welfare: Teachers' Experience of Stress, Attitudes to Reporting and Awareness of Employee Supports in the Further Education Workplace in Ireland
- Steph Hanlon (Carlow College) - Critical Pedagogy and Interrogating 'Crisis': Harnessing Critical Thinking Within and Beyond the Sociology Classroom
- Keitumetse Mabole (Maynooth University) The Impact of Indigenous Knowledge in Enhancing Lifelong Learning amongst Marginalised Communities: The case of the San Communities in Botswana

ROOM SCHEDULE Day 2



ROOM SCHEDULE DAY 02 – WGB G09

SESSION

4

DAY 02 SESSION 04 09:00 – 10:30
PANEL 3 – THEORY 2: IRELAND IN TRANSITION
Chair: Kieran Keohane

- Lisa Smyth (Queen's University Belfast) - Explaining Ireland's Moral Revolution
- Louise Brangan (University of Strathclyde) - The Stories We Tell: Or why can't we remember the Magdalene laundries?
- Ciaran McCullagh (University College Cork) - The Catholic Church and Criminality
- Kevin Warner (University College Cork) - The Path Not Taken: the failure to follow the Whitaker Report in Irish penal policy

SESSION

5

DAY 02 SESSION 05 13:30 – 15:00
PANEL 3 – DISABILITY, LIFE-COURSE & CARE
Chair: Des Fitzgerald

- Joe Moynihan (Munster Technological University) - How Can Sociological Theory Enhance Our Understanding of Intellectual Disability?
- Siobhan Saravanamuttu (York University) et al. - In Service of Capital: Producing In/Dependent Subjects through Disability Care Work
- Aoife Gallagher (Atlantic Technological University) - Supporting the Bereaved Child in Primary School and Early Years Settings: A Compassionate Community Approach
- Michael Tobin (South East Technological University) - Analysing the lived experience of a new age friendly social housing development in Waterford City.
- Emmet Fox (South East Technological University) - Revisiting Senior Leisure Travel Demand in the UK

SESSION

6

DAY 02 SESSION 06 15:30 – 17:00
PANEL 3 – CONFLICT, WAR & GENOCIDE
Chair: Amin Sharifi Isaloo

- Sarah Carol (University College Dublin) and Faouzia Zeraoulia (University of Jijel) - Content analyses of the Gaza war reporting in the Palestinian, Israeli and German discourse
- Michael Edward Rose (University College Cork) - Expulsion and Resistance: The Rohingya at the Systemic Edge
- Laura Smith (University of Liverpool) - Everyday Peace in Northern Ireland
- John McNamara (South East Technological University) - War: What is the Art for?



ROOM SCHEDULE Day 2

ROOM SCHEDULE DAY 02 – WGB G13

SESSION

4

DAY 02 SESSION 04 09:00 – 10:30
PANEL 4 – DECOLONIAL SOCIOLOGY 1

Chair:

- Pilar Luz Rodrigues (University of Galway) et al. - Understanding Race Equality in the South East: Reflections from an EDI Project in the South East of Ireland
- Bríd Ní Chonaill (TU Dublin) - Developing antiracist practice in community and higher education – lessons learned from action research
- Dr Niamh McGuirk (DCU Institute of Education) - Critical Race Theory and Education: Racism and anti-racism in sites of initial teacher education in Ireland
- Lennita Oliveira Ruggi (Federal University of Paraná) and Nata Duvvury (University of Galway) - Intersectional EDI approaches for higher education: a proposal for Grassroots Key Performance
- Helen Maher and Tanja Kovačič (University of Galway) - Decolonising curriculum at University of Galway – a reflective journey

SESSION

5

DAY 02 SESSION 05 13:30 – 15:00
PANEL 4 – DECOLONIAL SOCIOLOGY 2

Chair:

- Pooja Priya (University College Cork) - Intersectional Encounters: Gendered Ethnography and African Migrants' Negotiation of Place and Identity in Delhi
- Aisling Walsh - Weaponising Whiteness: The Paradoxes of Post/Anti-Colonial Irish Identity and Solidarity
- Eburn Joseph (University College Dublin) - Being Black in academia and the teaching profession in Ireland
- Judith O'Connell (University of Galway) - Dissecting History text books and their role in creating Nationalist sentiment'.

SESSION

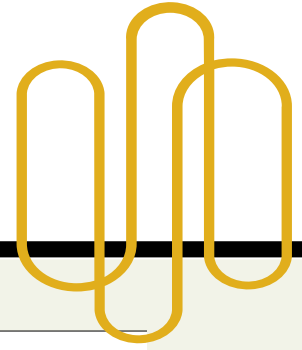
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DAY 02 SESSION 06 15:30 – 17:00
PANEL 4 – POVERTY, PRECARITY, INEQUALITY

Chair: Julius-Cezar MacQuarie

- Anousheh Alamir and Bertrand Maître (Economic and Social Research Institute) - Persistent income poverty and material deprivation in Ireland
- Emma Holden et al. (South East Technological University) - Understanding Economically Marginalised Young Adults' Exclusion from Digital-First Government Services: An Ethnographic Journey
- Matteo Moraschini (University College Cork) - Political Lives and Permanent Liminality: Biopolitical Struggles in Narratives of Refuge
- Tanja Kovačič (University of Galway) - Equal education for all? Reflecting on mainstream education through students' experiences attending alternative education programmes in Ireland

ROOM SCHEDULE Day 2



ROOM SCHEDULE DAY 02 – WGB G18

SESSION 4

DAY 02 SESSION 04 09:00 – 10:30 PANEL 5 – SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY 2 Chair: Des Fitzgerald

- James Cuffe and Nasrin Khandoker (University College Cork) - My phone is a protective shield for me": Technology and human subjectification with embodied entanglement
- Eric Deibel (University College Dublin) et al. - The Global Digipolis and its inhabitants: reflections on platform urbanism and smart city governance
- Marcus Leaning (University of Limerick) - Towards a sociology of Open Access publishing.

SESSION 5

DAY 02 SESSION 05 13:30 – 15:00 PANEL 5 – FEMINIST & QUEER EPISTEMOLOGIES Chair: Evelien Geerts

- Charlotte Waltz (Erasmus University) - 'The Dis/Comfort of Your Own Bed': Abortion, Telemedicine, and Moral Governance in Ireland
- Doris Murphy (University College Cork) - Street walking, crip talking, care imagining: Disabled sex workers in Ireland.
- Ellen O'Sullivan (University College Cork) - On Effigy: Femicide, Nation and Representation in Ireland

SESSION 6

DAY 02 SESSION 06 15:30 – 17:00 PANEL 5 – MIXED-HERITAGE RELATIONSHIPS AND RACIALISED BOUNDARIES Chair:

- Iris Wigger (Loughborough University) and Margaret Byron (University of Leicester) - Exploring the life histories, shifting identities and representations of Mixed-Heritage families in Europe: The Mixed-Relationships-racialised Boundaries Research Network
- Elena Zambelli (Maynooth University) - Improper Couples, Suspicious Mobilities: Sexuality as Currency and Stigma in Black-White Couples' Everyday Lives in Europe
- Rebecca Chiyoko King-O'Riain (Maynooth University) - #blackandIrish and #wasian: New Mixed-Race Voices in Ireland
- Elizabeth Mavroudi (Loughborough University) - Negotiating mixedness in diaspora: young people in the Greek, Jewish and Palestinian diasporas



ROOM SCHEDULE Day 2

ROOM SCHEDULE DAY 02 – WGB G05

SESSION

4

DAY 02 SESSION 04 09:00 – 10:30

PANEL 6 – QUALITATIVE SECONDARY ANALYSIS IN IRELAND

Chair an Rapporteur: Lisa Moran

- Rong Bao (Maynooth University) and Jane Gray (Maynooth University) - Opportunities for Qualitative Secondary Analysis in Ireland: First Findings from the QSA*Net Project
- Rosalind Edwards (University of Southampton) - The Value of Qualitative Secondary Analysis of Archived Data – Now and Into the Future
- Kahryn Hughes (University of Leeds) - The Ethics of Qualitative Secondary Analysis

SESSION

5

DAY 02 SESSION 05 13:30 – 15:00

PANEL 6 – SOCIAL THEORY 1: THEORISING THE EDGES OF THE SOCIAL

Chair:

- Billy Goodwin (University College Cork) - Antagonistic Forces: How journalists and news consumers are pushed to the edges of society
- João Nunes de Almeida (University of Glasgow) - Vagabonds, Drifters and Quitters: Toward the Abandonment of Social War
- Tom Boland (University College Cork) - Critique and Counter-Critique: How polarised critical discourses problematise power

SESSION

6

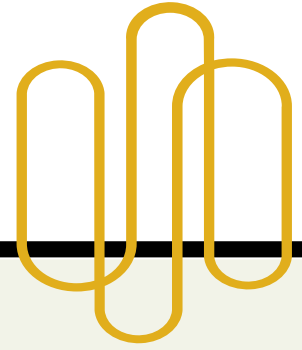
DAY 02 SESSION 06 15:30 – 17:00

PANEL 6 – SOCIAL THEORY 2: THEORISING THE EDGES OF SOCIETY

Chair: Tom Boland

- Jody Ponce (University College Cork) - When we're all outsiders, then nobody is: On the proliferation of claims of marginality
- Diana Stypinska (University of Galway) - In the glare of the noisy majorities: Theorising society on (the) edge
- Oliver Simpson (Lancaster University) - Thinking the outside of the social: Annihilation as Becoming

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



PANEL 1 – ROOM WGB G01 - WORK 1: WORKING LIVES CHAIR: TOM BOLAND

- Filip Majetić (Ivo Pilar Institute of Social Sciences) et al – ‘Being a “Protean” Worker’

Considering the popularity of protean career orientations, and growing importance of work-life balance, this study aimed to explore the strategies/practices of career self-management among young workers in Zagreb (Croatia). Data were collected in spring/summer 2024 through 4 in-person focus groups. In total 21 residents of Zagreb aged up to 35 years represented lower and higher value-added jobs as well as onsite and remote employees and self-employed workers (expats excluded). Design of the interview protocol and the data analysis –interpretative phenomenological analysis– were theoretically bounded by the adapted Job characteristics model (JCM) (Hackman & Oldham, 1976) and Career self-regulation framework (CSF) (Hirschi & Koen, 2021; Hirschi et al., 2022). JCM specifies job characteristics beneficial for the achievement of career wellbeing: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback from the job. CSF integrates workers’ career orientations, i.e. one’s attitudes and preferences towards their career and whole-life career self-management, i.e. the strategies/practices of self-developing, -implementing, and -monitoring career goals that consider both work and nonwork roles. Our interviewees, at that time navigating either the late stages of career exploration or the early stages of career establishment/growth, were self-motivated, self-directed, and reasonably flexible, but not characterized by especially dynamic career moves. Their workplace/market behaviour was calibrated to prevent a negative effect on the work-life balance. Moving abroad for work was rarely seen as overall beneficial, while being/becoming their own boss (sole proprietor in particular) and/or working remotely for a foreign company were highly preferred options.

- Vicki O’Reilly (Technological University Dublin) – ‘Should businesses reflect society? A ‘possible others’ intervention’.

When we look at who and how we govern our organisations today, social class plays a key, but often unspoken, role in how senior management structures are maintained. In support of this, our educational system facilitates a reproduction of the same social systems. Through an action research study, working specifically with a cohort of Leaving Certificate Students who are undertaking the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA), my research is attempting to understand what impact industry can have on the employment trajectory of LCA students. Using a newly created module two separate parties are taken on a journey of understanding and awareness of the other. The groups come together to undertake a shared project with the skills of the LCA students being showcased. Building on the work of ‘possible selves’ and demonstrating potential to LCA students of what they can achieve, ‘possible others’ asks those with power and influence to understand how they are responsible for ensuring opportunities are given to others, perhaps outside of their usual employee type. This research challenges us to look at the awareness of the LCA programme amongst senior hiring managers, hiring practices and employment practices to support local communities. It asks us to challenge the role of an organisation within a community and to expect that businesses should represent the society within which they make their profits and continue to succeed.

- Amy Healy (University of Limerick) and Seán Ó Riain (Maynooth University) - The impact of Work Organisation on Voting for the radical right

This paper explores the role of workplace regimes in shaping intentions to vote for Far Right parties (in competition with Far Left, Centre Left and Centre Right parties). Workplace regimes refer to the immediate organisational contexts of workers’ work – including their autonomy at work, their opportunities for learning and training, the modes of control they experience and the degree to which their working time and other conditions are standardised. The ESS Surveys of Rounds 1-9 (2002-2020) are used to identify relatively coherent ‘regimes’, using Latent Gold. Our focus is on explaining why workers in a range of workplace regimes and employment situations (as well as within a variety of social demographic sub-groups) vote for the Far Right within their particular contexts of electoral competition. Initial analysis has been carried out investigating who are more likely to vote for Radical Right parties. Socio-demographically, Radical Right voters are generally more likely to be male, citizens, young to middle aged and having difficulty coping on their income. Attitudinally Radical Right voters are more likely to place a value on being rich, place less value on equality and on helping people, and to support ‘strong government’. In terms of work regimes, those working in Simple/Taylor work regimes (with low autonomy and low learning at work) are significantly more likely to vote for the Radical Right. However, those working without permanent contracts in the ‘Learn Extreme’ regimes (with autonomy and learning but also demanding hours) are also more likely to vote for the Radical Right.

- Ingrid Holme (University of Galway) - Tension points in the postdoctoral talent pipeline: a comparative study.

Growing scientific research talent requires technical training, material resources, and nurturing researchers’ social well-being, especially as progression in STEM fields is impacted by factors such as gender and race, producing a widely acknowledged leaky pipeline. Funded under Research Ireland’s Science Policy Research stand, this project explores the research talent pipeline and researcher career progression in Ireland, Denmark and Singapore as examples of small, advanced economies. Our paper discusses our initial findings from mapping the lived experiences of postdoctoral staff within the talent pipeline to understand the qualitative and quantitative elements of the pipeline, and the constraints and blockages. This enables us to question if, and in what way, an optimal attainable national research talent pipeline is possible



BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

PANEL 2 – SOCIOLOGIES OF GENDER & SEXUALITY 1 CHAIR: DANIEL GUIGUI

- Pat O'Connor (University of Limerick) – 'Athena Swan: the driver transforming inequality in Irish HEIs or institutional peacocking?'

Ireland is frequently depicted as the 'golden girl' of gender equality in public higher education. This reflects changes in the gender profile of the governance structures and professoriate in such higher educational institutions (HEIs) over the past 10 years. Much of that momentum is perceived as being driven by Athena Swan- a gender equality charter introduced in 2015, with institutional and departmental/unit awards at Gold, Silver and Bronze, and later extended to other bases for inequality. Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) and related Action Plans (APs) are required as part of an AS application. These potentially could drive structural and cultural change in HEIs. However, there is evidence from the UK that AS has not increased the proportion of women at professorial level; nor impacted on the gender pay gap- with much of the work being done by junior women often in precarious positions. Indeed it has been suggested that AS reflects institutional peacocking (Yarrow and Johnson, 2022).

No HEI in Ireland has got a Gold award- but two HEIs have Silver institutional awards (TCD and UL). To explore the extent to which these award-winning applications have the potential to drive organisational change, a content analysis is undertaken, focusing particularly on the extent to which inequality is named; on the forms, experience and sites of such inequality, and the location of solutions at an organisational level. The implications of these patterns will be discussed in the context of the concept of institutional resistance and its mechanisms.

