



SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION: CREATING HOPEFUL FUTURES

SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION IRELAND
ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2024

10-11
MAY
2024

51st SAI Conference
Hosted by Maynooth University



Sociological
Association
Of Ireland



**Maynooth
University**
National University
of Ireland Maynooth



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Welcome to the 51st Annual Conference of the Sociological Association of Ireland!

We are thrilled to gather once again, this time under the inspiring theme of "Sociological Imagination: Creating Hopeful Futures." As we come together on the 10th and 11th of May 2024 in Maynooth University, we embark on a journey of exploration, reflection, and envisioning.

Throughout this conference, we aim to harness the power of sociological imagination to inspire positive change and shape a brighter tomorrow. Our collective efforts will delve into pressing social issues, innovative research, and transformative practices, paving the way for hopeful futures grounded in sociological insights. Together, let us engage in meaningful dialogue, share valuable perspectives, and cultivate connections that foster resilience, empathy, and optimism.

We extend our warmest welcome to all participants, speakers, and guests. Thank you for joining us to envision and create hopeful futures through the lens of sociological imagination.



**SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION:
CREATING HOPEFUL FUTURES**



Friday 10th of May

09.00 - 10.00 a.m Registration

10.00 - 11.30 a.m **FRI1:** Understanding the experiences and practices of mental health **SE130** **FRI2:** Margins to centres I: The Limits of public sociology Race and Ethnicity Study Group **SE131** **FRI3:** The interplay between structure and culture **SE230**

11.30 - 11.45 a.m Coffee Break and Postgraduate Poster Exhibition

11.45- 12.45 p.m Plenary I - Keynote Dr Henrike Rau - Creating a climate of hope: Sustainable consumption and the sociology of everyday practices SE129

12.45 - 01.00 p.m Welcome to MU from President Eeva Leinonen

01.00 - 01.45 p.m Lunch & HOD meeting

01.45 - 03.15 p.m **FRI4:** Sociology of the Environment **SE130** **FRI5:** Margins to centres II: the limits of public sociology. Race and Ethnicity Study Group **SE131** **FRI6:** Migrants navigating borders, boundaries and barriers on the island of Ireland **SE230**

03.30- 03.45 p.m Coffee Break and Postgraduate Poster Exhibition

03.45 - 05.15 p.m **FRI7:** Sociology of the Environment **SE130** **FRI8:** Creative epistemologies and research methodologies **SE131** **FRI9:** Migration, Intersectionality and racialisation **SE230**

05.30- 06.30 p.m SAI Wine Reception

07.00 p.m Conference Dinner



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**SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION:
CREATING HOPEFUL FUTURES**



Saturday 11th of May

08.30 - 9.00 a.m **Registration**

09.00 - 10.30 a.m SAT1 Foreclosing the future: challenges for social theory. Social Theory Panel SE010 SAT2: Mothering Futures SE011 SAT3: Civil Society/State Relations in an age of Political Polarisation Panel SE012

10.30 - 10.45 a.m **Coffee Break and Postgraduate Poster Exhibition**

10.45 - 12.15 p.m SAT4: Critical Problems in Public, Social Theory Panel SE010 SAT5: Love, Marriage and the Family SE011 SAT6: Securitization and its discontents SE012

12.15- 01.15 p.m **Plenary II - EMERITUS PROF Tom Inglis The Control of Self: Honour and Shame in Ireland SE014**

01.15 - 02.00 p.m **Lunch & AGM**

02.00 - 03.30 p.m SAT7: Education across the life course SE010 SAT8: Political polarisation, policy tensions and ways forward SE011 SAT9: Health, Technology and Agency SE012

03.30- 03.45 p.m **Coffee Break and Postgraduate Poster Exhibition**

03.45 - 05.15 p.m SAT10: The Sociology and Political Economy of Work SE010 SAT11: State capacity: European, national and local perspectives SE011 SAT12: Digital Futures SE012

05.15 p.m **Conference End**



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CONFERENCE PROGRAMME – 10TH/11TH MAY 2024

VENUE: SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, NORTH CAMPUS

TIME: 10.00 – 11.30

PANELS AND VENUES: FRI1: SE130 FRI2: SE131 FRI3 SE230

FRI1: UNDERSTANDING THE EXPERIENCES AND PRACTICES OF MENTAL HEALTH

CHAIR BRIAN CONWAY VENUE: SE130

Melissa Meyer (University College Cork)

'Turbulence, tricksters and tethers: Unpacking the mental Health issues young people in Ireland face as social pathologies through interviews with the counsellors who work with them'

Rachel Brown (Maynooth University)

'The Practice of Mental Health'

Ross Macmillan, Carmel Hannan, Michael Anyanwu, Saoirse McInerney & Elke Hayes (University of Limerick)

'Disruptions in child development: the impact of the pandemic on children's psychological well-being'

FRI2: MARGINS TO CENTRES I: THE LIMITS OF PUBLIC SOCIOLOGY RACE AND ETHNICITY STUDY GROUP CHAIR: BARRY CANNON VENUE: SE131

Pilar Luz Rodrigues & Andrea Ciribuco (University of Galway)

'Language, intercultural communication and integration of migrants in rural communities in Ireland'

Amin Sharifi Isaloo (University College Cork)

'The Public Sphere and the far-right'

Rebecca Chiyoko King O'Riain (Maynooth University)

'De-colonizing Irish sociology to overcome the 'post-colonial excuse'

FRI3: THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN STRUCTURE AND CULTURE CHAIR: NESSA NI CHASAIDE VENUE:SE230

Eoin Flaherty (Maynooth University)

The three worlds of heavy metal: inequality and the political economy of metal music

Michael McLoughlin (Galway University)

Inverted dependency: How Organizational Sense-making Enables Procedural Reinforcement of Hierarchies in Ireland's Visual Art Infrastructure

John O'Brien (University College Cork)

Deregulating alcohol availability: an analysis of the Sale of Alcohol Bill

Bidav, T, McEvoy, E, Kerr, A. Kitchin, P.J, (Maynooth University)

Young People's awareness, critique, and resistance to gambling marketing sport.

11.30 – 11.45 COFFEE BREAK / POSTGRADUATE POSTER EXHIBITION

SE FOYER



CONFERENCE PROGRAMME – 10TH/11TH MAY 2024

PLENARY 1 : CREATING A CLIMATE OF HOPE: SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND THE SOCIOLOGY OF EVERYDAY PRACTICES

KEYNOTE: PROF DR HENRIKE RAU

CHAIR: DR PAUL RYAN (MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY)

TIME : 11.45 – 12.45 VENUE : SE129

The growing popularity of social practice approaches in environmental sociology and sociological sustainability research has sparked renewed interest in people's daily routines and their potential transformation. Applying social practice theory to topics such as domestic energy use and mobility has provided fresh insights into the material and social elements of everyday practices and opportunities for recrafting or substituting them to reach more sustainable levels of resource consumption. This keynote address will present conceptual insights and empirical findings from the field of practice-centred sustainability research to demonstrate their contribution to a social-ecological transformation.

Henrike Rau is Professor of Social Geography and Sustainability Research at LMU Munich, Germany. She has made internationally recognised contributions to the conceptual and methodological advancement of social scientific and interdisciplinary sustainability research on topics such as domestic energy use, food consumption and mobility practices across the life course.

WELCOME TO MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY FROM

PRESIDENT EEVA LEINONEN

VENUE: SE FOYER

TIME: 12.45 – 13.00

13.00 – 13.45 LUNCH / HEADS OF DEPARTMENT MEETING SE FOYER



CONFERENCE PROGRAMME – 10TH/11TH MAY 2024

VENUE: SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, NORTH CAMPUS

TIME: 13:45 - 15:15

PANELS AND VENUES: FRI4: SE130 FRI5: SE131 FRI6: SE230

FRI4: SOCIOLOGY OF THE ENVIRONMENT

CHAIR: EOIN FLAHERTY VENUE: SE130

Aidan O’Sullivan (Birmingham City University)

‘Expanding environmental consciousness in the social sciences curriculum: challenges and opportunities’

Emonn Slater & Eoin Flaherty (Maynooth University)

‘The ‘bewitched’ world of everyday things: Engels and Marx on dialectically determined reality and the dire consequences for Nature of our failure to recognize it.’