- Egle Gusciute (University College Dublin) et al. – 'Breaking Barriers: Female Farmers in the Transition to Sustainable Agriculture in Ireland'.

A successful transition to low carbon societies, including sustainable agriculture, is dependent on inclusion of all key stakeholders (Morone, et al., 2020). Female farmers are significantly underrepresented in agriculture and are often working without visibility and status (Dunne, et al., 2021). This is a particular challenge in the Irish context, where only 13% of farm holders are female (CSO, 2021). There are significant research gaps regarding gender equality and farming in Irish and European contexts, with particular scarcity in the role of women in sustainable agriculture. This research, part of the SAGE project, addresses this research gap by exploring female farmers' attitudes toward sustainability and the emerging bioeconomy. We identify key barriers and potential solutions/enablers to greater visibility and involvement of female farmers in sustainable agriculture. Utilising a mixed-method approach, including survey research and interviews, this study captures the voices of female farmers, highlights obstacles to sustainability adoption, and offers strategies to enhance their role in shaping the future of a more inclusive, resilient and sustainable agriculture in Ireland.

Keywords: Sustainable agriculture; female farmers; attitudes; gender equality; sustainability

- Edith Busted (University College Cork) - At the Frontline of Climate Activism: An ethnographic exploration of the gendered dynamics within contemporary climate movements in Ireland

Utilising a gender lens, this research explores the dynamics of contemporary climate activism in the Republic of Ireland. Climate related disasters are increasing in severity and frequency at an alarming rate, resulting in the reactionary emergence of new climate activist movements on a global scale aiming to hold governments and corporations accountable for climate catastrophe. A gendered analysis of climate activism can aid the development of novel understandings of how gender identity and relations inform and transform approaches to tackling the climate crisis.

Ethnographic observations followed by semi-structured interviews with members of contemporary climate movements are used to gain insight into how gender is embedded in climate movement identity, participation, and tactics. This research incorporates visual ethnography through photo documentation of the props and banners used during demonstrations. The theoretical underpinning of this research is informed by a feminist interpretation of social movement research, providing a systematic analysis of how social movements are gendered (Kuumba, 2001; Einwohner et al., 2000). This theoretical synthesis combines new social movement theory with ecofeminist theory to develop a distinct gendered analysis of contemporary climate activism.

My empirical research will inform and advance understandings of the under researched relationship between gender and contemporary climate activist movements.

Investigating how gender informs our responses to and approaches to climate action can help 'challenge the patriarchal systems that perpetuate climate change to leave behind a more gender-just and ecologically sustainable society for future generations' (Iglesias, 2022).

- Evie Gilbert (Queen's University Belfast) - Mind the Hermeneutical Gap: Analysing the Epistemic Injustices Surrounding HIV/AIDS and Gay and Bisexual Men in the 1980s-1990s

Disinformation surrounding the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the 1980s and 1990s was orchestrated with the intention of marginalising gay and bisexual men. The government, police, and tabloid media deliberately produced and sustained hermeneutical lacunas surrounding HIV/AIDS, because they benefited from the hermeneutical marginalisation of, and structural identity prejudice against, gay and bisexual men. This harmed gay and bisexual men's abilities to contribute to hermeneutical resources, accurately interpret their experiences, construct their sense of selfhood, and robbed them of their right to health, identity expression, and life.

Existing research focuses predominantly on present-day social and medical solutions to HIV/AIDS without an understanding of the influence of political structures that both actively and passively upheld the injustice. This critical analysis, rooted in the ethics of knowing and theories of oppression, offers an intersectional interpretation of the epistemic marginalisation and systemic prejudice that characterised responses to HIV/AIDS. Fricker's (2007) Epistemic Injustice provides a unique philosophical lens through which gaps in public knowledge and the harms that they cause people in their capacity as knowers can be understood. Fricker centralises the importance of humans' ability to construct, convey, and interpret knowledge credibly and accurately, and acknowledges that this ability is dependent on social identity power and factors that influence power structures and relations, such as negative identity-prejudicial stereotypes. Examples of activism are used to draw normative conclusions about how to virtuously close the hermeneutical gap and reduce prejudicial stereotypes and imbalances in identity power.

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



PANEL 2 – SOCIOLOGIES OF GENDER & SEXUALITY 2

Chair: TBC

- Eeva Sointu (York St John University) - The dangers of going solo: on femininity and masturbation

Masturbation is thoroughly social; social norms shape how even the most solitary sex is depicted, had, and handled. Despite growing acceptance, silence and stigma continue to surround masturbation by people with a clitoris (Haus and Thompson 2020; Fahs and Frank 2014; Kaestle and Allen 2011; Hogarth and Ingham 2009). Furthermore, female masturbation needs to be carefully handled, lest it undermines the sexual confidence and prowess of especially male partners (Kraus 2017; Fahs and Swank 2013). I argue that representations of female masturbation entwine with a gradual erasure of female sexual desire through racialised discourses linking ideal femininity with chastity. Ideas of lesser female desire were promulgated through 19th and 20th century marriage manuals and normalised through 20th century psychoanalytical thinking. Despite challenges to the idea of lesser female desire through sexology and second wave feminism in the latter half of the 20th century, female masturbation continues to be seen as a second-rate substitute for those failing to secure a sexual partner. While female masturbation can be read as a sign of sexual confidence that, furthermore, makes female masturbators attractive as partners (Haus and Thompson 2020), valuing masturbation due its contribution to partnered sex captures the centrality of relationships in defining normal female sexuality. Postfeminist celebration of masturbation thus articulates scant challenge to how heterosexual female sexualities remain anchored in traditional ideas of femininity. Contemporary representations of female masturbation point to the enduring power of ideas of femininity emphasising lesser sexual desire but also responsibility for the satisfactions of others.

- Leanne Zarroug (Queen's University Belfast) - "Girls! You shouldn't be fucking them anyways!" An insight into how Black Female Students navigate a predominantly white sexual field

This paper investigates how Black women navigate a predominantly white sexual field within the context of Queen's University Belfast, a predominantly white institution. Building upon Green's (2014, 2015) and Wade's (2022) calls for exploring macro-level power dynamics within Sexual Field Theory, this study contributes to the growing literature on women's sexual choices in university settings (Wade, 2022) alongside constructing an argument for the existence of a Black Female Sexual Field. Using snow-ball sampling, six Black women, primarily of West African descent and Christian backgrounds, were interviewed with a combination of face-to-face and online methods. The findings reveal that participants often withdrew from the predominantly white sexual field, recognizing that their standard for engaging in sexual relationships—namely, being in a long-term committed relationship—was unlikely to be met in Northern Ireland. Their sexual habitus and erotic capital were misaligned with the white-dominated sexual field. Despite this, participants revealed a strong unwillingness to adapt their sexual habitus to fit these norms as many participants noted a higher potential for finding compatible partners in England. This withdrawal was further compounded by a desire to temporarily de-center men while at university, prompting an exploration of how compulsive heterosexuality can manifest in a context where participants remain disengaged from the sexual field. To deepen understanding of Black women's sexual lives, future research should focus on incorporating a larger and more diverse sample to capture a broader range of experiences.

- Shannon Hughes-Spence (South East Technological University) - Out in the club' – young women's experiences of the Night Time Economy

While Night Time Economy (NTE) spaces are presented as places of pleasure and female empowerment, they are also sites of anxiety and fear, but also resistance (Gunby et al., 2020). Women are subject to disciplinary power structures as they embody self-regulatory conduct that highlights gendered social control within the NTE. Through a feminist Foucauldian lens, my PhD and this paper explores the lived experiences of women's resistance to unwanted sexual attention in the NTE. "I'm trying to stay home," states 22-year-old Rachel, reflecting on a previous negative experience in the NTE. 22-year-old Maggie shares that when she receives unwanted attention on a night out "you have to just run away". This exemplifies how avoidance strategies are utilised within the disciplinary gendered spaces of the NTE. Resistance to unwanted sexual attention comes in the form of public shaming of the perpetrator by 20-year-old Terri. She describes how she draws attention to unwanted conduct so other people around are aware. "I think the most important thing to do is like the public shaming aspect" she states. Similarly 21-year-old Felicity physically intervenes when she believes a woman is uncomfortable, often angering the perpetrator "which I don't really care about it" she says while laughing. These instances highlight how women overtly challenge sexist attitudes and conduct in the NTE.

- Luke Roantree and Megan O'Sullivan (Queen's University Belfast) - Queer gan teanga, queer gan anam - The intersection of Irish-speaking and LGBTQIA+ communities in Northern Ireland

The perception of Irish-language usage differs substantially across the Irish border. In NI, Irish-language usage is seen as 'counter-cultural' due to historical lack of government support and Unionist/Loyalist hostility, contrasting with connotations of 'conservatism'/'elitism' in the Republic. We investigate how this impacts the relationship between the Irish-speaking and LGBTQIA+ communities, using 2021 NI Census data. Our multivariate analysis identifies strong positive correlation between memberships of these communities ($p < < 10^{-10}$); LGBTQIA+ individuals are 38.0% more likely to report some proficiency in Irish than straight individuals, and Irish-speakers are 54.4% more likely to identify as LGBTQIA+ than non-Irish-speakers. Restricting 'Irish-speaker' to responses showing higher levels of fluency, these figures rise to 62.5% and 74.3% respectively. To rule out confounding factors, we analyse Catholic-only and Protestant-only populations, finding strong positive correlations in each ($p < < 10^{-10}$), demonstrating that the effect is not solely explained by community background. We further validate our hypothesis that shared counter-cultural identity acts as a mechanism to link these communities by approximating regional perceptions of Irish as counter-cultural via the prevalence of 'No Ability in Irish' responses, finding a significant correlation ($p < 0.001$) with the 'strength' (see Figure-1) of the link



BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

PANEL 2 – THEORY 1: CHALLENGES & POSSIBILITIES CHAIR: JOHN O'BRIEN

- Kieran Keohane (University College Cork) - Social Pathologies of Contemporary Civilization: turning from the darkness towards the light, with Fernando Pessoa and Elana Ferrante.

In tune with C. Wright Mills' (1959, 3) proposal in the sociological imagination that "neither the life [or the health] of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both" we'll begin by tracing a broad, deep comparative-historical-sociological arc, from Greece and Rome, through the Dark Ages, into Renaissance, Enlightenment, Modernity, and to our late modern, neo-liberal era, outlining a general hypothesis that epidemics of depression, anxiety, suicidality, addictions, despair, nihilism, and even dementia are related to cultural pathologies of the social body and disorders of the collective *esprit de corps* that arise during historically recurring cycles of liminal collapse and transition. And by extension and corollary we explore what might be done to ameliorate human sufferings and to propagate societies in which people may lead a happier, healthier, more hopeful and more meaningful life. 'It's not dark yet, but it's getting there' as Bob Dylan says. New fascism, the institutions of republican democracy in flames, the planet melting, war in the East, the Middle East and other hot zones, hundreds of millions of people in flight... It has become very difficult to see the light. We are in need of metanoia -turning towards the light, and for this, we will need not only critical diagnosis of the epidemic social pathologies of contemporary civilization, we will need a redemptive logos a horizon of radiant ideals, and we need good models to emulate. To make a turning we begin again with a reminder from Vico and from Joyce that to transform our world and ourselves for a better future we need to bear in mind that good ideas "are already anchored in a deep tradition, in ways of life which have already been lived. ... The validly new is a recreation of a tradition." (Taylor, 2007, 748) In emergency conditions that seem to demand entirely new thinking, we need the presence of mind to know that "imagination is nothing but the working over of what is remembered" (Vico, 1999, 699); "Imagination is memory" (Joyce), and "thinking is remembering and rearranging what we have known all along." (Wittgenstein, 1994, 09). Read more ...

- Jonathan G. Heaney (Queen's University Belfast) - Wisdom and Emotions: Towards a Relational – Sociological Perspective

The study of wisdom has been growing exponentially over recent years. No longer seen in exclusively philosophical or theological terms, there is now a wide-ranging and multidisciplinary 'science of wisdom' emerging. The dominant approaches to wisdom currently seem to come from cognitive science, psychology, neuroscience, education, and gerontology. Increasingly, there seems to be a shift towards the operationalization and measurement of wisdom where psychometric approaches, coupled with cognitive-psychological conceptualizations of wisdom and its elements (including emotion), are to the fore. However, it is puzzling that, given this growth, and the wide-spread, albeit often passing, acknowledgment of the importance of 'social' considerations within this literature, that the sociology of wisdom remains almost entirely absent from this emerging. The exception is the work of Ricca Edmondson (2005, 2013; Edmondson & Wörner, 2019). Moreover, while the importance of emotion to the practice of wisdom is also widely acknowledged, from a sociological perspective, this treatment is often problematic. For instance, in most models where it is included as a dimension or component of wisdom, emotional life is reduced to 'emotional regulation' or 'emotional intelligence', or core emotions associated with wisdom, such as empathy, sympathy, and compassion, are often conflated, confused, or remain vague. In this paper, building on the sociocultural approach advocated by Edmondson, and arguing from specifically (emotions-) sociological perspective that draws on relational sociology, I aim to theoretically explore the practice of (practical) wisdom in terms of the 'wise habitus', the 'wise situation', and cultural, emotional, and symbolic capital.

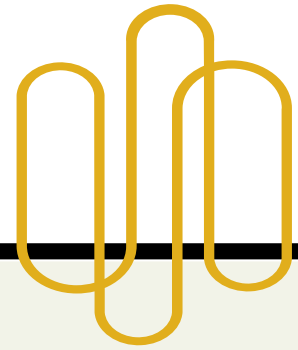
- Erin Silver (University of Otago) - Toward an abolitionist modality in sociology

Abolition has an expansive genealogy across movements like those to end slavery, the family, prisons, debt, schooling, rent, and work, and a rich history as an orientating principle for transformative activism. This paper argues that across these histories there is a common abolitionist core that includes ontologies of expansive space, time, and being; epistemologies of collective study, imagination, and storytelling; methods of care, refusal, and fugitive creation; and grammars of possibility and critical hope. There is significant scope for our own sociological inquiries to draw on and practice with this abolitionist orientation. Thus, I suggest that sociological inquiry itself can be abolitionist in modality, and I develop 'abolition sociology' as a framework to guide the wanderings of our sociological imaginations and to inform transformative sociological practice.

- Quinn Roberts O'Mahar (Ulster University) - Deaths of Despair

In the United States between 1999 and 2022, approximately 3.1 million people have died from overdoses, alcohol-related-diseases, and suicide, collectively labelled Deaths of Despair. The most common victims are working class individuals without college degrees that have experienced increased difficulty in the modern labour market. Two common factors behind Deaths of Despair are long term economic hardship and lack of social connection. Since the late 1970s, the US has undergone seismic socio-economic shifts. Union density, job quality, and social capital have declined as a partial result of deindustrialization and the rise of neoliberalism. All of these are associated with Deaths of Despair. With the rise of precarious work, employment is no longer a reliable site of identity formation and is no longer a source of 'ontological security' which has harmed the mental wellbeing of many Americans. Furthermore, the growth of precarious work has created a polarized labour market which has exacerbated social exclusion and alienation in American society. These changes coupled with the decline of many American communities has allowed Diseases of Despair to fill the void. Furthermore, many attempts to build social citizenship in the US have been undone. This paper will draw on several psychological theories of addiction which indicates it stems from a sense powerlessness and emotional pain. It will argue that through labour solidarity along with improved realization of labour rights, social capital and social citizenship can be rebuilt which in turn may be used as a supplementary public health tool to help decrease these deaths.