Mike Hynes (University of Galway)

‘Climate hero or villain: is digitalisation more often than not fuelling climate change?’

FRI5: MARGINS TO CENTRES II: THE LIMITS OF PUBLIC SOCIOLOGY. RACE AND ETHNICITY STUDY GROUP

VENUE: SE131

Philomena Mullen (Trinity College Dublin)

‘A Black Studies perspective on the decolonial turn in Irish Sociology’

Duduzile Unathi Ndlova (University of Galway)

‘Black affect and decolonising higher education in South Africa’

James Carr (University of Limerick) & Tiba Bonyad (University of Limerick)

‘It’s not out of badness’: Racial literacy, Public Sociology and Local Authorities in Ireland’ overcome the ‘post-colonial excuse’

FRI6: MIGRANTS NAVIGATING BORDERS, BOUNDARIES, AND BARRIERS ON THE ISLAND OF IRELAND

CHAIR: JOHN O’BRIEN VENUE: SE230

Marta Kempny, Emma Calvert & Elaine Moriarty (Queens University Belfast & Trinity College Dublin)

‘An examination of the effect of Brexit on EU nationals’ future lives and work in Northern Ireland’

Daniel Guigui (University College Dublin)

‘Shared spaces, shared stories: autobiographical narratives of Dublin-based hosts of Ukrainian refugees’

Egle Gusciute (University College Dublin)

‘Ethnic hierarchy in the rental housing market: a field experiment examining discrimination against Ukrainian refugees’

15.30 – 15.45 COFFEE BREAK / POSTGRADUATE POSTER EXHIBITION

SE FOYER



CONFERENCE PROGRAMME – 10TH/11TH MAY 2024

VENUE: SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, NORTH CAMPUS

TIME: 15:45 - 17:15

PANELS AND VENUES: FRI7: SE130 FRI8: SE131 FRI9: SE230

FRI7: SOCIOLOGY OF THE ENVIRONMENT

CHAIR: ANNE FITZGERALD VENUE: SE130

Lorenzo Posocco (University of Copenhagen) & Iarfhlaith Watson (University College Dublin)

Climate change and loss of biocultural diversity: bridging the gap between global concern and national action

Addiena Luke-Currier, Eliane Moriarty, Trevor Hodkinson (TCD)

Frame analysis of policies regarding antimicrobial use in agriculture in farming newspapers in Ireland

FRI8: CREATIVE EPISTEMOLOGIES AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

CHAIR: PAUL RYAN VENUE: SE131

Tanja Kovacic & Lisa Moran (South East Technical University)

'There will be more moments': Yes I feel as if my journey has not been finished yet. Narratives of belonging and crossing borders of two sociologists using Collaborative autoethnography (CAE)

Noirin McNamara (Trinity College Dublin)

The value of owning the symbols that orient us within subjectivity

Tom Kissock-Mamede (University of Cambridge)

Non-indigenous sociologists researching indigenous

FRI9: MIGRATION, INTERSECTIONALITY, AND RACIALISATION

CHAIR SOPHIA PALLARO VENUE: SE230

Matteo Moraschini (University College Cork)

Political paralysis or life impossibility? An empirical perspective on political refugees' concerns

Robert O'Keefe (Trinity College Dublin)

Nigerian taxi drivers in Dublin: Racism and the Failure of Neoliberal governmentality

Pooja Priya (University College Cork)

Exploring the placemaking strategies of the Congolese and Nigerian migrants in Delhi: an intersectional approach

17.30 – 18.30 WINE RECEPTION SE FOYER

19.00 CONFERENCE DINNER PUGIN HALL, SOUTH CAMPUS



CONFERENCE PROGRAMME – 10TH/11TH MAY 2024

VENUE: SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, NORTH CAMPUS

TIME: 9.00 – 10.30

PANELS AND VENUES: SAT1: SE010 SAT2: SE011 SAT3: SE012

SAT1: FORECLOSING THE FUTURE: CHALLENGES FOR SOCIAL THEORY

VENUE: SE010

Diana Stypinska (University of Galway)

The future without (a) future ...? On economization and ecological relationality

Tom Boland (University College Cork) & Ray Griffin (South East Technical University)

Prescribing the future on a misdiagnosis: Unemployment Scarring, NEETs and Activation

João Nunes de Almeida (University of Glasgow)

The Crisis of Social Cures as the Crisis of Sociology of Indecision and Complicity

SAT2: MOTHERING FUTURES

CHAIR: JENNY SAILAVAARA VENUE: SE011

Ciara Bradley (MU)

Lived experience of Traveller women of pregnancy and birth during the Covid-19 pandemic and post-pandemic

Roisin Freaney (MU) and Orlagh Woods (MU)

Reflections on themes of Irish Motherhood in Anne Enright's The Green Road.

Tanya Cassidy (MU)

Thinking about mother futures: Imagining hope and potentiality informed by memories and experiences in the past and present

SAT3: CIVIL SOCIETY/STATE RELATIONS IN AN AGE OF POLITICAL POLARISATION PANEL

CHAIR: BLANCA BLANCO VENUE: SE012

Chris O'Connell (Trocaire)

A struggle for rights and freedom: the importance of civil society space

Barry Cannon and Shane Murphy (Maynooth University)

'We're not the right-wing or racist but...': far right myth and distributive conflict in asylum-seeker related protest in the Republic of Ireland, Nov 2022-JUniversity of Limerick y 2023

Nessa Ni Chasaide (Maynooth University)

Challenging Ireland's corporate tax games? Options from 'above' and 'below.

John Brown (Maynooth University)

Radical-left governments and popular sector relations: tensions and contradictions in the building of Venezuela's communes

10.30 – 11.00 COFFEE BREAK /POSTGRADUATE POSTER EXHIBITION SE FOYER



CONFERENCE PROGRAMME – 10TH/11TH MAY 2024

VENUE: SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, NORTH CAMPUS

TIME: 10:45-12:15

PANELS AND VENUES: SAT1: SE010 SAT2: SE011 SAT3: SE012

SAT4: CRITICAL PROBLEMS IN PUBLIC SOCIAL THEORY

VENUE: SE010

Aslı Kandemir (University of Birmingham)

In spatiality of populism: Discourse of tolerance as symbolic border

Jody Moore-Ponce (University College Cork)

“I feel like....” A Digital ethnography and linguistic genealogy of representations of lived experience”

Billy Goodwin (University College Cork)

Combating hyper reality with Rosa’s (2018) Resonance

SAT5: LOVE, MARRIAGE, AND THE FAMILY

CHAIR: ANGELOS BOLLAS VENUE: SE011

Carmel Hannan, Antje Order and Merike Darmody (University of Limerick and ESRI)

Trends and patterns in Intermarriage in Ireland: 1971 to 2016

Catherine B McNamee & Danielle Mackle

Dating experiences and perspectives among LGBTQ+ university students in Northern Ireland

Lim Mengzhen (Meiji/Temple University)

What if a romantic relationship is short term?

Ann Burke (South East Technical University)

‘Exploring the moral dimensions of pro-life feminism in the Irish pro-life movement’

SAT6: SECURITIZATION AND ITS DISCONTENTS

CHAIR MARY P CORCORAN VENUE: SE012

Clva-Nicole Mavrlja, Aphra Kerr, Ciara Bracken-Roche (Maynooth University)

Facial Recognition Technology: the expanding security assemblage in Irish policing

Sarah Carol (University College Dublin) & Faouzia Zeraoia (University of Jijel)

‘The social architecture of checkpoints: the case of Palestine’



CONFERENCE PROGRAMME – 10TH/11TH MAY 2024

PLENARY 2 : THE CONTROL OF SELF: HONOUR AND SHAME IN IRELAND

KEYNOTE: EMERITUS PROFESSOR TOM INGLIS

CHAIR: MARY P. CORCORAN

TIME : 12.15 – 13.15 VENUE : SE014

Tom Inglis is Emeritus Professor of Sociology at University College Dublin. He has written about culture, mostly in relation to religion, meaning, the body and the media, particularly in relation to Ireland.

Honour and shame are emotional controls that are central to social order in everyday life. One's Identity, sense of self and individual self-worth are developed over time and presented to others for assessment. It is through this assessment that individuals come to be, on the one hand, recognised, respected and honoured or, on the other, ignored, demeaned or shamed. There is a constant struggle to maintain face. It is because this struggle is intensely emotional, that it is difficult to find good evidence. I suggest that sociologists might look at alternative sources such as novels and, when it comes to understanding how honour and shame operate in Ireland, to the works of John McGahern.

13.15 – 13.45 LUNCH / AGM SE FOYER



CONFERENCE PROGRAMME – 10TH/11TH MAY 2024

VENUE: SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, NORTH CAMPUS

TIME: 14.00 – 15.30

PANELS AND VENUES: SAT7: SE010 SAT8: SE011 SAT9: SE012

SAT7: EDUCATION ACROSS THE LIFE COURSE

VENUE: SE010

Delma Byrne (Maynooth University)

Negotiating provision for school choice for a diverse and inclusive society

Emily Murphy (University of Limerick)

Changes in gender inequality among young people with disabilities

Keitumetse Mabile (Maynooth University)

Indigenous knowledge and lifelong learning

SAT8: POLITICAL POLARISATION, POLICY TENSIONS AND WAYS FORWARD

CHAIR: MARY P. MURPHY VENUE: SE011

Kieran Allen (University College Dublin)

Shifts in political cleavages in Ireland 2024

Niamh Kirk (University of Limerick)

Decolonising Ireland? Narratives of hospitality and anti-colonialism on a shared Island

Lisa Smyth, (Queens University Belfast)

Liberty and Solidarity : Ireland's Moral Revolution

Rian Mulcahy and Jessica Simpson, (University of Greenwich)

The Hidden pandemic: consequences and responses to Qanon.

SAT9: HEALTH, TECHNOLOGY AND AGENCY

CHAIR: J. CLARK POWERS VENUE: SE012

Jack Lehane, Aphra Kerr & Mani Dhingra (Maynooth University)

'Health beyond health care: demonstrating non-traditional public sector relevance for population health through Smart D8'

Harriet Wilkinson (Maynooth University)

Old wives tales to digital trackers- the sifting social imaginaries of menstruation in Ireland

Elena Cristina Pislariu, UCM Spain

'Mapas locos': the recovery of agency from surveillance of mental institutions

15.30 – 15.45 COFFEE BREAK / POSTER EXHIBITION SE FOYER



CONFERENCE PROGRAMME – 10TH/11TH MAY 2024

VENUE: SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, NORTH CAMPUS

TIME: 15.45 – 17.00

PANELS AND VENUES: SAT10: SE010 SAT11: SE011 SAT12: SE012

SAT10 THE SOCIOLOGY AND POLITICAL ECONOMY OF WORK

CHAIR: APHRA KERR VENUE: SE010

Amy Healy (University of Limerick) and Sean O’Riain (Maynooth University)

“The mean side of lean: work organisation, gender and workplace abuse”.

Sasha Noon (Technical University of the Shannon)

“Becoming and being a Social Profession: how the sociology of professions can those support those in the social professions to become agents of influence and change in and for their professions”

Shannon Hughes Spence (South East Technical University)

“Types of feminine subjectivities in modern nightclubs”

Mary P. Murphy (Maynooth University)

Navigating tensions between care income proposals in eco-social welfare policy proposals.

SAT11 STATE CAPACITY: EUROPEAN, NATIONAL AND LOCAL PERSPECTIVES

CHAIR: PAULINE CULLEN VENUE: SE011

KShamsoddin Shariati (Maynooth University)

The Imperative of state capacity in addressing polycrises: a comparative analysis of wicked problem management in Europe

Sean O’Riain (Maynooth University)

Growth models and futures in Ireland’s Political Economy

Mary P. Corcoran (Maynooth University)

Urban space as contested space: the struggle to make and sustain liveable neighbourhoods in Dublin

SAT12: DIGITAL FUTURES

CHAIR: NIAMH KIRK VENUE: SE012

Eric Deibel (Maynooth University)

STS, AI and the Social Contract AI

Dominic Hewson (Ulster University)

A new ‘world of information’: shifting parameters of power at the dawn of the dataistic episteme

Mani Dhingra (Maynooth University)

‘Digital Twins and their potential use in democratising urban futures’

J. Clark Powers (Maynooth University)

Resilience through Resistance: Digital Sociology as Necessarily Technoskeptic



KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:



Professor Dr Henrike Rau

Maximilian University, Munich

Prof. Dr Henrike Rau is based in the Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society, Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich. Her core research interests span a range of environmental topics, consumption patterns in the areas of mobility, energy use and food, interdisciplinary, cross-cultural and comparative studies. Her extensive research work to date has focused on (un)sustainable consumption patterns in the areas of mobility, energy and food. In particular, she has been internationally recognised for her research on the dynamics of mobility practices across the life course, diverse mobility cultures and the mobility-related (re-)distribution of temporal and spatial resources.

Dr Rau designed and led cutting-edge research on transport, mobilities and the 'consumption of distance' as part of CONSENSUS, a collaborative project (2009-2015) between Trinity College Dublin and NUI, Galway on consumption, environment and sustainability funded by the EPA Ireland (www.consensus.ie). From 2014-2018, Dr Rau was a social science partner in the NUIG-based nZEB-Retrofit project (2014-2018) funded by Science Foundation Ireland. This project combined engineering and social science expertise to investigate household energy consumption in Ireland and the potential benefits and drawbacks of retrofitting initiatives. Recently, she was a lead researcher and WP1 leader in ENERGISE, an inter- and transdisciplinary research project (2016-2019) on household energy use in Europe that is funded under the EU Horizon2020 programme (www.energise-project.eu).

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KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:



Professor Tom Inglis

University College Dublin

Tom Inglis is Emeritus Professor of Sociology at University College Dublin. Professor Inglis has researched and written about culture, mostly in relation to religion, meaning, the body and the media, particularly in relation to Ireland. He published two editions of *Moral Monopoly: The Rise and Fall of the Catholic Church in Modern Ireland* (1998). From his interest in the changes occurring in Catholicism Ireland he began to examine sexuality and the media in the context of Ireland. In 1998, he published a revised 2nd edition of *Moral Monopoly*, as well as *Lessons in Irish Sexuality*. Two years later, he co-edited *Religion and Politics* (2000). *Truth, Power and Lies* (2003) which was a sociological examination of what became known as the case of the 'Kerry Babies' enfants found dead in suspicious circumstances. His other books include *Global Ireland: Same Difference* (2008) and *Meanings of Life in Contemporary Ireland: Webs of Significance* (2014). He has published two memoirs *Making Love* (2012) and *To Love a Dog* (2020). He lives in Cootehall, Co. Roscommon where is Academic Director of the John McGahern Barracks.

[Tom Inglis Profile | University College Dublin \(ucd.ie\)](#) tom.inglis@ucd.ie



51ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND

OTHER EVENTS:



The MU Arts and Minds Festival coincides with the SAI Annual Conference meeting at Maynooth. You may be interested in the following exhibition and panel session below:

Queer Religion – Photographic Exhibition and Panel Discussion

This London-based collection created by Irish queer atheist photographer Frances Marshall, spotlights and celebrates prominent queer leaders in religion. These queer leaders risk so much personally in order to live in their truth and create positive change within the monotheistic religions. The subjects captured openly identify as queer and by their very existence provide a safe space within institutions that actively promote queerphobia.

The exhibition is free and will be available in the TSI Building Foyer from 10am on Saturday, 11th May until 6pm.

Panel Discussion (14:00- 15:00 Saturday, May 11th) - TSI Building, Lecture Theatre 1 - Get your tickets on Eventbrite

Exploring the multifaceted aspects of queerphobia through the lens of religion, law and life, Anna Nolan, Chairperson of National LGBT Federation and Head of Development at COCO Content, one of Ireland's leading television production companies, will chair a panel discussion on what that means to the panellists and the lives they're living today. Joining Anna and Frances on the panel are Maeve Delargy, Founder of Lesbian Lawyers Network and Senior Associate with Philip Lee LLP; Mother Christina Beardsley, a London-based trans Christian advocate and Reverend who features in the exhibition; and Oisín O'Reilly, CEO of Outhouse. For the panel discussion must be booked and costs €5. The full programme of MU Arts and Minds Festival and Eventbrite links are here.