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



PANEL 3 – POLITICS 1: NATION, STATE, POWER

CHAIR: TBC

- William Persichilli (Università degli Studi di Messina) - Statelessness, Gender, Minorities. Kurdish Women's Quest for Freedom and Democratic Confederalism for a New Positive Peace

I propose an empirical study which draws from a more general research framework in which I analyse the linkages between women's activism and peace. In my PhD research project I investigate whether non-violent practices and agencies, typically (trans)feminist, can lead to new and understandings of peace, where constructive relationships between opponents can be created. In my reference to peace, I rely upon Galtung's notion of positive peace, namely the absence of structural/cultural violence (opposed to negative peace, namely the absence of war), being realised through international cooperation, communication, empowerment of unrepresented and estranged categories. Öcalan's paradigm of Democratic Confederalism and its application within the Kurdish movement for freedom, perfectly resonates with my research's scope, if we consider the way the stateless Kurdish population, a minority split in four nation-states, and the Kurdish women, a minority within the minority, are succeeding in constructing peace. Democracy, ecology, women's liberation are the main pillars of a novel anti-capitalist, anti-misogynist, stateless Kurdish community, in which women are free, fighters, and as leaders as men. For this study, I have been following the axes of qualitative research, employing a grounded theory approach, conducting qualitative interviews to Kurdish (or pro Kurdistan) women activists and militants, with the aim to investigate the Kurdish women's inner dimension of the practices and external dimension of agency. Thus a particular interest on a militant woman's agency and her view/realisation of Democratic Confederalism has been my main focus. The sampling has been theoretical, non-probabilistic, mainly a snow-ball sampling.

- Michael Murray (Maynooth University) - The politics of fear and 'normal living': power, quiescence and resistance.

This paper explores political fear as an exercise in power that threatens '...normal, regulated, or optimized life...' (Debrix and Barder, 2011) while also arguing that a socially mediated framing of 'normal living' offers possibilities for challenging fear narratives. Here, political fear is not merely a reflection of the politics of cultural malaise that effectively excludes any meaningful sense of agency or strategy. Rather, it constitutes a deliberate exercise in power that is targeted at particular social groups and communities (for instance, in terms of class, gender and race), with the purpose of creating conditions of quiescence and powerlessness. By the same token, the crucial importance of socially mediating such threats through the lens of 'normal living' opens up the possibility of challenging and contesting political fear. This paper explores these issues with reference to ongoing research.

- Cydney Sheridan (Maynooth University) - Vigilante Justice and the Rise of Far-Right Nationalism in India: Cow Protectionism and the Citizenship Amendment Act

Research indicates levels of reported hate crime have increased over the last decade, which has coincided with the ascension of numerous right-wing political parties. As the world's largest democracy and a hub of linguistic and religious diversity, India has received heightened media attention since the election of the country's Hindu nationalist party, the Bharatiya Janata Party. The actions of the BJP in introducing and strengthening discriminatory legislation has incited and emboldened vigilante groups across the Nation who seek to target Muslims and lower caste Hindus in their capacity as a quasi-moral police seeking to uphold strictly Hindu values. Such vigilantism has been linked to the issue of cow protectionism and has resulted in what are colloquially referred to as cow lynchings. Cow lynchings and other related bovine offences have been found to be largely perpetrated by vigilante mobs, acting to uphold cow protection legislation and preserve the sacred symbolism of the cow within the Hindu faith. Numerous instances have occurred in which individuals have been lynched, beaten and sexually assaulted by vigilante groups for allegedly selling, transporting or consuming beef. A number of vigilante groups linked to religious organisations have been implicated in the incitement of cow related violence, these include the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, the Vishva Hindu Parishad, and the Bajrang Dal. These acts of violence have been further compounded by the recent introduction of the Citizenship Amendment Act, which has been labelled inherently anti-Muslim. Such findings demonstrate the thriving far-right ethnic nationalism manifesting in contemporary Indian society

- Xiaojian Zheng (University of Galway) - Constructing Place Identity in a Non-Metropolitan City of Contemporary China: An Ethnographic Study of Tai'an

Place is both the site of inhabitation and the object of discourse. The discourse surrounding a place produces and sustains power structures, as it regulates and disciplines practices. Residents' engagement in the negotiation of place identity is often constrained by these discourses, which are embedded in social contexts through setting rules and reinforcing hierarchies. Consequently, mapping the landscape of power relations involved in the construction of discourse on place identity can provide critical insights into the causes and consequences of marginalisation within fluid power dynamics. Nevertheless, limited research has been conducted on the political and cultural processes that have shaped the place identity of non-metropolitan regions in China, where the majority of the population inhabits.

This ethnographic research examines how discourses of place identity are produced and sustained in Tai'an, a small Chinese city historically influenced by imperial visits over thousands of years and currently recognised as one of China's most popular tourist destinations. Through eight months of participant observation and interviews with 22 participants, this research reveals that Tai'an exemplifies a centralised power structure predominantly governed by local authorities who closely adhere to central government directives while often lacking innovation and long-term strategic planning. This results in an official narrative regarding place identity that is markedly inconsistent, as evidenced by grassroots governance, street propaganda billboards, and museum exhibitions. Furthermore, this ambiguity manifests itself in the fact that although an atheistic party leads the government—officially eschewing religious elements—religious values continue to play a pivotal role in actual urban planning processes as well as internal governmental deliberations. The limited avenues for participation in local affairs engender feelings of disengagement among residents from their localities, ultimately leading to diminished interest in—and involvement with—place identity. This study offers a critical examination of the concept of place within the contemporary Chinese context.



BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

PANEL 3 – HEALTH & ILLNESS 1 CHAIR: MYLES BALFE

- Shelley Etkin (University College Cork) - Herbolgies of Repair: Tea Talk

For the Sociological Association of Ireland's 2025 conference, I would like to propose a talk that introduces my research through a shared experience of drinking specific medicinal tea together. By shifting the focus into the internal sensory landscape of the body and the collective social experience, connections can be made between felt-knowledge and the research questions I am engaging with. I will facilitate this by brewing a tea that includes specific medicinal plants from the land of Palestine-Israel and guide a simple contemplative practice connecting bodily sensations and questions that can arise through this accessible way of encountering the plants with the theoretical, practical, and methodological terms of my research. Through locally-rooted decolonial, queer feminist, ecological, and anti-zionist lenses, I ask how cultural encounters and collisions mediated through plants have taken place in this context. Recognising that they were and continue to be fraught with multiple forms of violent realities given conditions of war, occupation and apartheid regimes (segregated legal and social structures) several key medicinal plants are re-examined as liberatory allies.

- Meadhbh Hannon (University of Galway) - 'The Missed Disease': Endometriosis awareness, life disruptions and pain disclosure habits of an Irish university student population

Endometriosis is an under-researched chronic gynaecological condition, known to significantly disrupt all areas of the lives of those living with it. The stigmatisation of menstruation and the normalisation of menstruators' pain means that disclosing pain symptoms can complicate relationships and disclosers' experiences are often dismissed. This study explores the extent of the awareness that student menstruators in University of Galway have of endometriosis, including symptoms, prevalence, reasons for diagnostic delay, and information sourcing. It also explores the extent to which participants experience life disruptions, the areas of life these occur, and the frequency of disruptions. Pain disclosure habits of participants are also explored, investigating who they disclose to and why. An anonymous online mixed-methods self-completion survey was completed by 314 University of Galway students who experienced severe menstrual pain.

Respondents lacked awareness of endometriosis symptoms and prevalence but showed a noteworthy understanding of reasons contributing to a delay in diagnosis of the condition. Life disruptions were extremely common among respondents, occurring most frequently in social life and in education/work, recording significantly higher life disruptions than in other related studies. The findings revealed that overall, respondents were most likely to disclose their pain to friends, and least likely to disclose to healthcare professionals. This study uncovered a demonstrable need for increased awareness of endometriosis, and five recommendations were made to ensure practical action is taken.

Keywords: endometriosis, awareness, symptoms, life disruptions, normalisation of pain, pain disclosures, health sociology.

- Jenny Säilävaara (Maynooth University) - Infant Feeding in Finland and Ireland: A Multilayered Contextual Practice

This study explores infant feeding as a complex behaviour influenced by personal, cultural, and social factors, focusing on mothers from Finland and Ireland. Using narrative interviews and the Voice-Centered Relational Method (VCRM) for analysis, I examine the multifaceted nature of breastfeeding and formula feeding, including embodied experiences, and the interplay between individual choices, cultural norms, and societal influences. Data was collected through narrative interviews with mothers from Finland and Ireland in 2024. The VCRM analysis reveals how mothers internalize and resist societal discourses on breastfeeding, such as the idealization of "good motherhood" or the stigmatization of public feeding practices. These dynamics underscore breastfeeding as a site where personal and collective identities are negotiated and performed. The study highlights contrasts between Finland, where over 70% of infants are still breastfed at six months, and Ireland, where breastfeeding rates are lower. This research contributes to the sociology of mothering by examining how infant feeding practices intersect with broader social structures, cultural expectations, and individual agency. By utilizing narrative interviews and the VCRM approach, this study offers a nuanced perspective on the challenges and supports experienced by mothers in Finland and Ireland. The findings provide valuable insights for developing effective strategies to support mothers in diverse cultural settings, potentially informing evidence-based interventions and policies aimed at improving maternal and infant well-being.

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



PANEL 3 – HEALTH & ILLNESS 2

CHAIR: GER MULLALY

- Carmel Hannan (University of Limerick), Ross Macmillan, Elke Hayes, Michael Anyanwu, and Saoirse McLnerney - Cohort Comparisons of the Consequences of COVID on Youth Psychological Wellbeing

Background: The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health of young people is a critical social issue. One under-explored effect is whether birth cohort moderated pandemic exposures and consequent effects on health and well-being. As cohort determined both the timing of lives and life circumstances during the pandemic period, investigation of cohort moderation – amplification or amelioration – is critical for the advance of both science and public policy.

Context: Mental health of young people and its relation to life course transitions is a critical aspect of population health and there is wide speculation that the COVID-19 pandemic had widespread detrimental effects on well-being.

Methods: We conducted random-effect, growth curve analysis with N-way product-terms to assess both cohort effects and variation in cohort effects in the two cohorts of the Growing up in Ireland data.

Results: In general, cohort differences in pandemic effects on psychological well-being were remarkably similar across cohorts with an approximate increase of 12 percent in symptomatology between the pre-COVID and COVID-19 period. There was further evidence of cohort moderation with respect to sociodemographic/family background factors. Surprisingly, there was very little evidence that pandemic exposures were associated with cohort differences in psychological well-being during the pandemic.

Conclusions: The findings point to a negative impact of the pandemic on the mental health of young people that was highly consistent regardless of cohort and by extension life stage. This highlights the needs for mental health supports suitable for a range of ages and life course contexts

- Monica O’Mullane and Tara Kenny (University College Cork) - The Good, the Bad and the Ugly: Reflections on using an action research approach to clarifying and actioning Health Impact Assessment practice in Ireland

Health Impact Assessment is a process that systematically assesses potential health impacts of a project, programme or policy on population health, and the distribution of health impacts across population groups, which can create or exacerbate health inequalities. In Ireland, although public health policy Healthy Ireland (2013-2025) endorses the use of HIA in embedding a Health in All Policies approach to decision-making, the practice of HIA is sparse. A research project, HIA-IM, is examining the process of doing two HIAs in order to generate learnings from the experiential practice of HIA processes. The HIAs conducted in the project include the Cork City Development Plan (2022-2028), and the Climate Action Plan 2024. The project will create an implementation model for carrying out policy-level HIAs going forward. HIA-IM is underpinned by an action research approach using implementation science frameworks in gathering data on the process of doing the two HIAs, to create the model. Part of the action research approach is to gather action-oriented learnings from the Steering Group members on the two HIAs through World Cafes and a reflection technique, Stop & Share. Also, researchers engaged in the work record ongoing learnings through monthly prompted reflections and biannual analysis retreats. Framed by the work of Patricia Maguire (2000) and Hilary Bradbury (2022) in critical participatory action research, we will unpack and explore the role of action research in collating and mobilising the research on HIA, as well reflect on our role as reflexive researchers working within this space.

- Miriam Dillon (University of Queensland) - Circulating distress within an Advanced Practice Physiotherapy-led clinic

Political and economic forces are central to a health service’s development, structure, evaluation, and care delivery; these forces intersect with emotions. Yet, how politics, economics and emotions intersect and impact clinicians and patients are rarely considered within healthcare research and practice. Furthermore, emotions like distress are an evitable part of clinical encounters in chronic pain care, but are poorly conceptualised as individualistic and irrelevant. However, both physiotherapists and patients experience distress and are affected by a range of sociopolitical forces. In this study, we took a critical reflexive ethnographic approach to map the production and circulation of distress within an Advanced Practice Physiotherapy-led clinic, delivering chronic low back pain care. Drawing from Sara Ahmed’s theorisation of ‘use’ as an analytical tool, we illustrate how political-economic-evaluation assemblages shape the values and priorities within the clinic, often producing distress and constraining care. We show how economic priorities intersect with evaluation regimes to produce narrow conceptualisations of success while obscuring and exacerbating experiences of distress. We argue that political and institutional level change is required to enable broader approaches to care. This may be facilitated by shifting the focus beyond quantified evaluation and economic outcomes to incorporate the humans in the human aspects of care, along with the emotional elements of service users’ and clinicians’ experiences. Through the lens of ‘use’ we make the familiar strange and reveal how political and economic forces produce distress in the clinic.

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



PANEL 4 – EXPLORING THE LIVES OF WORKING-CLASS ACADEMICS

CHAIR: TBC

Panel Outline: This research project aims to explore the experiences of academics who identify as Irish and working class, using an autoethnographical approach. We intend to collect 13 autoethnographies; each will be an account of the author's life, their experiences, and their journey into becoming a higher or further education professional, in an educational system fraught with elitism and exclusion. Told in their own words, the authors will explore their experiences of being an academic in FE and HE – how they got there, if they faced any struggles, and if they had to, or still do, (re)negotiate their identities.

The authors' social class may not be the only aspect of their lives – they might also want to explore the intersections of their identity and draw on race, religion, ethnicity, gender and/or sexuality, and the intersections between them, in order to fully explore their experience and development into becoming an academic.

The topic of social class in academia has come into sharp focus in recent times, as universities widen their participation and welcome under-represented groups, including the working class. Working-class academics often experience difficult and turbulent times during their journey into and through academia.

Our research project aims to attempt to gain a deeper understanding of the lived realities of working-class academics in higher and further education, many of whom undergo unique and profound experiences. We are committed to being as inclusive as possible around what the Irish experience might mean: newcomer, diaspora, and narratives from either side of the border - are all welcome; indeed, such inclusivity is necessary given Ireland's specific histories of both emigration and partition.