Abstracts

Day 1 Friday 10th May 2024

FRI1: Understanding the experiences and practices of mental health

Melissa I Meyer, PhD, (University College Cork) melisvdm@gmail.com

Title: Turbulence, Tricksters, and Tethers: Unpacking the mental health issues young people in Ireland face as social pathologies through interviews with the counsellors who work with them

Abstract: The primary prevention parable of the ‘river story’ proposes that at some point pulling drowning people from the river should ignite an investigation upstream as to why people are falling into the river in the first place.

Using this approach, this exploratory study investigated the high rates of mental illness and struggles young people in Ireland face today as social pathologies. Through an adapted delphi-method, counsellors who work with young adults who were interviewed, the findings unpacked to understand why so many young people are falling into the river. A sociological imagination illuminated themes of social acceleration, liminality, strain, and theatricality. This paper proposes another potentially hidden element – that of the trickster influencer who capitalises off the paradoxical permanent liminality young people are finding themselves in.

Rachel Brown, (Maynooth University) rachel.brown.2017@mumail.ie

Title: The Practice of Mental Health

Abstract: The lived experience of mental health is commonly understood as an individualistic psychological phenomenon. However, consistent and enduring research demonstrates that mental health is shaped by various conditions of distress originating from individual, environmental and social factors. This

suggests that mental health is more than an experience limited to the minds of individuals, but a socially situated one in which practices of mental health occur in microstructural and macrostructural domains. The study presented used Bourdieu’s theory of practice as a theoretical lens to examine the ways in which experiences of mental health are influenced by the guiding principle of the habitus and forms of capital as participant’s negotiate social fields. This interdisciplinary and critical study analysed excerpts from 14 semi structured interviews of individuals of various ages, genders and social class backgrounds. The habitus concept was used as an analytic tool to capture social class as qualitative distinctions as well as a subjective social class questionnaire as opposed to objective socioeconomic measures. A sociocognitive critical discourse analysis was conducted which examined the discourses and semiotic markers participants used to describe their class backgrounds and lived experiences of mental health.

This highlighted the shared sociocultural knowledge, contexts, power relations and social structures and systems which operate within the discourses of mental health. Findings suggest mental health is experienced through practices of subjectification, resilience and recovery. These practices occur on an intrapersonal, interpersonal and a social structural level with various integrative interactions of discourses, habitus, forms of capital and social fields. These findings are important for how we understand experiences of distress and the relationship between mental health and broader social structures of inequality. Importantly, implications relate to future policies on inequality and mental health as well as clinical and therapeutic applications. This presentation advances knowledge regarding the relationship between the social and the psychological as well as how power operates through mediating discourses of normality.

University of Limerick: Ross Macmillan, ross.macmillan@ul.ie Carmel Hannan carmel.hannan@ul.ie Michael Anyanwu, michael.anyanwu@ul.ie Saoirse McInerney, saoirse.mcinerney@ul.ie Elke Hayes elke.hayes@ul.ie

Title: Disruptions and discontinuities in child development: The impact of the pandemic on children's psychological wellbeing

Abstract: Developmental psychology has longstanding interest in both continuities and discontinuities in psychological well-being. The COVID-19 pandemic provides a unique opportunity to further assess developmental processes by examining if prior trajectories of psychological distress influence COVID-19 adaptations. We examine longitudinal data from the Growing Up in Ireland study for ages 3 to 12/13 that is the '08 cohort. Key measures include socio-demographic controls, the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) responses for the emotional sub-scale, the Mental Health Inventory (MHI-5), and several measures capturing COVID-19 disruptions in home, school and social life. Data analysis involved Bayesian estimation approaches for linear regression that account for missing data through a modified FIML approach. We found 1) minimal continuity in psychological distress in childhood and that during the COVID-19 pandemic; 2) small, almost negligible effects of trajectories of psychological distress in childhood and COVID-19 adaptations; and 3) minimal evidence of statistical moderation for COVID-19 adaptations given prior trajectories of psychological distress.

FRI2: Margins to centres I: The Limits of Public Sociology: Race and Ethnicity Study Group

Pilar Luz Rodrigues (South East Technological University) pilar.luzrodrigues@setu.ie
Andrea Ciribuco (University of Galway) andrea.ciribuco@setu.ie

Title: Language, intercultural communication and integration of migrants in rural communities in Ireland

Abstract: In 2017, Ireland had the 4th highest share of migrant population in rural areas in the EU with 11.9%, more than twice the EU average (JRC 2019). And although Dublin had the highest

number of non-Irish residents in the most recent census (CSO 2022), Ireland has been home to unique cases of migration to rural areas. The town of Ballyhaunis, for example, is the most diverse municipality in the country, with 37% of the population non-Irish. Nevertheless, most of the literature on migration has focused predominantly on migration to cities and urban areas, with less attention paid to rural settings (Morén-Alegret and Wladyka 2020; Woods 2016). In view of such gap in the literature, this paper aims to improve our knowledge of the experience of migrants and refugees living in Ireland's rural areas with respect to integration with local communities. Specifically, the paper examines how language learning among migrants may generate challenges and opportunities for intercultural communication and integration. It explores the linguistic repertoires of migrants and refugees living in rural areas, as well as the strategies they use to overcome language barriers. The study also investigated opportunities for cultural activities where locals and migrants come together, for shared conversation on rural development, including via translation/interpreting. The paper relates preliminary findings from a project funded by the Irish Research Council, with fieldwork and semi-structured interviews conducted since February 2023 with migrants living in the West and South East of Ireland, including areas officially recognised as Irish speaking regions (Gaeltacht).

Amin Sharifi Isaloo: University College Cork amin.sharifiisaloo@ucc.ie

Title: The public sphere and the far-right

Abstract: Drawing on Turner's concept of liminality, this paper explores how the far-right occupy more political stages and were able to form the public sphere after the rise of asylum seekers and refugees coming from the war zones, particularly the Middle East, and spread racism through various forms of media, social media and AI, which, in turn, not only create dislike, violence and hate, but also undermine social justice.

Rebecca Chiyoko King O'Riain (Maynooth University)

Title: 'De-colonizing Irish sociology to overcome the 'post-colonial excuse'

Abstract: Ireland is a post-colonial society on the edge of Europe, which has historically been seen to have sympathetic relationships with parts of the global south. These relationships are often based on a solidarity with oppressed people in part based on the historical experience of being a formerly racialized peoples (Ignatiev 2008) and a formerly colonized nation. This racialization in the Irish experience (Garner 2003) clearly marks Ireland in the contemporary moment as a predominantly white post-colonial nation which can sympathetically relate to those in the global south having been racialized by others.

However, the increasing multicultural, racial and ethnic diversity in the Republic of Ireland problematizes this homogenous racial notion of Irishness and begs the question of how the Irish have become 'more than white.' Irishness has become a tricky and complex culture and identity for Ireland as it continues to try to balance self-identification as a white post-colonial country with solidarity with colonized people of colour, while still, despite its best efforts, retaining cultural remnants of colonialism. Some Irish people think that they can't possibly be 'racializing' others in Ireland because they themselves were once racialized.

FRI3: The interplay between structure and culture

Eoin Flaherty (Maynooth University)

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Title: The three worlds of heavy metal: inequality and the political economy of metal music

Abstract: Metal music production is organised globally into three distinct ‘worlds of heavy metal’. These ‘worlds’ are groups of countries that share similar characteristics associated with higher or lower extents of metal music production, corroborating existing evidence that certain socioeconomic and political conditions are conducive to greater or lesser metal output. This paper details the results of a secondary quantitative analysis, through which these groupings were derived. In doing so, it offers several contributions to the quantitative study of heavy metal in particular, and to theories linking structural variables to cultural output in general. First, given existing findings showing that heavy metal music thrives in wealthy, politically open, secular countries, it clarifies the causal mechanisms linking these variables to metal music output. In doing so, it argues inequality plays a key role in determining the extent of metal production, drawing on the sociologies of class and inequality. Second, in order to further examine the causal complexities that may exist within current quantitative models of metal music production, it applies hierarchical cluster analysis to a secondary set of country-level data to produce a global typology of countries. The typology initially yields six distinct clusters, which are condensed into three in order to sharpen our theories of how heavy metal music production is associated with national extents of inequality, but also income, democracy, secularism, and male demography. Finally, this paper clarifies the empirical characteristics of these distinct worlds by mapping and explaining the membership of each world, and interpreting them in the context of existing theory.

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Title: Inverted dependency: How Organisational Sense-making Enables Procedural Reinforcement of Hierarchies in Ireland’s Visual Art Infrastructure

Abstract:

Visual art infrastructures in Ireland are primarily built around a state funding procedural hierarchy. Within this structure arts organisations are mostly funded by state funding, or are civic institutions with costs salaries, etc., coming from directly from the exchequer. The artist has very little hand in the management, planning or implementation of programme, in either scenario. While the artist’s work is central to an organisation’s public presentation of its purpose and the means through which the organisation makes sense of that purpose, the infrastructures are built on perceived dependency by artists procedurally, and a power dynamic that enables that hierarchy to perpetuate. This anomaly became most evident during Covid19 restrictions as the assemblage of procedural supports didn’t exist.

In this article paper, I will compare two post-Covid19 restriction examples of this hierarchy as manifest through the procedural actions of two arts infrastructures in Ireland. I will use an ethnomethodological approach to examining both situations and their implication. The first procedural action involves the cancellation of a group exhibition, Beyond the Studio in March 2023 at dlrLexicon gallery, in Dublin. The second involves the pay to speak “speed curating” events organised by Visual Artists Ireland. As an artist working in Ireland for over 25 years, I have the unique adequacy (Garfinkel, 2002) to be able to identify the sociological facts within two vastly different situations. As such, I focus on organisation sense-making in relation to these actions, and how they aim to create orderliness within a visual art infrastructure.

John O’Brien (University College Cork) johnobrien@ucc.ie

Title: Deregulating alcohol availability: an analysis of the Sale of Alcohol Bill

Abstract: A long-promised revision of alcohol licensing legislation has been outlined in the Sale of Alcohol Bill (SOAB). It will likely set the basic framework of alcohol policy for decades to come. The paper will examine the composition of the Bill as an example of corporate capture of policy making. Following two decades of slow incorporation of public health elements into alcohol policy, culminating in the 2018 Public Health (Alcohol) Act, the SOAB promises to reverse the trend with plans to liberalise availability. This change will support alcohol producers, retailers, and investors in bar chains primarily, despite the rhetorical claim that its purpose is to support ‘culture’ and the hospitality sector, and the peculiar absence of references to alcohol in official commentary on alcohol licensing changes. However, it is evident that its primary purpose is to deregulation of alcohol sales. Availability is an important predictor of the average level of consumption. The sociological idea of ‘the collectivity of drinking cultures’ underpins public health policy regarding alcohol (Skög 1985), whereby the average level of consumption predicts the overall level of chronic, acute, and social harms. It demonstrates that the most effective way to reduce the harms concentrated in extreme consumers is to reduce the average level of consumption. The SOAB will contribute to the opposite. However, it has galvanised the public health community and community organisations against what appears to be a case of corporate capture of policy against the public good, and its ultimate form hangs in the balance.

The paper will offer a socio-legal analysis of; and examine the history of the SOAB to seek to understand the interests that shaped it, and the social interests it serves. The data for the study are texts pertaining to the Bill. This includes the Bill itself, The Report on Pre-Legislative Scrutiny of the General Scheme of the Sale of Alcohol Bill, Dáil debates, press releases and all newspaper articles published on the topic discoverable on the Irish Newspapers Archive and The Irish Times Digital Archive.

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Title: Young People’s awareness, critique, and resistance to gambling marketing through sport

Abstract: The dominant theoretical approaches to understanding gambling and addiction are psychological. In contrast to this, we situate our work in the broader socio-cultural approaches to gambling (Abbott et al., 2018) and an emerging literature on what has been called the ‘gamblification’ of games, sport and media (Macey and Hamari, 2022). This paper presents findings from an ongoing mixed-methods project from the border regions on the island of Ireland that explores both the exposure, awareness and perceptions of young people to gambling marketing communicated through sport and the strategies used by gambling companies in their marketing communications.

First, nine focus groups were conducted with 70 young people (14-24 years). This assisted us to identify live sporting events of interest to our young people and the broadcast and social media platforms that they used most frequently to access this content. Second, mass media broadcasts of major sports events across public service, commercial and subscription television channels in both regions (n=18) were recorded and analysed. Third, a purpose sample of Instagram posts (N: 178) from 7 major gambling brands’ social media accounts accessible on the island of Ireland were collected and analysed.

Our focus group findings suggest that young people predominantly use smartphones and social media to consume sport and through this they encounter gambling marketing. From our media analysis, gambling operators utilise sports consumption as a vehicle for marketing by connecting with sports fans through the distribution of themed social media content related to sport. We also observed the use of influencers online to promote gambling. However, these strategies were most prominent for football, horse racing and darts, and almost exclusively for male athletes.

Nevertheless, focus group data painted a mixed reception for both sports, sponsors and celebrity influencers and their association with gambling. While the communications strategies did indeed appeal to several of the focus group attendees, a number rejected the associations, critiquing the chances of the claims occurring (i.e. winning) and questioning whether gambling was a good fit for sport. This vein of resistance indicates that young people critique harmful industry communications and formulate their own views.

Our emerging findings point to the need for forthcoming gambling marketing policies to go beyond national broadcast television operators and to engage with transnational mass and social media marketing and operators. They also point to the need to update gambling harms programmes to address online social media strategies and sponsorships in certain sports.

Keynote: Prof Dr Henrike Rau

Title: Creating a climate of hope: Sustainable consumption and the sociology of everyday practices

Abstract: The growing popularity of social practice approaches in environmental sociology and sociological sustainability research has sparked renewed interest in people’s daily routines and their potential transformation. Applying social practice theory to topics such as domestic energy use and mobility has provided fresh insights into the material and social elements of everyday

practices and opportunities for recrafting or substituting them to reach more sustainable levels of resource consumption. This keynote address will present conceptual insights and empirical findings from the field of practice-centred sustainability research to demonstrate their contribution to a social-ecological transformation.

Panel: FR4 Sociology of the Environment

Aidan O’Sullivan (Birmingham City University) aidan.osullivan@bcu.ac.uk

Title: ‘Expanding environmental consciousness in the social sciences curriculum: challenges and opportunities’

Abstract: This presentation will reflect on the challenges of designing modules on the environmental social sciences in a UK Post-92 University. Its primary focus is on a green criminology module the presenter designed and debuted this year in his faculty. Discussion will also include proposed environmental sociology and environmental security modules. The presentation will also outline how the module design approaches questions such as decolonisation and criminology’s long association with criminal justice agencies. The latter can impede students’ reimagining of violence away from hegemonic conceptions of it as interpersonal and public spectacle (Nixon 2011) to that of longer-lasting invisible harms of environmental devastation.

The presentation synthesises the presenter’s recent publications including sociological analyses of climate violence in the Global South (O’Sullivan et al. 2023), critical criminological frameworks looking at power and harm in climate mitigation measures (Omukuti and O’Sullivan 2023) and critical pedagogy and activist criminology in UK higher education (O’Sullivan 2023).

The presentation is centred on conference themes such as expanding the Sociological Imagination and, more precisely, the Criminological Imagination (Young 2011) through the contested idea of “The Environment” (Bell 2020) and break down the barriers between Culture and Nature that the social sciences rest on (Bonneuil and Fressoz 2017). The presentation hopes to open up a discussion with Irish counterparts who are either designing modules around environmentalism/climate change or have already successfully conducted them. The main task as instructors is to consider how to prepare our students for the systemic natural and social crises that continuing environmental devastation will deepen. But it also includes a consideration of hopeful futures and how students often desire such narratives over expressions of climate grief. This reflects subjectivities cognisant of the crises that have marked their adolescence and will continue to mark their early adulthood. This challenges us as academics and teachers to present liberatory pedagogies that at the same time do not minimise the scale of future challenges.

Maynooth University: Eamonn Slater, eamonn.slater@mu.ie & Eoin Flaherty eoin.flaherty@mu.ie

Title: The ‘bewitched’ world of everyday things: Engels and Marx on dialectically determined reality and the dire consequences for Nature of our failure to recognize it.