- Iona Burnell Reilly (University of East London)
- Stephen Baker (Ulster University)
- Keith Murphy (Technological University Dublin)
- Declan McKenna, University of Limerick



BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

PANEL 4 – CONSPIRACY, CRIME & SUBTERRANEAN WORLDS

CHAIR: JAMES WINDLE

- Áine Bernadette Mannion (University College Cork) - "I Think I Have Been Ghosted... Again.": Perspectives And Learnings From Undertaking Research With Irish Judges And Gardaí

Conducting social research with any cohort presents its own unique set of challenges and opportunities. This paper explores some preliminary findings, experiences and lessons learned from engaging in research with members of the judiciary and An Garda Síochána for a PhD research project. A study which is exploring the relationship between Gardaí and judicial decision-making with the children in detention in Ireland. The participants were invited to take part in in-depth qualitative semi-structured interviews to illuminate on an area which is untheorized. Not only is the topic of the study underexplored but reflections on methods utilised or on the experience of undertaking research with these cohorts, particularly in the Irish context, are hard to come by.

This paper will reflect on lengthy ethical review processes, significant access and recruitment challenges, and provide perspectives on being in the room interviewing decision-makers in the Irish criminal justice system. While drawing on my experiences as the researcher of this project I will yes, highlight the obstacles and ethical considerations faced, however, this paper also aims to provide strategies to mitigate these challenges, including the importance of persistence, effective communication, and having a good grounding in qualitative interviewing skills. By analysing the nuances of undertaking research within the Irish judicial and policing contexts, this paper contributes to a deeper understanding of how researchers can navigate similar environments, ultimately offering valuable insights for future studies involving underexplored, or hard-to-reach professional or elite cohorts.

- Rian Mulcahy (University of Greenwich) et al. - The Hidden Pandemic: Consequences of and Responses to Qanon

Drawing on discourse analysis data, this paper examines the unacknowledged consequences of Qanon experienced by the social networks of Qanon believers. By exploring how conspiratorial belief is negotiated within personal relationships, we identify potential social responses to this ever-evolving phenomenon. Qanon has undertaken a metamorphosis of sorts in the last two years, mutating into a virulent infusion of Christian nationalism and political extremism that is fuelling socio-political polarisation and civil instability in the US and now, far beyond. While there has been research conducted on the wider implications of Qanon belief and on Qanon believers themselves, there remains very little examining the micro-level social and relational consequences of such beliefs and how Qanon belief impacts those closest to the believers. Through a feminist, relational lens and drawing on data from discourse analysis of the Subreddit forum 'QAnonCasualties', the paper addresses this gap by providing a much-needed analysis of the unheard voices and experiences of the primary social networks of Qanon believers (e.g., family, partners, friends etc.) and by doing so, sheds light on the unacknowledged and far-reaching consequences of conspiratorial belief. In highlighting the shared experiences of the QanonCasualties, we forefront the importance of hearing the perspectives of this hidden population whose stories too often go untold. Their experiences provide a unique perspective on the journey towards conspiratorial belief and political polarisation, as they watch (and react to) the process in real-time. It also allows for the identification of push and pull factors relating to the QanonCasualties and their 'Q's as they negotiate their relationships. A central aim of the paper is to demonstrate why Qanon can no longer be treated as a 'fringe issue' but must be considered a far-reaching social problem. By investigating the banality of the everyday experiences of those affected, we create space for the emergence of social responses to redress what has become a complex social problem.

- Aogán Mulcahy (University College Dublin) Police Abolitionism: Critique, Context and Public Safety

In recent years, the role of the police has been highlighted and challenged in a series of public protests and social movements coalescing around the themes of 'police abolitionism', 'defund the police', and 'Black Lives Matter'. Although international in nature, these movements are largely associated with a series of controversial deaths of young black males in the USA at the hands of police officers. Several of these deaths were captured on camera, and the violence this revealed underpinned demands for a fundamental change in safety and security provision, primarily through the abolition of specific police departments, the diversion of funding from the police to other agencies, or other measures. This paper examines the main features of the police abolition movement and considers the factors which extend and limit its public appeal and political impact. I draw on examples from police-public relations in Ireland and elsewhere to highlight the significance of context in these issues. I also highlight the tension between the emotional appeal of policing and efforts to advance a framework of public safety that decentres the police.

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



PANEL 4 – BELONGING, HUSTLING, ENTREPRENEURSHIP & MANIFESTING: EMERGING DISCOURSES IN EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION **CHAIR: NICOLA INGRAM**

- Ryan Wilkinson (University of Leeds), Kirsty Finn (University of Manchester) and Nicola Ingram (University College Cork) - Against Higher Education Belonging: A Cautionary Tale from an Unloved Sector

This paper focusses on discourses of student belonging in higher education (HE) policy and practice in the UK and challenges normative assumptions about belonging deficit as a fundamental barrier to equity and inclusion within the sector. We argue that the increased focus on belonging in the policy rhetoric and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion activities in UK HE Institutions obfuscates the reality of a sector in crisis. Students are incited to feel a sense of belonging to institutions and embody studenthood in a way that articulates belonging through engagement and physical presence, with any deviation from this behaviour regarded as pathological and borne out of the cultural deficit of those from non-traditional backgrounds. These deficit framings generate a plethora of superficial belonging activities that misrecognise belonging as an individual problem of mindset. The structural conditions of contemporary studenthood are absent from discursive constructions of student belonging despite decades of academic literature highlighting the persistence of structures of class, race, gender and disability in the generation of inequalities. Moreover, as participation in HE has increased and the returns have diminished, the sector has been called into question and held to account in both popular and political debates. The value of HE in the UK is in question in an unprecedented way resulting in course closures, redundancies and regular industrial disputes. In this paper we ask why would anyone want to belong to something that is so unloved, and present the UK HE sector as a cautionary tale for other countries where neoliberal governance structures are less advanced.

- Kirsty Finn (University of Manchester) and Kim Allem (University of Leeds) - Thrifting, meditating and Hustling through the crisis in Higher Education: Financial precarity, entrepreneurialism and student wellbeing

Student mental health and wellbeing (MHWB) has been a key policy focus for almost a decade in England. However, the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic and a longer-term precarisation of the youth and graduate labour market, has seen increasing policy and media attention on the financial determinants of student MHWB. Beset by mounting student debt and spiralling costs of living, students have been incited to strategise to 'get by' and manage the material and psychological effects of increased financial insecurity. Correspondingly, there has been an increased visibility and promotion of flexible, entrepreneurial and often digitally-mediated forms of student employment, embodied in the rise of the 'side hustle', with media declarations that 'the university side hustle has come of age'. Parallel to less positively framed 'gig work', universities themselves have begun embedding initiatives to help students launch side hustles, exhorting them to turn passions into entrepreneurial projects. The side hustle sits alongside the endorsement of other invitations for students to manage their financial wellbeing and mitigate the rising costs of living and learning through embracing entrepreneurial and self-responsible dispositions; from 'thrifty' spending to 'mindfulness' and supposedly eco-friendly 'grow your own' food initiatives. In this paper we interrogate these injunctions and argue that these apparent 'solutions' to MHWB and the worsening conditions students encounter across both work and study only serve to further individualise systemic and structural failings of the project of higher education.

- Kirsty Morrin (University of Liverpool) - To be Against Everything and Nothing: The Case of Entrepreneurship in Education

This presentation focuses on a particular subset of entrepreneurial policy, discourse, and practice, that is 'entrepreneurship' as, and in formal, state education. Conceptually, the article centres the contradictions in 'entrepreneurship' as a present-day neoliberal discourse that can claim to be both everything and nothing, one that can take on all successes and deflect all failures. Empirically, it explores the contradictions of competition, risk, the nation-state, and resistance in these entrepreneurial, educational ecologies in order to pose an argument 'against entrepreneurship'. There is a move 'against entrepreneurship' as: a site of expropriative venture philanthropy, as speculative and concerted precarity, as expanded ethno-imperial logic, and finally as recognition of resistant praxis. Within these four arguments there is a focus on the (re)production of inequality, where each in turn serves to entrench rather than reform said inequalities. Reemphasising the contradictory nature of 'entrepreneurship', the article argues that these very same contexts also contain potential through difference and praxis which 'move against' such retrenchment.

- Tom Boland (University College Cork) - Transformation Talk: From jobseeking and career advice to manifesting and social theory

The idea of change animates modernity: Transformations of the self, society and the whole world are an immense source of hope and anxiety. Yet, what is meant by transformation? Is it just a change? Evidently, there are less evocative terms like adjustment or reconfiguration, or conceptualisations like metamorphosis which seem almost overblown. In this paper I suggest that modern society is increasingly suffused with 'transformation talk', a particular way of talking about change, or from a post-structuralist perspective, a mode of posing the problem of change. The paper draws on a range of empirical examples, from jobseeking advice on self-presentation and cultivating inner strengths to career guidance which transforms people through conversations to the contemporary notion of 'manifesting' which proposes that people can transform their lives by channelling their energies to their true desires. In each of these cases, the transformation talk clearly chimes with contemporary individualism and even neo-liberalism. More troublingly and reflexively, there are similar ontological conceptualisations within much social theory, which produces its own versions of 'transformation talk', which is often not just theoretically questionable, but easily co-opted politically.



BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

PANEL 5 – POPULISM & THE RISE OF THE FAR-RIGHT CHAIR: DYUTI CHAKRAVARTY

- Yasmine Ahmed (University College Cork) - Understanding and mapping the development of the far-right in Ireland

The last years have proved to be important formation years for far-right movements in Ireland, with an increase in the number of racist attacks, as well as attacks against activists, politicians and international protection applicants; the COVID-19 outbreak with the related Government enforced mitigations seems to have provided fertile ground for far-right propaganda. This presentation pinpoints 4 moments within the last 7 years which are relevant to the development of far-right movements in Ireland, ending this analysis with the evolution of events around to the local and European elections in 2024. In the context of growing far-right wins at the electoral level at the EU and extra-EU context, and of increased grassroots activities in Ireland, this presentation also wants to trace relevant international links of the Irish far-right, to understand more in depth this evolving landscape.

- Rebecca Close (University College Cork) - Imaging/Imagining Reproductive Crisis in Europe

The total fertility rate has dropped dramatically in 11 of the 27 EU members states in the last 20 years, suggesting a crisis in reproduction in Europe. Fecundity is also understood to decline abruptly for women and gestating people after a certain age. Time-lapse microscopy has been at the centre of the way we know about reproductive biology since the early 20th century and today continues to condition how scientists create knowledge about reproductive cells in lab settings. In this sense, imaging practices are key to scientific and popular imaginings of both the biological clock and the supposed urgencies of population replacement. This paper addresses the so-called 'fertility crisis' as it is made of images. It does not, however, study images as sources to analyse the visual cultures of fertility, or examine how effective singular images are in describing crisis or proposing solutions. Rather, its reproductive politics approach addresses images as participating in a field of struggle in which knowledge, ideas and feelings about reproduction, sexuality, sex-gender, race and ability (as well as nation, borders and ideas of surplus populations) are negotiated. The paper draws on data collected through ethnographies in reproductive biology research labs and mixed-method analysis of media discourse and public governance reporting on global demographic shifts. It situates fertility crisis imaging technologies –from microscopy to common fertility metrics– in a broader historical context of what philosopher Achille Mbembe has called Europe's 'mathematics of population'.

- Titas Biswas, Catherine Forde, and Vanessa Liston (University College Cork) - Pedagogy as Body Politic: Exploring the Saffronised Classroom Setting as a Fascist Space in the Making
- Jody Ponce (University College Cork) - How the far-right has co-opted the term 'lived experience' to express how they 'feel' about political issues from immigration to trans-rights.

The expansion of far-right ideologies has increased polarisation across many European countries, this polarisation plays out on social media in heated exchanges of opinions which often deploy the phrases, 'lived experience' and 'I feel like', increasingly by people on the far-right. This chapter explores, through digital discourse analysis and linguistic genealogy, how 'lived experience' is now being used to make claims of authority and authenticity by those on the far-right. Taking a Foucauldian approach to discourse, this chapter generates a critical genealogy of this common place expression. Expressions of 'lived experience' deploy the phrase, 'I feel like...' as a form of authoritative 'knowledge production'. My reading suggests that knowledge produced through 'felt lived experience', which has been historically used within feminist stand-point scholarship to give voice to marginalised experiences, is now being co-opted by those on the far-right, making the practice deeply problematic as individuals on the far-right use their 'felt lived experience' to counter the 'felt lived experience' of the marginalised, to re-establish, dominant far-right approaches to politics and society. Keywords: 'Lived experience', the far-right, Individualism, 'truth', Knowledge production, polarisation, Systemic injustice.

- Amin Sharifi Isaloo (University College Cork) - Artificial intelligence, media and the far-right

The re-emergence of the far right has caused alarm among segments of the political establishment, media, and academia. The economic, social and political crises in Europe have provided an ideal platform for the far right to perform and to shape the public sphere by spreading fear among European citizens. Currently, they are not categorised as a 'marginal electoral force' in most European countries. The far-rights in Europe shape the public sphere to demonstrate that there are major threats from 'Others'; the racialised 'other' as a threat to 'our' way of life. They employ the scapegoating mechanism to approach their pre-planned goals, usually by highlighting an 'enemy figure' on whom real insecurities may be projected (Girard 1989) such as the Muslim, the Jew, the Black or African. Drawing on René Girard's concept of the scapegoating mechanism and imitation and Victor Turner's concept of liminality, this chapter explores how the far right in Europe form the public sphere, particularly through AI and spreading it in social media.

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



PANEL 5 – HOME, BORDERS, MOVEMENT & THE FAR-RIGHT

CHAIR: MAGGIE O’NEIL

- Yasmine Ahmed (University College Cork)
- Masatoureh Fathi (University College Cork)
- Amin Sharifi Isaloo (University College Cork)
- Theresa O’Keefe (University College Cork)
- Maggie O’Neill (University College Cork)

PANEL 5 – DIGITAL PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICES IN ACTION

CHAIR: TBC

- Ray Griffin (South East Technological University) - Digital PES-in-Action
- Antoinette Jordan (South East Technological University) - From politics to code: the unfolding of EU digital aspirations into practice
- Órla Hayes (Propelor BIC) - Exploring Omni-channel Welfare Experiences in Unemployment Services
- Zach Roche (South East Technological University) - Digitising Exclusion: The Challenges of Modern Unemployment and PES Delivery
- Aisling Tuite (South East Technological University) - Cyborg Futures of Care and Welfare



BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

PANEL 1 – ROOM WGB G01 - MIGRATIONS, BELONGING AND BORDERING 1: IDENTITY AND SOLIDARITY **CHAIR: TBC**

- Aine Lyne (Mary Immaculate College) - Cultural Identity Formation-A participatory approach to working with children

The number of people with a dual Irish nationality increased 63% to 170,597 in 2022 from 104,784 in 2016 according to the most recent census figures (CSO, 2023). Furthermore 632,000 people identified as a nationality other than Irish (CSO, 2023). So, it is evident that Ireland is a culturally plural society, but what are the experiences of those who have multiple cultural identities in Ireland and has that changed our sense of what is Irish cultural identity. The aim of this study is to explore how cultural identities are developed amongst migrant and native Irish families in contemporary Ireland. The research engages families from DEIS primary schools in Limerick City to explore the influences and outcomes of cultural identity formation and how these differ between parents and children, first-generation and second-generation migrants and those from ethnic minorities and those from traditional Irish backgrounds. This research is based in schools as schools are uniquely place to support inclusion, as they are often the first societal institution families engage with, build relationships with and trust (Higgins et al., 2020). The research is also conducted within the context of DEIS schools. DEIS schools have a higher portion of families from a migrant background than non-DEIS schools so they are an important site for cultural exchange and the formation of multiple identities (Smyth, 2017). This paper will focus on the use of participatory research methods with children grounded in the Lundy Model of Participation (2007). Through the use of inclusive pedagogies, the study aimed to provide a space for children to explore, express and discuss their cultural identities in a safe and supportive environment.