Abstract: We want to propose that the essential root of our global environmental crises is our continual propensity to misinterpret the essential workings of the organic ecosystems of Nature. According to Marx and Engels, the ontology of concrete reality (including Nature) is determined by dialectical laws. On the surface, this ‘reality’ appears to be made up of thing-like objects with their ‘heterogeneous and independent forms’. However, concrete reality is in fact determined by an endless maze of underlying relations and interconnections, in which nothing remains static, everything is in a state of flux’. (Engels, 1986, 29). Therefore, the ‘surface’ reality, is a mystification, where the process of thingification holds sway and this apparent condition of existence gives rise to a misinterpretation of the workings of both social and material realities. Critically, our inherent inability to grasp this ‘bewitched’ reality by its surface appearance, comes to fore in the seemingly mysterious emergence of remote consequences. Significantly, it is when these remote consequences, determined by our economic activities appear in the ecosystems of the earth, they tend in general to be detrimental to the organic processes of the earth. In order to reverse this non-sustainable relationship to Nature, we need firstly a paradigm shift in how we interpret the organic world, by adopting a dialectical ontology where reality is determined by interconnecting processes rather than thing-like objects.

Keywords: Marx/Engels/nature

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Title: Climate hero or villain: is digitalisation more often than not fuelling climate change

Abstract: A common refrain from utopian digital ICT advocates, big tech, and some of the popular public discourses around such technologies is that we are but a few iterations away from tackling significant elements of the climate crisis. While digital ICTs hold some promise, in particular in understanding the unfolding crisis in more detail, they do not offer alternatives to the destructive practices and lifestyle choices that are fuelling the crisis. Much of what digital ICT offers suggests deeper and richer data becoming more readily available, but with international political inaction and indifference, and public paralysis on climate action, such data becomes largely meaningless. The evidence of anthropogenic Climate Change has been available for decades but we see little movement in terms of changing behaviours and priorities that will begin to alleviate some of the worst impacts and consequences of the crisis. Instead, while digital ICTs may not be the ‘silver bullet’ we are hoping for - implicit in deep Ecological Modernisation thinking - they may, in fact, be a significant driver of environmentally destructive practices and lifestyles. Cyberspace makes a virtue of placelessness, the sense of being there without being physically present. It conveys the misleading perception that individuals can ignore the realities of Climate Change and instead create a new novel reality for themselves in cyberspace. At the same time, cyberspace celebrates individualism over community and real-world commitment. Virtual communities take precedence over actual community engagement, which is a necessary prerequisite to climate action. Online shopping, supported by the convenience offered by digital technologies to pay virtually, allows people to ignore the environmental and moral consequences of where goods and items come from, and how far they travel. Digital ICTs are powering a consumer culture within high-emitting regions of the world, influencing individuals to consume even more of our natural resources at a greater pace than they can be replenished,

while also adding to mounting waste, all from the convenience of home. Moreover, in digitalising the world's knowledge, we are minimising and ignoring the intergenerational indigenous tacit knowledge, which is deeply rooted in a balance with nature and community and environmental sustainability and resilience. Indigenous inquiry and knowledge may yet hold the key to better engagement in climate action and provide us with a deeper appreciation of the value of the natural environment around us and we ignore such knowledge at our peril.

FR5: Margins to centres II: The limits of public sociology. Race and Ethnicity Study Group

Philomena Mullen (Trinity College Dublin)

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Title: 'A Black Studies perspective on the decolonial turn in Irish Sociology'

Abstract: Arguing from a position that coloniality is pervasive in interpretations and depictions of Irish sociology, this presentation examines the theoretical limitations of a Global North perspective, asserting that decolonisation is not a metaphorical interpretative lens but a praxis aimed at unsettling colonial foundations. The antimonial concept of the Global North may be understood to comprise the hegemonic knowledge(s), temporality and spatiality which pass as universal on a global scale. This understanding provides a necessary stimulus for the sociologist to take pains so as to avoid framing the discipline as a 'mere conduit for inculcating Western knowledge, values, and worldviews'.¹ Scholars from the Global South point to decolonisation as tending toward the status of fad in the Global North (both as location and episteme), reduced to tokenistic and self-serving performativity or, in the words of Eve Tuck and Wayne Yang, a 'metaphor'.²

From the perspective of being a lecturer in Black Studies in a HEI, the discussion highlights the complexities of decolonisation as a simultaneous and collective everyday practice in sociological enquiry, foregrounding its potential to unsettle social, cultural, political, economic, and epistemological colonial structures.

To illustrate this disruptive role, this presentation reconsiders the ethical dimensions of sociological research amongst 'raced' research subjects within the Irish context. Aligning with the decolonial turn, the argument will be advanced that universal ethical guidelines are inadequate, emphasising the need for researchers to adapt their ethical approaches to accord with diverse and marginalised contexts. In aligning with the conference theme of the potentiality of the sociological imagination, this engagement with key sociological concepts such as agency, identity, subjectivity, and risk underscores the transformative potential of a praxis of decolonisation.

Duduzile Unathi Ndlova (Galway University)

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Title: 'Black affect and decolonising higher education in South Africa'

¹ Toyin Falola, *Decolonizing African Knowledge: Autoethnography and African Epistemologies* (Cambridge, 2022), p. 9.

² Eve Tuck and K. W. Yang, 'Decolonization is not a metaphor' in *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education and Society*, i, no. 1 (2012), pp 1-40.

Abstract: Reflecting on RMF’s praxis of Black Pain and Rage at the University of Cape Town in 2015, and its possibilities for decolonising/transforming higher education in South Africa. This, towards a broader consideration of the epistemological value of Black affect in struggles for decolonising higher education in South Africa (and beyond). I propose a critical and reflective illustration of the RhodesMustFall movement’s centring of black affect in our protest and epistemological confrontation with coloniality at UCT, visibilising and contesting the dismissal of black pain and rage as ‘worthy’ epistemologies for decolonial thinking and doing at UCT and neo-liberal universities in particular.

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Tiba Bonyad (University of Limerick) tiba.bonyad@ul.ie

Title: ‘It’s not out of badness’: Racial literacy, Public Sociology and Local Authorities in Ireland

Abstract: Ireland is no stranger to racism, associated exclusionary practices and discourses impacting on negatively racialised groups (Carr, 2016; Joseph, 2020; Lentin and McVeigh, 2002; Fanning and Michael, 2019). Today, the rise of far-right mobilisations and the anti-immigration sentiment in Ireland have amplified the need for the development of initiatives and anti-racist strategies that transcend the neoliberal idea of social equality. Following critical race theory (CRT) scholars (Chávez-Moreno, 2022; Guinier, 2004; Laghter et al., 2023; Twine, 2004), we apply racial literacy as a conceptual tool to understand whether and how the Irish local authorities understand, negotiate and resist racial hierarchies. Informed by Burawoy (2005) and his argument for a ‘public sociology’ that engages with publics in a dialogical, mutually educational process, this paper draws on 69 in-depth interviews with staff of seven local authorities across Ireland. Based on our findings, we argue that hegemonic neoliberal discourses around equality, diversity and inclusion shape individual and institutional recognition of racism, with race often, but not always, left elusive and insignificant to staff who are thereby unable to address this phenomenon and support those targeted. We contend that racial literacy renders a possibility for a participatory problem solving praxis towards a just society by bringing race to the core (Rogers & Mosley, 2006 see also Molla 2024). Retaining a CRT perspective, aligned with the dialogical aforementioned ethos of public sociology, we suggest here that there are opportunities to develop “anti-racist actions from below” (Molla 2024) in the form of educational strategies that can reveal the processual dynamics of ‘race’ and racialisation in a manner that can challenge racism within institutions

FRI6: Migrants navigating borders, boundaries and barriers on the island of Ireland.

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Elaine Moriarty, (Trinity College Dublin) elaine.moriarty@tcd.ie

Title: An examination of the effect of Brexit on EU nationals’ future lives and work in Northern Ireland

Abstract: Following a referendum to leave the EU in 2016 (Brexit), the UK introduced new regulations for EU nationals living and working in the UK including Northern Ireland. These new

regulations included the introduction of the EU Settlement Scheme in 2019 and a new points-based visa system from January 2021. These new arrangements pose significant challenges both for EU migrants and employers in Northern Ireland and have impacted on immigration trends and nationality composition of migrants. Northern Ireland is in a unique situation as it shares the same island with the Republic of Ireland, a member of the EU while the RoI also maintains a common travel area with the UK including Northern Ireland. Thus, many EU workers have engaged in cross border employment, on both sides of the border.