- Mervyn Horgan (University of Guelph) - Civic Action Spheres: Improvising Migrant Solidarity through Public Sociability

Civil sphere theory (Alexander 2006) and civic action theory (Lichterman and Eliasoph 2014) share characteristics relatively rare amongst US-born theories: they are empirically grounded and have a strong normative bent without sacrificing analytic power. Both are centrally concerned with the doing of democracy, not simply as a political project of legislation and governance, but as a cultural project of meaningfully coordinated action addressed to civic engagement and civil inclusion. At base, both theories advance fine-grained understanding of cultural processes that generate solidarity. Civil sphere theory treats the civil sphere as a relatively autonomous sphere of social life where solidarity expands through processes of civil repair and civil inclusion. In civic action theory, the development of solidarity is centered, analytically at least, on relationship-building in social movements and advocacy groups, broadly conceived. Working with elements of both theories, I examine activity at the local (rather than national or international) level as a locus for invoking, enacting, and realizing the civil sphere ideal of expanded solidarity. To do this I develop the concept—civic action spheres—to understand interactional contexts where the coordination of action explicitly works to generate solidaristic social organization. This paper draws on the Irish context, and the public-facing work of Sanctuary Runners in particular, to shed light on intersections between civil sphere theory and civic action theory around the everyday improvised doing of civil inclusion and solidarity in interactionally-centered ways.

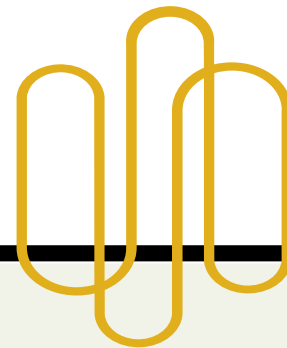
- Marc Scully (Mary Immaculate College) - Am I culturally appropriating Irish citizenship? – discourses of effortfulness and essentialism in negotiations and understandings of Irish citizenship among post-Brexit applicants for Irish passports.

The phenomenon of the rise in post-Brexit applications for Irish citizenship from people of Irish descent resident in Britain has attracted much attention since 2016. It has often been broadly, and somewhat superficially, been characterised as a citizenship of convenience for British people who wish to retain free movement in the EU through the medium of an Irish grandparent. This paper will more critically interrogate the relationship such applicants have with Irish citizenship, identity and culture. It draws on data from a focus group and interviews with 21 participants in a recent social psychological research project on discourses of citizenship among the Irish in Britain, post-Brexit. Participants draw on discourses of both effortfulness and essentialism in working up claims to Irish identity, with effortfulness in acquiring transnational knowledge being particularly central in rhetorically legitimizing less secure claims. The analysis thus builds on previous political psychological work highlighting the centrality of “effortfulness” to contemporary constructions of citizenship, particularly in the United Kingdom (Anderson & Gibson, 2020; Gibson, 2009). It is furthermore suggested that explicitly labeled “non-effortfulness” can act as a rhetorical marker of belonging. The implications of these findings for concepts of diasporic citizenship and debates around *jus soli* versus *jus sanguinis* citizenship in both Ireland and Britain are discussed.

- Aidan O’Sullivan (Birmingham City University) - Irish Reunification and the Irish Diaspora in Britain

Political ruptures such as Brexit open spaces for hopeful projections among stakeholder social groups and revive past political projects. This paper uses an innovative photo-elicitation survey to analyse how members of the Irish diaspora in Britain engage with the emerging discourse of a reunited Ireland. This research population was chosen due to their relative marginalisation in these debates. The paper used thematic analysis of their responses according to future hopes and fears using the concepts of nostalgia and nostophobia. The findings demonstrate that most participants deploy seemingly nostalgic conceptions of Irish reunification as an analogue to returned membership in more cosmopolitan bodies such as the EU. However, responses differed over how likely Brexit will lead to reignited sectarianism. These fears crystallised over whether young people would be recruited and how past reminders of the conflict should be managed. The paper demonstrates that even in a relatively uniform research population, there are lingering debates about constructions of the past and what role, if any, it should play in the future of post-conflict societies.

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



PANEL 2 – ROOM WGB G04 - EDUCATION 1: PERSPECTIVES ON HIGHER EDUCATION

CHAIR: TBC

- Caitríona Ní Laoire, James Bilson, Olive Byrne, Claire Dorrity, Claire Edwards, Caitríona Honohan, Piaras Mac Éinrí and Stephen O'Brien (University College Cork) - Enabling diverse student voice in higher education: a critical perspective

The concept of student voice has emerged as a key element of discourses surrounding student participation and engagement in the context of higher education (HE). However, what is meant by student voice seems open to interpretation. In this paper, we draw on a case-study of the unique Student Ambassador Advisory Group initiative in UCC to ask what meaningful and diverse student voice could look like. Based on in-depth data gathered through accompanying the SAAG over the period of one academic year, the paper argues that enabling diverse student voice in a meaningful way requires meaningful institutional investment – to create safe and respectful spaces in which diverse students can build relationships with each other and with decision-makers so that key concerns of all students can emerge, be articulated and be heard. We argue that different ideological understandings of what is meant by student voice produce tensions and contradictions that play out in different ways within HE institutional politics.

- Steven Thurston Oliver (Salem State University) - Utilizing Sociological Understandings and Contemplative Pedagogy to Engage Across Human Differences in Higher Education.

This presentation details the initial findings of a study of exploring the utilization of sociological understandings, and contemplative approaches to teaching and learning at colleges and universities in the U.S. and Irish educational contexts. Over the last twenty years sociologists of education in the U.S. have examined the impact of demographic shifts and rich diversity of among students coming to college campuses regarding race, class, religion, sexual orientation, gender, and gender identity. By neglecting to engage and understand the lived experiences and intersectionality of student identities, faculty limit the possibilities of engendering trust as an anchor for any teaching and learning that may occur. As college campuses become ground zero for culture wars and divisiveness, contemplative pedagogy invites students inward to reflect deeply on aspects of their own identity and socialization providing a powerful starting point for engaging across human differences. This study explores how these dynamics in the U.S. have manifested in the Irish context with the influx of migrants over the past several decades and other societal changes. This presentation will include a discussion of how faculty can utilize sociological understandings and contemplative pedagogy in their classrooms to facilitate learning environments that are more just, equitable, and inclusive.

- Franciszek Krawczyk (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań) - Two opposite traditions of writing about centre and peripheries of higher education: a comparative analysis of Wallerstein's and Ben David's work

This presentation will show the preliminary results of the one-year postdoc project "Is Trinity College Dublin semi-peripheral? Study of two conflicting traditions of writing about centre and peripheries". I will argue that many contemporary critics of division on centre and periphery in the sociology of higher education conflate two very different theoretical traditions. I will present their influence on contemporary sociological discussions on higher education and conduct a detailed comparison of their theoretical assumptions. When, for Wallerstein, the economic position of the given country was crucial for classifying its higher education, Ben-David was much more focused on culture and talent. The main inspirations for Wallerstein were Raul Prebisch and Fernand Braudel, but for Ben-David, Edward Schills and Milton Freedman. I will summarise the main differences between the two described traditions, to help to avoid conflating them in the future. I will also point out that choosing between those traditions is crucial when we compare the geopolitical position of concrete universities. The further research that will be conducted in my project aims to explore this difference by comparing Trinity College Dublin and the University of Warsaw in Poland.

- Lisa Moran (Technological University of the Shannon) - The Discursive Reconstruction of Emotions in Higher Education (HE): A Biographic Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM) Study of Emotional Labour of Female Senior Leaders in Ireland's Technological Universities (TUs)

This thesis critically analyses Emotional Labour (EL) in structuring everyday interactions amongst female senior leaders with regards to power, governance and decision-making in Ireland's Technological Universities (TUs). Drawing on qualitative data from interviews conducted using the Biographic Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM) in 2024, the paper argues that EL and how it is exercised is contextual and nuanced. While definitions of EL are multidimensional, it is "the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display [that is] sold for a wage" (Hochschild, 2012, p. 7). Drawing on Hochschild and others, the paper elicits how emotions both shape and reflect power relations, deliberation and micro-governance strategies in Irish TUs. It illuminates the multifarious strategies that female senior leaders utilise to manage their emotions in personal and professional contexts which in turn, affects how they both lead and manage in everyday life.

- Peter Doak (University of Leeds) - Decolonizing the Curriculum: Preliminary Thoughts on the Potentials of Irish Sociological Thought

In recent years there has been a push for universities to decolonise – at both curricular and institutional levels. This impulse has gained traction within sociological thought in the UK. This paper asserts that Irish sociology has a significant contribution to make to decolonial approaches. Ireland problematises the metropolitan/colonial binary, it unsettles orientalist notions of Eurocentricity. It offers a case of racialised whiteness. Interrogations of the construction and semetrisation of 'sectarianism' foreshadow contemporary debates problematising the religious dimensions of Islamophobia. Moreover, the fact that these contributions are played out against a backdrop of the continued existence Northern Ireland – should serve to remind British based scholars of the limits of decolonial thought in the context – the UK – of continued colonialism.



BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

PANEL 3 – ROOM WGB G09 - THEORY 2: IRELAND IN TRANSITION **CHAIR: KIERAN KEOHANE**

- Lisa Smyth (Queen's University Belfast) - Explaining Ireland's Moral Revolution

How can we understand how moral transformation which Ireland has undergone over the course of half a century? While the problem of how to explain social change, and the closely related question of continuity (Patterson, 2004), remains central to sociology, it appears to have receded from the fore of theoretical debate. This perhaps reflects the retreat of determinist explanation, so prevalent in the twentieth century, whether in Marxist or structural functionalist form. The poststructuralist turn, with its hostility to 'grand theorising', appears to have deflected debates concerning the drivers of change, as attention turned to questions of radical indeterminacy and decentred, non-hierarchical, accounts of power. Nevertheless, we continue to face the question of how to explain the sources of significant social change, beyond immediate contingencies and pressures. This paper aims to address this question through a focus on the case of Ireland, giving due regard to the creativity of political actors in driving change, but at the same time avoiding an overly-narrow focus on contemporaneous political campaigns and movements as the sole driver of change. This paper considers alternative perspectives on social change, ranging from perceiving it as a limited phenomenon which protects the underlying stability of any social system, to the view that change has become a permanent and radically destabilizing feature of late modern societies. A processual perspective, treating both continuity and change as ordinary, is adopted. The quality of change is understood as contingent on the degree of normative revision generated through responses to historical events.

- Louise Brangan (University of Strathclyde) - The Stories We Tell: Or why can't we remember the Magdalene Laundries?

Industrial schools, asylums, Mother and Baby Homes, and Magdalene Laundries were once vast islands of abandonment marking the Irish social landscape. They are closed now, but their legacies linger, and the Irish have been in a protracted period of historical reckoning. In this presentation, I focus on the enormous amount of cultural output and social discourse regarding Magdalene Laundries. Where once there was silence there now seems to ceaseless objection to this past. There are hit movies, best-selling books, successful art works, BBC dramas, break out poems, all dealing with the Laundries as an ugly part of our past. The only problem, much of it is, factually speaking, incorrect, an erroneous misrepresentation of the past. These are not just the blurry boundaries of artistic licence, there is such a persistent pattern in these aesthetics and narratives that renders it amenable to critical and sociological analysis. Following the work of Stuart Hall and Gillian Rose, I explore why we continue to see this past, which we are supposedly confronting, persistently reimagined? And ask what story remains untold? And what lessons remain unlearned?

- Ciaran McCullagh (University College Cork) - The Catholic Church and Criminality

The past behaviour of the Catholic Church has generally been responded to through tribunals of inquiry and state apologies. These have had limited success in terms of the attribution of responsibility and the acceptance by the Church of their responsibilities in the area. This paper will propose that we need to change the focus here and begin to consider the church's behaviour as that of a criminal organisation and to look at it through the lens of corporate crime. This claim will be substantiated through a consideration of a series of issues such as illegal adoptions, violence in schools, and the treatment of women in Mother and Baby Homes. It will be argued that if it acted as a criminal organisation then its behaviour needs to be responded to in a different way to the way in which it is and that it is most appropriately dealt with through the Criminal Assets Bureau. This has the power to seize assets that are suspected to be the product of illegal activity and much of the accumulation of wealth by the Catholic Church could be characterised in this way. The cost of "buying" a baby in the 1950s was around 2,000 pounds, a sum of money that would have bought a three bedroomed suburban house in Dublin. The paper represents an extension of and substantiation of an argument presented in a short piece published in the Irish Examiner. see <https://www.irishexaminer.com/opinion/commentanalysis/arid-41470000.html>

- Kevin Warner (University College Cork) - The Path Not Taken: the failure to follow the Whitaker Report in Irish penal policy

2025 marks the 40th anniversary of the Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Penal System, known as the Whitaker Report. This paper analyses the prison-minimising and socially inclusive philosophy underpinning Whitaker and its recommendations. It links these to social policy thinking in Ireland at that time, but also to wider European perspectives. However, a punitive turn from the late-1990s took the Irish prison system in a direction diametrically opposite to that set out by Whitaker. Penal populism and a more neo-liberal mindset in administration drove up the rate of incarceration, worsened prison conditions, and (crucially) saw the representation of people held in prison deteriorate. Along with such historical analysis, the paper will draw on research recently conducted by the author into regimes in Ireland's 12 prisons. Deteriorations in regimes are evident today: the 'care/custody balance' has shifted significantly from 'care' towards restrictive and punitive thinking and practice; access to services is hugely curtailed. The performative rhetoric of some politicians is associated with longer sentences, more people in prison, neglect of rights. Language used demonises and 'others' justice-involved persons. Much so-called 'reform' fails to recognise the extent to which the Irish prison system has departed from the Whitaker prescription and become inhumane and dysfunctional. Yet, there are some signs of hope: an Oireachtas report in 2013, an emerging focus on abolitionism and minimalism, models of less damaging practice in other countries.

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



PANEL 3 – DISABILITY, LIFE-COURSE & CARE **CHAIR: DES FITZGERALD**

- Joe Moynihan (Munster Technological University) - How Can Sociological Theory Enhance Our Understanding of Intellectual Disability?

This presentation explores how sociological theory deepens our understanding of intellectual disability, focusing on attitudes, stigma, and knowledge production. Drawing on the works of Jeff McMahan, Peter Singer, and Eva Feder Kittay, it examines how these perspectives shape societal views and treatment of intellectual disability. The presentation also analyzes stigma and social comparison through sociological lenses, highlighting how intellectual disability is socially constructed. Stigma, as a product of societal attitudes, impacts both the self-perception of individuals with intellectual disabilities and how they are viewed by others. Social comparison theory underscores how societal hierarchies privilege certain cognitive abilities, reinforcing inequality. Additionally, the presentation critiques knowledge production in higher education, questioning whose knowledge is valued and how excluding intellectual disability perspectives impoverishes academic discourse. By integrating these sociological insights, the presentation advocates for a more inclusive and equitable understanding of intellectual disability, aiming to dismantle stigma and expand the boundaries of knowledge production.

- Siobhan Saravanamuttu (York University) et al. - In Service of Capital: Producing In/Dependent Subjects through Disability Care Work

This project investigates the ongoing violences impacting intellectually disabled institutional survivors who now receive services from a community disability service agency. We draw on focus group data documenting the experiences of disability service workers who supported institutional survivors through a series of class action lawsuits. This analysis is rooted in Canadian data but extends to the Irish experience and addresses cross-country knowledge gaps given the congruence between British colonial histories and current shared models of care for intellectually disabled people. Drawing on Canadian institutional violence literature, we trace the production of institutional violence in community disability services. Led by feminist theorists such as Nancy Fraser and Linda Gordon (1994) and Iris Marion Young (2000) we argue that this boundary-making contributes to the ongoing discursive disciplining of non-disabled people which involves a disavowal of dependence in favour of self-sufficiency, within the ongoing crisis of social reproduction. We see this as a further entrenchment of the culture of compulsory able-bodiedness (McRuer, 2006) and argue that community agencies serve not only their clients, but also the broader discursive demands of neoliberal capital that rely on constructing intellectually disabled people as exceptionally dependent.

- Aoife Gallagher (Atlantic Technological University) - Supporting the Bereaved Child in Primary School and Early Years Settings: A Compassionate Community Approach

The death of a significant loved one can profoundly impact on a child's emotional, social, and academic development. However, childhood bereavement is often overlooked, particularly within primary school and early years settings. These environments play a crucial role in offering stability and support, considering the family system is also grieving. This presentation explores the concept of a compassionate community approach (Breen, et al 2022; Aoun, et al 2018), rooted in collective care and social responsibility, and how such an approach can help create a supportive environment for the bereaved child within the primary school and early years setting. Aligning with the conference theme of Childhood, Education, Socialisation, and Ageing, this paper positions primary school and early years settings as agents of social change and bridging research with real-world impact. A whole-community approach is recommended, advocating for interdisciplinary collaboration, and family and community partnerships to foster compassionate, grief literate and supportive environments where the bereaved child feels safe and understood.

- Michael Tobin (South East Technological University) - Analysing the lived experience of a new age friendly social housing development in Waterford City.

Housing is a basic human need and is an essential element for quality of life. Having a home promotes autonomy, provides a sense of security, and has an impact on one's well-being. Questions of availability, affordability and quality are core to housing policy analysis. Currently, all three areas face significant challenges in Ireland. Moynihan (2021) states that it is a social goal to enable people to age at home. St Joseph's House Waterford is a new age friendly development which aims to provide a safe and secure place for residents to live, participate and contribute to their community. Community building in social housing is an essential aspect of creating thriving, sustainable living environments. This paper will explore the lived experience of tenant engagement and participation, and question if social housing residents have an active voice in their housing decision making system. Furthermore, it will present analysis from the mixed-methods study of the social, health and wellbeing needs of residents within St Joseph's House and examine how these needs impact the housing experience and the residents' sense of community.

- Emmet Fox (South East Technological University) - Revisiting Senior Leisure Travel Demand in the UK

As part of the UK's DEMAND Centre project we investigated senior leisure travel demand. Our analysis of 119 interviews of 60 older UK households from Birmingham and London identified how older people negotiate social expectations and bodily capacity in their leisure travel. There were even signs that a fear of failing capacity accelerated the uptake of more difficult forms of travel such as long haul. This presentation revisits the findings and how we arrived at them through our innovative use of Practice Theory. The findings also have relevance for areas of ageing, research methods, theory, planning, sustainability, and policy. With that in mind, I will also take a critical look at any impact of the 2017 article publication that emerged from this project to identify any ripples a pebble in the ocean of publications actually makes. Apart from aiding our careers, I question as to whether there was any other effects from this publication. While limited to just one publication this qualitative and reflexive approach might prove useful to determining whether, and perhaps even how, academic writing makes any difference or should the time and effort of the academics involved have been invested elsewhere. Did our efforts make even the tiniest of waves or did the pebble simply sink to the ocean floor.

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



PANEL 3 – CONFLICT, WAR & GENOCIDE CHAIR: AMIN SHARIFI ISALOO

- Sarah Carol (University College Dublin) and Faouzia Zeraouia (University of Jijel) - Content analyses of the Gaza war reporting in the Palestinian, Israeli and German discourse

How are war victims portrayed in Palestinian, Israeli and German newspapers since 7th of October? Which topics arise in connection to the war reporting? To what extent is a debate about genocide prevalent in the media? To answer these questions, we drew a random sample of newspaper articles published in those three countries between 7th of October 2023 and 31st of July 2024. For Palestine, the newspaper Al-Quds is analyzed (n=298), the Jerusalem Post for Israel (n=250) and the Süddeutsche Zeitung for Germany (n=249). Preliminary analyses reveal that the German newspaper outlet centers primarily on civilians, and the Israeli outlet on terrorists or Palestinians in general when reporting deaths of Palestinians. The Palestinian newspaper outlet focuses more often on resistance, which is reflected in a discourse about martyrs. It is also the only newspaper of the three, which talks about genocide. This peaked in May and June 2024 and then dropped again. The topic is almost entirely absent from the German and Israeli newspapers throughout the period of observation. If discussed, they primarily report statements from international actors or pro-Palestinian movements. The reporting of victims in Israel focuses mostly on civilians and hostages in the Israeli and German discourse. In the next steps, qualitative content analyses will be conducted to study the narratives around victimization, dehumanization and how this interacts with processes of othering.

- Michael Edward Rose (University College Cork) - Expulsion and Resistance: The Rohingya at the Systemic Edge

This paper investigates the ongoing genocide against the Rohingya, and their marginalisation in displacement, as a critical example of expulsion, driven by global capitalism and state violence. Using Saskia Sassen's (2014) concept of the systemic edge and Deleuze & Guattari's (1980) theory of deterritorialisation, the study situates the Rohingya's displacement within broader dynamics of capitalism as it renders communities expendable in the pursuit of resource extraction and profit. The analysis highlights how systemic processes, including forced displacement, resource-driven land grabs, and the commodification of human lives, are driven to create 'dead spaces,' where survival is precarious and bodies are treated as 'sub-human' (Uddin, 2020). These systemic edges take shape in refugee camps, infrastructure development zones, and contested territories, such as Myanmar's Rakhine State, where economic exploitation intersects with state-led exclusion and terror. However, these spaces are not entirely void of agency. They also become sites of reterritorialisation, in which resistance and reconfiguration emerge. Despite their erasure from political, social and economic recognition, the Rohingyas demonstrate collective strategies of survival that challenge the structures of exclusion, whilst affective forces like leadership vacuums, mobility, and solidarity shape their potential for resistance. This study contributes to the sociology of displacement by linking the local oppression of the Rohingya to global patterns of economic and social expulsion. It emphasises the need for critical, engaged research that not only examines the mechanisms of exclusion but also accounts for the latent potential and dynamics of resistance and change produced at the systemic edges.

- Laura Smith (University of Liverpool) - Everyday Peace in Northern Ireland

This paper explores the gendered dynamics of Everyday Peace in Northern Ireland. By focusing on how women in love across the ethno-political divide extend care to others within the family, I argue that Everyday Peace metaphorically capitalises on this, and fundamentally requires women's love and care to attain a positive outcome. Drawing upon semi-structured interviews with women in an intimate relationship with someone who is of a different community background, I present findings that show how women's lives are fundamentally shaped by a legacy of militarised masculinities, and continuing patriarchal structures in Northern Ireland. In doing so, this paper will present a unique critique of Everyday Peace and its gendered nature, by suggesting the neoliberal agenda has resulted in women being expected to give love and care for others, without the expectation of return. In this way, I argue that women in relationships across the ethno-political divide are expected to carry the emotional and relational burdens of peacebuilding within the home and community. Consequently, I argue that Everyday Peace expectations perpetuate new forms of violence and exclusion for women, even in the wake of peace processes that claim to benefit all. Ultimately, this research highlights the importance of centring love, care, and gendered experiences in discussions of peace, urging a more inclusive understanding of the continuing inequalities women in intimate relationships across the ethno-political divide face in Northern Ireland's peacebuilding landscape.

- John McNamara (South East Technological University) - War: What is the Art for?

The artist documents war. They do so in official and unofficial capacities. Their efforts can work in the service of propaganda machines, bolstering morale or dis-informing the masses. They serve posterity by heroifying national sacrifice and by dutifully deifying the glorious dead. They issue us sobering glimpses of the chaos and futility of conflict. They can shock us with brutal recollection and their depictions of visceral carnage. We are confronted by the stinging reality of this atrocity as we are challenged by the sublime horror of their work. They teach us to remember and help future-proof against jingoistic excess and wanton militarism. War: What is the Art for? will explore representations of war and the fallout of war in visual art from the First World War and the Inter-War period. It will use the work of three prominent artists from the period 1916 – 1936 in order to question and interpret the purpose of Art during war and in its aftermath. It will do so with reference to Sociological conceptualisations of nationalistic iconography and commemoration, incorporating the work of Bernhard Giesen and Anthony D. Smith.



BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

PANEL 4 – DECOLONIAL SOCIOLOGY 1

CHAIR: TBC

- Pilar Luz Rodrigues (University of Galway) et al. - Understanding Race Equality in the South East: Reflections from an EDI Project in the South East of Ireland

The latest census shows that people identifying as Black/Black Irish African have increased 17% and those identifying as Asian/Asian Irish Chinese have increased by 38% since 2018 (CSO, 2022). These numbers indicate that the racial and ethnic composition of Ireland is rapidly changing. Similarly, international student numbers are at an all-time high, making up 13.7% of the student population in Ireland (HEA, 2023). How can higher education ensure that it is ready to meet these changes? This paper is based on findings and reflections from a one-year project funded by the EDI Fund of the South East Technological University (SETU), which included a research report and a discussion event. The paper analyses results from the report, which investigated the racial and ethnic landscape in the South East (Waterford, Wexford, Kilkenny, and Carlow) to inform how these demographic shifts have affected the region. It also reflects on the events held at the university, which facilitated discussions about how the institution can play a role in the region with respect to race equality. Discussion events focused on racism, cultural diversity, and inclusivity from the perspective of anti-racism experts, higher education students and staff, and those working in the community with such issues.

- Bríd Ní Chonail (TU Dublin) - Developing antiracist practice in community and higher education – lessons learned from action research

Research has identified the prevalence of racism in Ireland and its impact, both on those that experience it and on wider communities (e.g. Michael et al 2023; Machowska-Kosiack & Barry 2022; Joseph 2024 to name but a few). This presentation shares the findings from a piece of action research which examined the experiences of people affected by racism and the community services they engage with as they seek support and to report. First the rationale for conducting the research will be outlined before describing the qualitative approach adopted. Data was gathered through focus groups and semi-structured interviews involving twenty-five participants from community service providers, local community groups and key informants (professionals working in interculturalism/antiracism/advocacy within the community and voluntary sector). The data was analysed thematically, and the findings will be presented under four thematic areas: (i) understanding, experiences, and impact of racism; (ii) service providers' responses to racism; (iii) reporting of racism; (iv) recommendations in addressing racism. Finally, the conclusion will share the subsequent reflection on and learning from the research findings by the project partners (Empower and TU Dublin) to inform actions currently being taken to develop antiracist practice.

- Dr Niamh McGuirk (DCU Institute of Education) - Critical Race Theory and Education: Racism and anti-racism in sites of initial teacher education in Ireland

In Ireland, when considering the racialized identities of the overwhelming majority of teacher educators, teachers and student teachers, it is important to reflect on both context and educator positionality when responding to racism(s) and when teaching about, through and for anti-racism(s). Sites of initial teacher education are well placed to guide student teachers to develop the racial literacy needed to embed anti-racism education in their practice across all class levels. This paper draws on the seminal work of Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) and Gibson (2006) to foreground Critical Race Theory as a theoretical frame to recognize and address racism in educational contexts. The paper outlines the steps undertaken by a cross-institutional working group of academics as they move towards the development of an anti-racism charter for sites of initial teacher education. The paper highlights the importance of a reflective and dialogical space to develop a praxis conducive to embedding anti-racism as a fundamental aspect of teacher education in the Irish context. It outlines preliminary findings of an ongoing research study that aims to explore the anti-racism education practices and experiences of teacher educators and other educational stakeholders.

- Lennita Oliveira Ruggi (Federal University of Paraná) and Nata Duvvury (University of Galway) - Intersectional EDI approaches for higher education: a proposal for Grassroots Key Performance

This paper summarises a frame of grassroots Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that centres on everyday transformation, displacing the opportunistic use of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) initiatives as marketing tools. Instead of focusing on the development of KPIs within the policy field or by a panel of experts, the paper fleshes out the collective attempts of rank-and-file staff to judge if, how, and to what extent EDI initiatives have changed their working environment. The paper is based on ethnographic research conducted at the University of Galway (Ireland) from 2018 to 2021. Evidence shows that several indicators are effective and already operational amongst staff. Grassroots KPIs serve a dual function: assessing change and expanding EDI goals.

- Helen Maher and Tanja Kovačič (University of Galway) - Decolonising curriculum at University of Galway – a reflective journey

In line with the institutional Race Equality Framework and Action Plan 2023-2027, the University of Galway has embarked on a decolonising curriculum journey. Like Nakata et al. (2012), we acknowledge this work as highly contested. Informed by Kho's (2012) work on reflecting the colonial present at University of Galway viewed through two ruptures, we recognised the need to look for a University of Galway-specific understanding of the decolonising curriculum. We recognise the importance of self-reflexivity as an essential part of this process, helping us address and constantly question our positionality and evolving power constellations. Additionally, drawing on feminist analysis of power relations (hooks, 2015), the process is iterative and dialogical. Applying methodological aspects of collaborative autoethnography (Chang et al., 2013), we will reflect on the year-long journey of the decolonising curriculum by considering our distinctive positions as Vice-President and researcher. First, we will outline how we engaged with the process, which we believe should be iterative, reflective and led by the University (staff and students) community. We will present some examples of good practices already used in research and teaching, as well as the challenges faced when attempting to decolonise curriculum. Considering the balance between individual staff experimentation with the process and structural possibilities, we will ask ourselves some difficult questions about who and how should lead the process on the institutional level.

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



PANEL 4 – DECOLONIAL SOCIOLOGY 2

CHAIR: TBC

- Pooja Priya (University College Cork) - Intersectional Encounters: Gendered Ethnography and African Migrants' Negotiation of Place and Identity in Delhi

This study examines how Nigerian and Congolese migrants navigate placemaking in New Delhi, India, while critically addressing the role of female researchers in migration ethnography. Employing participant observation in Pentecostal churches, walking interviews, and semi-structured interviews, the research uncovers migrants' strategies—such as learning Hindi, forming religious networks, and establishing businesses—to counter placelessness and forge belonging in Delhi's exclusionary urban landscape. The paper reflexively engages with the sexual, racial, and gendered risks encountered during fieldwork, including harassment and surveillance, revealing how intersectional identity complicates researcher safety and ethical data collection. Contributing to migration and feminist scholarship, this work advocates for intersectional methodologies that recognize both migrant resilience and the embodied realities of women researchers. It affirms ethnography's value in illuminating how racial minorities construct identity and belonging in hostile environments while challenging the erasure of gendered fieldwork dynamics in academic narratives.