In the context of these changed policies, this paper will present an initial analysis of the impact that Brexit has had on EU migrants' work and lives in Northern Ireland. It will first provide an overview of the changes within the Northern Irish labour market following Brexit, drawing on various secondary data sources. Following this, it will present preliminary findings and emerging themes arising from qualitative interviews with EU nationals working in Northern Ireland, focusing on their life trajectories, previous and current employment situation, and their aspirations for the future.

Acknowledgement: The paper presents preliminary findings from the *Migrant and Employer Strategies in an All-Island Economy* project, funded under the North South Research Programme

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Title: Shared Spaces, Shared Stories: Autobiographical Narratives of Dublin-Based Hosts of Ukrainian Refugees

Abstract: In the wake of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict, the European Union witnessed an influx of approximately six million refugees, spotlighting the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' 2023 report on global forced displacement totalling 117.2 million individuals in the past year. Amidst this crisis, Dublin emerged as a metropolitan arena where the challenge of competitive housing markets intersects with acts of solidarity and cosmopolitan ethics of sharing. This study delves into the accounts of Dublin residents who, despite housing scarcity, have opened their homes to Ukrainian refugees. Through a biographic research method, this project captures the autobiographical narratives of hosts, unearthing the personal motivations that animate their decisions to share their living spaces.

This PhD research situates itself within the broader discourse on sociological imagination by exploring how personal biographies, stories of hospitality, and solidarity contribute to envisioning hopeful futures amidst the ongoing housing crises in Dublin. By focusing on individual and collective agency, identity formation, and the emotional and affective dimensions of hosting refugees through biographies, the study aims to contribute to an understanding of how micro-level actions are informed by and can reshape macro-level phenomena such as migration, displacement, and social change. The preliminary thematic analysis of 30 biographic interviews conducted between December 2022 and March 2023 reveals how socio-cultural, historical, political, and economic determinants are interwoven with individuals' personal life courses and foster a practice of home-sharing that transcends mere accommodation to embody a form of social and political action in resonance with those of previous generations.

In aligning with the conference theme, this paper argues that the act of sharing spaces with displaced individuals not only politicises and depoliticises future imaginaries of hospitality but

also highlights how the sociology of everyday life contributes to the broader canvas of social change. By presenting these narratives, the research offers insights into the ways in which personal and collective futures are being reimagined and reshaped through acts of solidarity, thus contributing to the sociological discourse on hope, agency, and the potential for a sustainable and equitable future in the face of global crises.

Keywords: Sociological imagination, biographic research methods, solidarity, Russo-Ukraine War, shared futures.

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Title: Ethnic hierarchy in the rental housing market: a field experiment examining discrimination against Ukrainian refugees.

Abstract: Ireland, a relatively recent ‘country of immigration’, has experienced a significant increase in its migrant population, including a recent increase in refugees from Ukraine. The EU’s response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis has been unprecedented in comparison to previous refugee crises. In addition, strong public support has been expressed towards Ukrainian refugees (Drazanova and Geddes, 2022) across Europe. Similarly, to other EU states, Ireland has also taken a different approach to accommodating displaced people from Ukraine in comparison to the current Direct Provision system which is applied to most other international protection applicants. The Irish public has also expressed significant levels of solidarity and support towards Ukrainian refugees.

Access to housing is a fundamental human right (UN 1948). In Europe, discrimination in accessing housing towards ethnic minorities is prohibited by international bodies and national legislations. However, despite this there is consistent evidence of ethnic/racial discrimination against ethnic minorities in the housing market across European states (Flage 2018; Auspurg et al., 2019), including Ireland (Gusciute, et al., 2022). This paper presents results from a field experiment in the Irish context which considers the extent of ethnic discrimination towards Ukrainian refugees. The experimental design involved creating fictitious applicants with Irish, Ukrainian and Nigerian names. These applicants applied for vacant rental properties advertised online. The rate of discrimination is measured by the responses received and invitations to view a property by each applicant. Through this experiment I examine whether solidarity expressed by the general public towards Ukrainian refugees translates into reduced discrimination in accessing services such as housing. The paper contributes to the general scholarship on ethnic discrimination and considers the impact of socially constructed ethnic hierarchies as well as the importance of migration status in discrimination towards ethnic minorities.

Keywords: discrimination, refugees, Ukraine, Ireland, housing, ethnicity

FRI7: Sociology of the Environment

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Title: Climate change and loss of biocultural diversity: Bridging the gap between global concern and national action

Abstract: Recent literature has challenged the notion that climate change and biodiversity loss are uniquely global concerns, highlighting the responsibilities of individual nation-states and corporations. The thesis that some countries contribute more to pollution than others is supported by evidence that demonstrates that some countries lead in air pollution, others in water pollution, and still others in land pollution. The same holds true for corporations. However, the issue of accountability is often overlooked. This paper argues that consideration of accountability is necessary, but underdeveloped.

Positive developments are evident, for example, in the UN, prompted by the Pacific islands, directing the International Court of Justice to advise states of their legal duties regarding climate change. Nonetheless, change may not come easily, as both nation-states and corporations are expected to resist accountability and/or delay reparations.

This paper examines the gap between global concern and national action by focusing on four main issues related to climate change and biocultural loss: the question of responsibility, the challenge of quantification, the legacy of nationalism, and the dynamics of knock-on effects and unintended consequences. By analyzing these issues, the paper contends that, while climate change and biocultural diversity loss are matters of global concern requiring global and supranational action in terms of assessing responsibility and quantifying the problem, individual nation-states, in principle, possess the greatest potential and agility to track knock-on effects, implement potential solutions and follow up, and anticipate unintended consequences from attempted solutions.

Laure Detymowski (Maynooth University) laure.detymowski@mumail.ie

Title: Greening Data Centres through District Heating for a “Hopeful Futures”?

Abstract: In April 2023, the new Tallaght District Heating Scheme was inaugurated in the presence of Minister for the Environment Eamon Ryan. Erected directly beside an Amazon data centre, the district heating infrastructure is powered by its waste heat. While the project involves a wide range of stakeholders, it is primarily led by South Dublin County Council in conjunction with Dublin’s energy agency Codema. The cost of the initial infrastructure, amounting to €8 million, was half state-funded and half EU-funded. In addition to its environmental value, the project has been lauded for its social impact: it is managed by Heatworks, Ireland’s first publicly owned, not-for-profit energy company, and future connection to the scheme include 133 cost rental apartments to be built on a nearby public land by 2025. Drawing on a four-year PhD research investigating climate justice in South Dublin, the presentation provides a critical assessment of the widely publicized social and environmental benefits of the district heating scheme. Grounded in the literature that challenges ‘green’ and ‘public’ as good for all in a context of neoliberal urban environmental governance, the assessment covers three dimensions of the project: first, its procedural and epistemic arrangements, second, its relation to private actors and private markets and, third, its social and environmental outcomes. Based on a qualitative, ‘in-place’ approach to data collection, the assessment reveals acute social and environmental inequities unfolding and amplifying through the district heating project. Ultimately, it questions

the ability of the current neoliberal approach to climate change mitigation to address existing inequities and bring about more “Hopeful Futures”.

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Title: Frame analysis of policies regarding antimicrobial use in agriculture in farming newspapers in Ireland

Abstract: It is estimated that by 2050, ten million people will die each year from antimicrobial resistant (AMR) infections [1]. AMR is driven by the improper use of antimicrobials, particularly in agriculture. 73% of the antimicrobials sold globally are used in food-producing animals [2]. Interdisciplinary actions utilising a One Health framework have been taken at the European Union and Irish levels to address this issue and change behaviour on farms, however the issue persists, indicating a gap in the policy implementation process. Key to understanding this may be to utilise sociological methods to evaluate one step in the process: how the issue is framed by information sources used by farmers, such as agricultural newspapers. These sources have been previously identified as significant for the farming community and can play an important role in educating farmers, raising awareness, and encouraging the uptake of specific practices [3, 4].