- Aisling Walsh - Weaponising Whiteness: The Paradoxes of Post/Anti-Colonial Irish Identity and Solidarity

Between almost unwavering support for Palestinian liberation to the steady growth of violent anti-migrant extremism over the last year, Ireland has seen diverging, often opposing, narratives emerge of what it means to be Irish and how we understand and practice anti-imperial solidarities. This paper explores the role of whiteness, victimhood and indigeneity in the apparent contradictions between expressions of solidarity with Gaza and the increasingly mainstream "concerns" that a largely over-estimated influx of (non-white) migrants, refugees and asylum somehow threaten Irish Identity. This paper engages with the contradictions evident in Ireland's fetishization of our victimhood and struggle for independence from British imperialism as our own form of exceptionalism from the liberation struggles of other post-colonial nations. I argue that this is, in large part, the result of our deliberate mobilisation of whiteness to set us apart from other colonised nations as "deserving" of independence and capable of self-governance, which has likely contributed to resurgence in claims to an "indigenous" Irish identity from white, settled Irish people which are focused on keeping "Ireland for the Irish" (eg. white settled and Catholic). I explore how our white exceptionalism and economic dependency have shaped a peculiar post-colonial identity where we feel we must fall in line with and emulate our former masters and current hegemon (UK and US) rather than forge genuine solidarity with other post-colonial nations and migrant populations living in Ireland.

- Ebon Joseph (University College Dublin) - Being Black in academia and the teaching profession in Ireland
- Judith O'Connell (University of Galway) - Dissecting History text books and their role in creating Nationalist sentiment.



BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

PANEL 4 – POVERTY, PRECARITY, INEQUALITY

CHAIR: TBC

- Anousheh Alamir and Bertrand Maître (Economic and Social Research Institute) - Persistent income poverty and material deprivation in Ireland

Travellers and Roma are two of the most disadvantaged groups in Irish society. Both groups face high unemployment rates, poor health, and low educational attainment relative to the white Irish majority. They also face some of the highest levels of prejudice from the general population towards any ethnic or social group (Mac Gréil, 2011; McGinnity et al., 2018). However, little is known about the nature and determinants of prejudice towards Travellers and Roma. Respondents to a large representative survey (n=3,008) in 2023 were asked to indicate their level of comfort with having a member of various social group as a neighbour, in a relationship with their child, and in a class at school with their child. We find that Travellers and Roma face the highest levels of prejudice of any ethnic group in all three domains. Exploratory factor analysis finds that while attitudes to Roma were in some cases associated with attitudes to a broader range of ethnic and national groups, this is not the case for Travellers. Attitudes to Travellers and Roma are more strongly related to attitudes to extremely marginalized groups - those with substance abuse issues and criminal records. Investigating factors associated with attitudes, some indicators show that more privileged groups hold less tolerant attitudes in Ireland, suggesting that anti-Traveller and anti-Roma racism may be distinct from other forms of prejudice in Ireland. Further analysis will focus on differences in the relationship between socio-economic status and attitudes to Travellers and Roma compared to attitudes to other minorities.

- Emma Holden et al. (South East Technological University) - Understanding Economically Marginalised Young Adults' Exclusion from Digital-First Government Services: An Ethnographic Journey

As Ireland advances digital-first public services under the EU's 2030 agenda, economically marginalised young adults face growing risks of exclusion. This ethnographic study examines how young adults (18-24) who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET) engage with digital-first government platforms, particularly those using big data, AI, and statistical modelling. Through ethnographic fieldwork, biographic interviews, and creative design methods, the study explores relational, emotional, and structural barriers shaping their interactions with these systems. This research builds on foundational work from the EU H2020-funded HECAT project and the Science Foundation Ireland-funded PESTech project (2023). PESTech's user-centred design approach highlighted significant accessibility and trust issues in digital labour market services, revealing a disconnect between labour market data and user needs. These findings stress the urgent need for inclusive, user-driven digital public service design. Applying Haraway's (1991) Cyborgian perspective, this study reframes the digital divide beyond mere access, incorporating digital literacy, confidence, usability, and algorithmic opacity as key considerations. Research suggests that digital exclusion is shaped not just by connectivity but also by intrinsic barriers to navigation and comprehension, impacting social mobility and labour market participation (Czaja & Urbaniec, 2019). At this stage, preliminary ethnographic fieldwork is underway. While formal results are forthcoming, early observations will be discussed, providing insights into the challenges of digital-first government services for disadvantaged populations. Initial observations will be discussed in relation to existing literature on digital inclusion, governance, and socio-technical systems. Findings will contribute to digital inclusion research, policy design, and the socio-technical governance of public service.

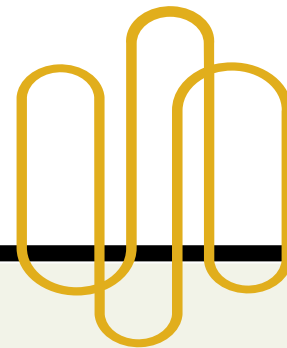
- Matteo Moraschini (University College Cork) - Political Lives and Permanent Liminality: Biopolitical Struggles in Narratives of Refuge

This paper investigates the narratives of persons in refuge through the exploration of conceptual continua: zoe and bios, life impossibility, and intelligibility. The concept of permanent liminality is also addressed and used to offer reflections on the possible root of life impossibility and its dynamic interplay with the permanent liminality. Drawing from interviews and autobiographical materials of refugees, the analysis positions the refugee as both a subject marked by biopolitical power and a self-reflective agent navigating their political and existential predicaments. Building on theoretical frameworks from Turner's liminality, the paper reinterprets the suspension of rules not as an absence of regulation but as a site of competing "spirits" or traces of power, will, and cultural ethos. In doing so, it frames refugees' struggles as an ongoing reflective positioning within a shifting biopolitical environment. The paper also introduces the notion of permanent liminality to account for the enduring state of in-betweenness experienced by refugees, where the potential for transformation is thwarted by the perpetuation of life impossibility. This liminality, marked by the interplay of agency and constraint, disrupts classical distinctions between political and biopolitical domains. Through close readings of life narratives, the study interrogates whether the act of fleeing can be read as fully political gesture that both challenges and reaffirms the biopolitical structures refugees seek to escape. Ultimately, the paper argues by "thinking through" their predicaments, persons in refuge articulate a liminal political agency that resists reduction to bare life while grappling with the impossibility of a fully realized bios.

- Tanja Kovačič (University of Galway) - Equal education for all? Reflecting on mainstream education through students' experiences attending alternative education programmes in Ireland

Alternative education is scarcely researched and conceptualised in an Irish context. Department of Education (2023) acknowledges that the sector's scope on the Irish educational landscape remains unknown as alternative education programmes remain undocumented and unrecognised. Based on six years of evaluation conducted by the Unesco Child and Family Research Centre (2018-2024) of Education, Youth and Children and Youth Funds, funded by Rethink Ireland, we want to offer some important conceptual and theoretical considerations on the essential role of such programmes in supporting students in progression to education. In this presentation, we will discuss the link between alternative education programmes in Ireland and educational inequality as a persistent feature of the Irish education system (Calhill, 2020). We will consider how the charity status of alternative education providers and unregulated aspects of the sector as such fit into the broader discourse of anti-intellectualism and charity discourse, which is deeply linked to social conservatism in Irish social policy (Lynch, Cantillon and Crean, 2016). As part of this presentation, we will examine the findings gathered from six projects; two operate outside mainstream schools, while the other four work as outside programmes supporting students from post-primary DEIS schools.

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



PANEL 5 – SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY 2

CHAIR: DES FITZGERALD

- James Cuffe and Nasrin Khandoker (University College Cork) - My phone is a protective shield for me”: Technology and human subjectification with embodied entanglement

This chapter examines the embodied aspects of technology in relation to the construction of inter-subjectivity, using feminist technoscience (Lie 2022; Appleton 2018; Burt-D'Agnillo 2022) and feminist new-material theories (Haraway 1980; Barad 2003; E. A. Grosz 1994). In other words, it aims to examine the embodied connection between technology and humans and explore the ways in which social subjects reflect on their technological behaviour and embodied participation. This chapter is based on the CyberSocial project that examines the urban digital transformation and how it relates to human values and technical normativity. The research methodology involves unique and creative ethnography incorporating diary studies, workshops and focus group discussions in the form of world café methods and open-ended interviews to understand the patterns that connect humans and technology. The findings of the research indicated an intimate entanglement between technology and its users that influences their process of subjectification. A feminist new-materialist interpretation of Simondon's idea of individuation (Simondon 2017; E. Grosz and Mercier 2021) provided a pathway to understanding this zone of subjectification where technology and its users co-construct each other's subjectivity. In short, this chapter analyses the CyberSocial research findings to examine the intimate and affective entanglement between technology and its human users to explore how they influence each other's zone of subjectification.

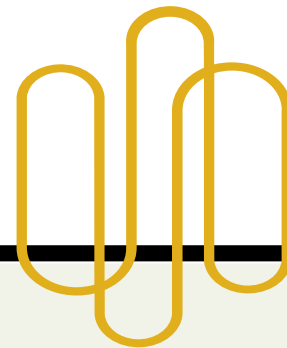
- Eric Deibel (University College Dublin) et al. - The Global Digipolis and its inhabitants: reflections on platform urbanism and smart city governance

The “global digipolis” is a concept that emphasizes digital culture and information technologies as integral to the modern city. Additionally it is premised on how the late 19th century sociologist George Simmel discussed the metropolis. Today's debate over ‘the city’ partially points in the same direction. The ‘smart city’ seeks to create policies that are responsive to the lives of its inhabitants while ‘platform urbanism’ prioritizes the role of global capitalism, raising concerns over surveillance, privacy, personal data, as well as its power over critical infrastructure and the urban experience. Simmel, however, made the subtle point that the resulting indifference of the city's inhabitants should be understood as a “blasé attitude”. While stemming partly from external forces such as the money economy, this apathy should simultaneously be understood as a type of self-preservation; it is, Simmel argues, resistance to ‘the social-technological mechanism’. It is historical, and implies a departure from the individualism of the 19th century. Accordingly the paper reflects on commercial relations’ primacy and the idea that there is a singular authority in charge to guarantee the protection of (fundamental) rights. Drawing upon real-world examples from a research collaboration between Dublin City Council's Smart City Unit and ADAPT Research Ireland Centre, the paper examines the ‘digipolis’ in terms of a different type of ethics. It points to a contractual ethics rooted in the ancient “polis,” which still influences digital culture. For better or worse, it implies an understanding of self-preservation premised on what is described as a minimal morality.

- Marcus Leaning (University of Limerick) - Towards a sociology of Open Access publishing.

Open Access publishing is a model for scholarly communication that allows scholarly research publications to be available to readers at no cost. It is part of a broader Open Science movement to make scientific and scholarly research accessible to all. The model has received attention from a range of academic fields such as information and library studies, publishing, legal, political and philosophical studies. This paper proposes a sociological line of enquiry in which the practice of Open Access publishing is understood as an institutional social system as understood in the work of Anthony Giddens. As such it is simultaneously a site of contestation with differing positions seeking to direct practice and a form of organising practice that structures and affords power relations within and beyond academia. The paper commences with an overview of Open Access publishing and its relationship with Open Science and the different models currently in use. Part two attends to the conflicting positions within the debate and to some of the strategies currently being pursued. The competing positions of commercial publishing corporations and ‘radical’ Open Access advocates are contrasted. Part three looks to the impact and consequence of Open Access both in terms of access to research but also publication by scholars in the Global South and others without wealthy institutional support.

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



PANEL 5 – FEMINIST & QUEER EPISTEMOLOGIES

CHAIR: EVELIEN GEERTS

- Charlotte Waltz (Erasmus University) - 'The Dis/Comfort of Your Own Bed': Abortion, Telemedicine, and Moral Governance in Ireland

Historically, self-managed abortion was practiced in Ireland by pregnant people and activists providing care under the constitutional ban (Sheldon 2016; Spillane et al. 2021). The introduction of abortion pills marked a significant shift in abortion experiences and governance. During the campaign to legalize abortion, narratives of unsafe, isolated practices in bedrooms, hotel rooms, or airplanes underscored the need for clinical supervision of abortion medication (Calkin 2020). The clinic became central to the biopolitical mandate for legalization in 2018, promising safety and regulation. However, the COVID-19 pandemic altered considerations of place. The adoption of telemedicine facilitated self-managed early medical abortion, transforming the management and legitimacy of abortion pills as reproductive technologies. This paper examines how abortion pills became implicated in moral governance, particularly in the political legitimization of places of care (Mishtal et al. 2022; Mishtal et al. 2015). By analysing pre-legalization public discourses on self-managed abortion in non-clinical settings alongside post-legalization narratives, I explore the impact of shifting moralities on abortion policy. While telemedicine has reframed narratives around places of care, barriers persist for those lacking access to safe spaces or community support. This exclusion highlights ongoing inequities in abortion care. Ultimately, this paper interrogates which, and whose, moralities inform abortion governance in post-legalization Ireland, revealing the enduring influence of place and legitimacy in reproductive policies

- Doris Murphy (University College Cork) - Street walking, crip talking, care imagining: Disabled sex workers in Ireland.

This paper investigates the lived experience of disabled sex workers in Ireland, and how they access care. Mary Daly (2021) situated care at the intersection of perceived need (following Fraser, 1989), actors, resources and ideas. Sex workers are so marginalised that their care needs are often not perceived. Applying a feminist ethic of care will provide a new philosophical approach to sex work research in Ireland (Murphy, 2022). This project comprised of walking interviews with disabled sex workers, as well as virtual interviews with key stakeholders in the area of sex work supports. Key partner organisations were the Sexual Health Centre in Cork, and two sex worker-led organisations: the Sex Workers Alliance Ireland (SWAI), and the Red Umbrella Front (RUF). This project used Participatory Action Research and creative methods to create new knowledge with the sex working community in Ireland. Disabled sex workers in Ireland exist at the intersection of many oppressions, and experience significant barriers to care. Policy recommendations have been co-constructed with key partner organisations. I assert that we can create an evidence-base which sex workers and their allies can use to call for legislative change, harm reduction policies, and a more caring society in general. This follows O'Neill (2017), who suggested that we move away from the moral censure of sex work by listening to sex workers in participatory research. This paper echoes calls from Blewett et al. (2022) to intertwine disability justice and sex worker rights advocacy in building a more caring society for all.

- Ellen O'Sullivan (University College Cork) - On Effigy: Femicide, Nation and Representation in Ireland

This presentation is based on my ongoing PhD research, which is a qualitative analysis of femicide in Ireland and the role that the killing of women plays in the construction and maintenance of Ireland as a nation state. I examine this relationship through analysis of news media. Femicide in Ireland is an area of academic enquiry that is a burgeoning field, and examinations of the interplay between femicide and nationalism are essentially non-existent. As there is such limited research on this topic, my project is unique and innovative in its scope. Using the killing of Jean McConville in 1972 by the IRA as my primary case study, I use Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis to analyse the news coverage of femicide, concentrating on four data sets consisting of articles published the year she was Disappeared (1973); the first attempt to find her remains (1999); the actual discovery of her remains (2003); and the trial of Ivor Bell (2014). I explore the connection between femicide and nationhood through the theorising of performance, memory, and violence, and draw heavily upon the work of Diana Taylor and her own utilization of Anderson's 'Imagined Communities' within the context of the Disappeared as a political phenomenon. My analysis highlights the lack of visibility of victims in the narratives of their deaths, but perhaps most poignantly, it shows the way that news media shapes the presentation of mourning in the public sphere, and how that mourning is informed by gendered dynamics in the liminal space of contested borders.



BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

PANEL 5 – MIXED-HERITAGE RELATIONSHIPS AND RACIALISED BOUNDARIES

Chair:n TBC

- Iris Wigger (Loughborough University) and Margaret Byron (University of Leicester) - Exploring the life histories, shifting identities and representations of Mixed-Heritage families in Europe: The Mixed-Relationships-racialised Boundaries Research Network

This panel explores research on the complex histories, lived experiences, shifting identities and cultural representations of mixed-heritage relationships in Europe's present and past. It showcases the work of research team members of our international cross-disciplinary network 'Mixed relationships and racialised boundaries in European societies (1920s-present)' and discusses the network's overarching decolonial re-search perspective and planned participatory research in collaboration with the Run-nymede Trust and community groups. The Network was established in summer 2022 with the support of the Independent Social Research Foundation and is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, UK. Taking a comparative cross-disciplinary European perspective and mixed-methods approach our network's research programme aims to provide a state-of-the-art inter-sectional analysis of first-hand lived experiences, histories and identity constructions of interracial families in European societies with a critical historiographic examination of the societal legacy of their cultural representation in media and public discourse.

- Elena Zambelli (Maynooth University) - Improper Couples, Suspicious Mobilities: Sexuality as Currency and Stigma in Black-White Couples' Everyday Lives in Europe

This paper discusses the role of sexuality in the regulation of interracialized couples in present-day Europe. Using Stoler's concept of 'duress,' which draws attention to the colonial histories of the present, it argues that in European states and societies, as well as in their former colonies, some such couples continue to be considered 'improper.' Drawing from my multi-sited ethnography of black-white couples' everyday experiences of racism in Europe, the paper highlights the role of intersecting structures of oppression in shaping the uneven distribution of this stereotype based (mainly) on partners' race, gender and sexuality. In so doing, it offers multiple contributions to scholarship on 'mixed' couples in twenty-first century Europe, specifically by moving past the prevalent methodological nationalism, methodological presentism, and default heteronormative framework. Overall, the paper argues that the 'improper couple' stereotype participates in a racialized and gendered economy of 'suspicious' cross-border intimacies, which contributes to upholding and reproducing Europe's exclusionary migration regime.

- Rebecca Chiyoko King-O'Riain (Maynooth University) - #blackandIrish and #wasian: New Mixed-Race Voices in Ireland

The Irish mixed-race experience has been shaped by the unique historical and social context of Ireland including examining the experiences of mixed-race people in the industrial schools in the 20th century (Mullen 2023) and motivating the formation of the Association for Mixed Race Irish in the UK and in Ireland, which held a collaborative digital exhibition and published a book 'Irish People of Colour: A Social History of Mixed Race Irish in Britain and Ireland 1700-200' (Bryan and Caballero 2024). Given the demographic shifts in the Irish population from 2016 – 2022, we see a 17% growth in the number of people identifying as black; 38% growth in those identifying as Asian or Asian Irish – Chinese; and a fast growing 'mixed or other' category with 64,992 in 2022. Current predictions of the areas surrounding Maynooth (beyond the pale) expect approximately an increase of +18% in the number of residents aged 13 years old who are from non-White Irish backgrounds. This has given rise to new cultural expressions of identity by young mixed-race Irish people on social and digital media such as the Black and Irish organization and pod cast; Gorm Media and trends such as the #Irishwasian trend on TikTok.

- Elizabeth Mavroudi (Loughborough University) - Negotiating mixedness in diaspora: young people in the Greek, Jewish and Palestinian diasporas

This paper will focus on the feelings and experiences of young people in the Greek, Jewish and Palestinians diasporas from mixed-heritage and mixed-race backgrounds. It will present vignettes of young people who see themselves as part of these diasporas, but who have to navigate mixedness not only in terms of potential belonging to host and homeland contexts but also in terms of negotiating multiple parental ethno-national backgrounds. This paper will explore such complexities of belonging for second generation plus children and young people (aged between 11-25) from Greek and Palestinian backgrounds living in the Midlands region of England, UK. The paper will argue that their feelings of in-betweenness and ambivalences about belonging go hand in hand with attempts by parents and the schools they attend to 'mould' their belonging along national lines. In doing so, mixed-heritage diasporic young people are also having to confront tensions around diasporic survival and 'purity' within diasporic communities, whereby mixedness is not always perceived in positive ways by some in diaspora. Thus, their grounded, intersectional positionalities can provide an insight into the ways in which they navigate the spaces in their lives, such as home and school, through negotiating mixedness through negotiations of sameness and difference (Nagel 2002). This is in line with other research which discusses the materialities and challenges of in-betweenness and the challenges living and feeling in diaspora (Mitchell 1997; Ang 2003) and of young people's strategies to deal with mixedness (Haritaworn 2008; L'Pree Corsbie-Massay and Maragh-Lloyd 2019; Ali 2003; Phoenix and Tizard 2005; Rosbrook-Thompson 2021), the exclusions they encounter (Chiyoko King-O'Riain 2019; O'Malley 2021) and their diasporic, transnational migration heritage (Childs et al 2019).

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



PANEL 6 – QUALITATIVE SECONDARY ANALYSIS IN IRELAND CHAIR AN RAPPORTEUR: LISA MORAN

- Rong Bao (Maynooth University) and Jane Gray (Maynooth University) - Opportunities for Qualitative Secondary Analysis in Ireland: First Findings from the QSA*Net Project

This panel will bring together national and international speakers on the emerging field of Qualitative Secondary Analysis (QSA) and consider the opportunities for QSA within Irish social science scholarship. National and international research funders increasingly require researchers to develop data management plans to ensure that their data are made 'as open as possible and as closed as necessary.' Barriers to sharing qualitative social science data have been lowered through the development of national infrastructures such as the Irish Qualitative Data Archive and the Digital Repositories of Ireland. Nevertheless, practices of re-using data remain limited in Ireland, in part because researchers remain uncertain of the analytical potential of QSA. Panel members will present research exemplifying different approaches to QSA. New findings from the project QSA*Net* will be presented on Irish researchers' knowledge and experience of qualitative secondary analysis, and on the supports required to promote data re-use.

- Rosalind Edwards (University of Southampton) - The Value of Qualitative Secondary Analysis of Archived Data – Now and Into the Future
- Kahryn Hughes (University of Leeds) - The Ethics of Qualitative Secondary Analysis



BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

PANEL 6 – SOCIAL THEORY 1: THEORISING THE EDGES OF THE SOCIAL CHAIR: TBC

- Billy Goodwin (University College Cork) - Antagonistic Forces: How journalists and news consumers are pushed to the edges of society

The idea of a broadly accessible and unabashedly partisan media is a relatively new development within the Irish media landscape. Indeed, until recently, one may have categorised this as a distinctly American or even British ‘problem’. Yet, the rise of left-wing and right-wing media outlets in Ireland reveals that Irish society is not impervious to such developments. However, at the same time, neither the left-wing nor the right-wing outlets in Ireland have yet gained the following to be considered mainstream – they exist on the edges of Irish society. Indeed, the interviews which are discussed herein reveal the fact that the associated journalists and consumers also consider themselves to have been “pushed” to the edges of the media landscape. Therefore, this paper uses Baudrillard’s (2013) *The Intelligence of Evil [Or the Lucidity Pact]* to theorise the ways in which both neoliberal and ‘woke’ rhetoric seems to push interactants to ‘the edges’, whereby irreconcilable forms of symbolic and sign exchange divide “... human cultures into two antagonistic forces”.

- João Nunes de Almeida (University of Glasgow) - Vagabonds, Drifters and Quitters: Toward the Abandonment of Social War

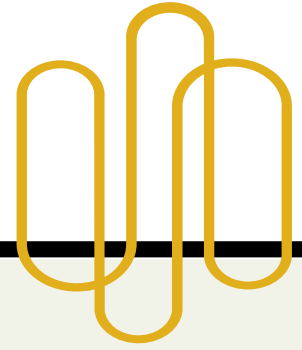
An undeclared fear of idleness haunts the neoliberal social order in crisis, leading governments to wage a social war against growing disposable populations. Yet, with very few exceptions, the concept of social war has been put aside in recent theoretical accounts. Trocchi (2011) reminds us, in the context of the past 2008 crisis, that the concept of social war offers a distinct definition historically tied to the concept of empire, entailing a war on the everyday habits as an imperial conquest of subjectivities, an uprooting of any form of life other than that of the civilised citizen of the empire. Far from being a new phenomenon, the survival of the colonial state has long depended on this surrender and capture of unproductive bodies for the metropolis. The English Poor Laws and all those practices of confinement for the heretics of western metaphysics, as Foucault (1988) showed us, have done nothing else but spreading a benevolent cruelty to cure the socially unproductive bodies. Such a crisis of subjectivity has not gone unnoticed in recent critical thought as in de Bloois (2020) and Berardi (2024), or even in televised round table discussions on social withdrawal and desertion. Addressing the contradictions of embryonic practices of abandonment such as the Great Resignation, bed rotting, quiet quitting, to name a few, this presentation will problematise emerging Bartlebian ways of life in the interstices of a broken social contract that offers no future, again, except for the total mobilisation for escalating military wars.

Keywords: social war; abandonment; crisis of subjectivity; forms of life; empire.

- Tom Boland (University College Cork) - Critique and Counter-Critique: How polarised critical discourses problematise power

Critique generally addresses power, yet increasingly meets with ‘counter-critique’ rather than the justification of power by power. Herein, I suggest that critique problematises power, both in the sense that it challenges the powerful or the operations of power within society, but that it poses the problem of ‘power’ in specific ways, providing a construction of what power is and how it operates. This is especially so within polarised politics, therefore I examine a series of ‘counter-critics’, that is, opponents of the ‘left’, ‘social justice’ or ‘the woke’, who are analysed here not as conservative justifiers of the status quo, but as critics who actively counter socialist, feminist and post-colonial critiques. Setting inaccuracies and exaggerations aside, from this corpus I suggest that the broad critical imagination of ‘power’ tends towards disfiguring, dichotomising and depth-based explanations all of which are both theoretically dubious and politically ambiguous.

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



PANEL 6 – SOCIAL THEORY 2: THEORISING THE EDGES OF SOCIETY CHAIR: TOM BOLAND

- Jody Ponce (University College Cork) - When we're all outsiders, then nobody is: On the proliferation of claims of marginality

In an age of heightened identity awareness and polarised discourse, the concept of the “outsider” has become increasingly contested. Marginality, once primarily associated with historically oppressed groups, is now invoked across a wide spectrum of ideological, social, and political positions. This paper explores how the language of marginalisation is utilised by individuals and groups who frame themselves as outsiders, even when situated within disparate power structures. Drawing on qualitative insights from activists with contrasting ideologies—progressive and conservative alike—this study examines the ways in which ‘lived experience’ is deployed to assert outsider status. For some, marginalisation arises from systemic exclusion based on identity or socioeconomic factors, while for others, it emerges as a perceived cultural displacement within shifting societal norms. By interrogating how both progressives and conservatives articulate their sense of marginalisation, this paper raises critical questions: Who are today’s outsiders, and what does it mean to be marginalised in a world where narratives of exclusion proliferate? Is marginality a universal experience, or does its meaning depend entirely on context and perspective? This research engages with these complexities, analysing how the discourse of being “on the margins” can unify, fragment, or polarise social movements. It argues that to understand contemporary marginalisation, scholars must move beyond binary frameworks of oppressor and oppressed, instead theorising marginality as a fluid, contested, and relational construct shaped by intersecting axes of power and identity.

- Diana Stypinska (University of Galway) - In the glare of the noisy majorities: Theorising society on (the) edge

Throughout modernity, socio-political change was regarded to be intrinsically linked to agitation. Be it in the context of revolutionary movements or progressive social reforms, the idea of stimulating affective unrest was at the core of the notion of lifting the masses out of the stupor induced by dominant ideology, of their political mobilisation and organisation. Indeed, agitation could be conceived as one of the hallmarks of the era of ideology, whereat it was consistently presented as a weapon against false consciousness. With the advent of postmodernity, however, the stakes have changed. Here, we encountered, what Slavoj Žižek described as, ‘a paradox of an enlightened false consciousness’: people fully aware of the ideological illusions but nevertheless continuing to follow the status quo. Counter to many lamenting this scenario, Jean Baudrillard controversially argued that the political apathy – that is, the silence – of the majorities ought to be read as a ‘collective retaliation’; their ‘hyperconformity’ operating as a defence by means of indifference. What are we to make of this claim, however, at a time when majorities appear to be perpetually on edge, characterised not by inertia, but by the state of ceaseless random motion, not by neutrality, but by an endless polarisation? Taking this problem as its starting point, this presentation sets off to theorise our contemporary move towards permanent everyday agitation. Focusing on the affective and socio-political dimensions of agitation, it examines today’s predicament through a lens of two interrelated concepts: mimesis and simulation.

Keywords: Agitation, Hyperconformity, Mimesis, Simulation, Social

- Oliver Simpson (Lancaster University) - Thinking the outside of the social: Annihilation as Becoming

With the escalating climate crisis and the ever-present possibility of nuclear war we as sociologists are presented with the problem of annihilation, the end of the social. Concomitant with these looming disasters is an increasing narrowing of the potential for social change within the current political structures as well as a hostility to the outside and the outsider. It is as if in response to imminent disaster the system has responded with a rigour mortis, a petrification of the process compelling us towards collapse. In this context, I contend annihilation requires conceptualising. Annihilation is typically understood to mean complete and irrevocable destruction. However, in theoretical physics annihilation refers to a process whereby matter is transformed into energy. Annihilation from this perspective therefore implies a process of becoming. Taking Vandermeer’s 2014 novel *Annihilation* and Garland’s 2018 film adaptation of the same name as its point of departure this presentation examines the consequences of thinking annihilation as a process of change that appears as destruction. The subject of the story taking place in a government exclusion zone, devoid of human habitation and undergoing alien transformations appearing to defy the normal laws of nature, is a provocation to think beyond the social: annihilation as an encounter with the outside. In this presentation I will outline the affective dimensions of annihilation and conclude with a reflection on the political implications of this concept, showing how both a process of becoming and of destruction imply two different forms of politics responding to the outside.

Keywords: Annihilation, The weird, The outside, Becoming, The anomalous, Horror

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12:30 – 13:30 Lunch.

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WINE RECEPTION

On the first day there will be a wine reception in the Western Gateway Atrium from 17:00 – 18:00.

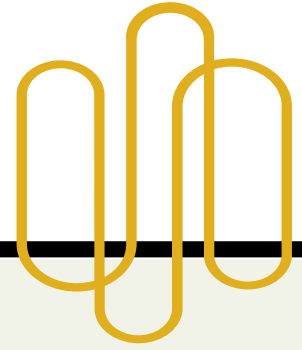
CONFERENCE DINNER

The conference dinner on the first evening will be at Léa's at The Glucksman from 18:30. Léa's is located on the main campus [Eir Code T12 N1FK], please confirm that you have booked your dinner in advance.

EVENING {Day 1 only}

Evening gathering will be at the Franciscan Well Bar [Eir Code T23 P264] – food is also available here for people who choose not to attend the dinner.

YOUR SCHEDULE



DAY 1

DAY 2

MORE PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Technical assistance:

To log in as guest ask on-the-ground point of contact:

Billy – bgoodwin@ucc.ie or +353 83 0516 503

For WIFI please log in with your EDUROAM credentials

52nd SAI {2025} ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN NUMBERS

170 20 6 2 2 150

**INDIVIDUAL
PAPERS**

**INDIVIDUAL
PAPER PANELS**

**SELF-ORGAN-
ISED PANELS**

**KEYNOTE
SPEAKERS**

**SATELLITE
EVENTS**

**MEMBERS
ATTENDING**

**SEE YOU
SOON!**