Aim: The purpose of this article is to analyse the frames utilised by farming newspapers in Ireland on policies regarding antimicrobial use in agriculture.

Methods: Three agricultural newspaper sources have been selected, as farmers have reported relying on multiple sources of information for decision making [4]. These sources include The Irish Farmer’s Journal, a well-established farming newspaper and Agriland.ie, the largest digital agricultural news publisher in Ireland [5]. The Farming Independent, a subsection of the mainstream newspaper, the Irish Independent, is also included to address the fact that Irish farmers have been reported to be sometimes sceptical of the farming press [3]. Newspaper articles from 2014 to 2024 will be included, as significant legally binding agricultural antimicrobial use legislation at the EU level was proposed at that time.

The Matthes and Kohring (2008) frame analysis method will be used to identify four frame elements within the texts: problem definition, causal interpretation, (moral) evaluation, and treatment recommendation. Hierarchical cluster analysis will then be used to analyse how frame elements group together systematically to produce frames [6]. This method will allow for frames to be empirically determined and identified in a transparent manner, as well as allow for an analysis of the interactions between frame elements and how frames evolve over time [6, 7].

Results and Implications: Our results will be utilised to shed light on the framing of this issue in the agricultural press in Ireland and inform policy makers of potential solutions within the larger picture of policy implementation.

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Title: The reproduction of ‘climate mitigation’: racialisation and future social disorder in media framing of an unstable category

Abstract: In recent years, the category of climate migration has become established in political and media discourse. However, the category is unstable and contested due to the complexity of migration and its multi-causal nature; and reproduction of ‘climate migration’ frequently masks and depoliticises this complexity. This is not solely a conceptual problem with consequences for public knowledge, but a political problem also, as the concept can be instrumentalised to advocate for different interests. Despite this instability, it is widely reproduced by civil society and media, often articulated to push for climate action. It’s also reproduced by political actors to advocate for border securitisation, framed as a catalyst of potential societal collapse. Representation of climate migrants in the media portrays them as both threats and victims, typical of migration coverage broadly. Although the category first emerged from the environmental civil society sector expressed as concern for environmental degradation, the framing was closely linked to colonial, racialised ideas of overpopulation causing land degradation and resulting in migration in regions such as the Sahel and Bangladesh. A focus on these geographical regions continues today in reproduction of ‘climate migration’, along with a hyperfocus on numerical predictions of movement of people across borders. These predictions proliferate despite an acceptance that science’s ability to predict movements of people based on climate change is limited. The category acts to disassociate environmental and climatic changes from the historical and contemporary impacts of exploitation and dispossession which leave people vulnerable to climactic shocks in the first place. Equally as fundamental is how the category of climate migration further reproduces coloniality and racialisation by creating an imaginary of climate migration as future social disorder, apocalypse or collapse. Despite this instability and misrepresentation, ‘climate migration’ is still widely reproduced by international institutions, academic disciplines, civil society organisations, political actors, and in the media. This paper examines the framing, interpretation and significance of the category of climate migration in media and political discourse. It presents a mixed-method study of how the category is reproduced in professional journalistic output in international media titles, through analysis of a corpus of 3,000 newspaper articles to document the regions and numbers that climate migration is most associated with, and the sources and key phrases that inform the reporting. In conclusion, the paper will reflect on the significance of media framing of climate migration for action or activism on climate change, and the treatment of people categorised as climate migrants.

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Title: 'There will be more moments': Yes, I feel as if my journey has not been finished yet.' Narratives of belonging and crossing borders of two sociologists using collaborative autoethnography (CAE)

Abstract: This paper elucidates approaches to collaborative autoethnography (CAE) used in contemporary international literature and draws on two female academics' experiences, who currently live in Ireland. As Ellis et al., (2011) state, autoethnography 'seeks to describe and systematically analyse personal experience to understand cultural experience.' In this paper, we as two female sociologists, retrospectively and selectively analyse experiences with international academic life; borders, cultural norms, and identity. We refer to the concepts of belonging and voice to explore academic mobility within the contexts of our lives.

In this paper, we explore relationships between enabling and constraining factors that contributed to our engagement with knowledge production and belonging to new academic environments outside our places of origin. Tanja's account documents her doctoral journey from Slovenia to Ireland; learning the host country's cultural fabrics to engage with academic life in her adopted city, leaving and coming home, which did not mean returning to 'the known'. Lisa's narrative displays synergies to Tanja's illuminating emotions upon emigrating to the UK in 2017, when anti-immigrant sentiment was heightened due to Brexit. However, her experiences of returning to Ireland during COVID-19 disrupted her previous imaginaries of coming home. We argue for a relational and reflexive approach in understanding internationalisation and specifically, the nuances and intricacies of internationalisation as a lived experience.

Presented in a conversational style, we explore areas of confluence and convergence in experiences of international academic careers. In doing so, we illuminate the multiple possibilities presented by CAE for opening conceptual and methodological advancements into multi-layered dimensions of academics' experiences, illuminating the significance of the method for Irish and international Higher Education (HE) research and policy-making.

Nóirín MacNamara, (Trinity College Dublin) Noirin.MacNamara@tcd.ie

Title: The value of owning the symbols that orient us within Subjectivity

Abstract: Judith Butler contests Ernesto Laclau and Slavoj Žižek's argument that the limits to symbolisation which shape political action are best accounted for through Jacques Lacan's account of the Symbolic, Imaginary and Real. Butler agrees that we each emerge as social subjects on the condition of foreclosures, but disagrees that such foreclosures are prior to the social. Oyèrónké Oyěwùmí has a somewhat similar critique of the Eurocentric foundations of feminist concepts. She argues that Western hierarchies, organised through 'bio-logic' or 'body-reasoning' with an emphasis on the sex/gender binary, are culturally particular. Oyěwùmí distinguishes between relational, dynamic, fluid social hierarchies organised by seniority, and hierarchies organised by body-reasoning (centred on gender and race for example) which are oriented toward fixity, and certainties.

In this paper I outline Bracha Ettinger's matrixial theory and argue that while it does not do what either Oyěwùmí (transcendence of the terms of the nuclear family) or Butler (divest Lacan's

paternal law of its power) advocate, it does provide us with the language to better account for how ‘body-reasoning’ structures our orientations and sets constraints on transformative processes. Through an account of multiple strata of subjectivity, within an expanded Symbolic, Ettinger’s matrixial theory enables us to account for the embeddedness of a strong orientation toward constant individuation, alongside a persistent disavowal and fear of processes of co-emergence at a non-cognitive level of subjectivity.

Laclau theorises social transformation through the articulation of an expansive universal discourse and full social imaginary from the goals of a range of social movements. In contrast, Butler is critical of the elevation of generating mass support for our ideals as the paramount social transformation strategy, arguing that it risks minimising the importance of practices of cultural translation among competing notions of universality. Drawing on Spivak, her concern remains with those who have been written out of histories and whose lives and desires are rendered illegible by dominant norms and practices.

In this paper I fully acknowledge that we are culturally oriented to desire an ‘absent fullness’ (Laclau) and the pursuit of ideals is an important part of political action. However I propose we must also continually question our goals and engage in practices of translation (Butler). Drawing on Ettinger’ and Oyèwùmí’s work, I further propose that practices of translation must include a rigorous accounting for our orientations and investments within Subjectivity.

Tom Kissock-Mamede (University of Cambridge) tmk36@cam.ac.uk

Title: Sociological nuances within the Indigenist space: Ambivalences in recuperating traditional Sociology with Indigenous frameworks during a Polycrisis.

Abstract: This article normatively explores how non-Indigenous Sociologists should engage in Indigenous solidarity and research surrounding Indigenous rights during a time of crisis. The paper is based on an empirical chapter of the authors Doctoral Thesis, which adopted auto-ethnographical reflections and ethnomethodological participant observations to extrapolate various ambivalence's that occurred, over the course of a day, at an Indigenous event in Brasilia, Brazil. The Indigenous advocacy event took place two weeks after the failed insurrection in Brasilia by far-right supporters of ex-President Bolsonaro, and analyses one specific character called ‘M’, a non-Indigenous activist at the advocacy event. ‘M’ is an interesting character who traverses the tightrope between cultural appropriation of Indigenous cultures, whilst simultaneously enacting Kineo Kitea¹ and holds some knowledge about Indigenous peoples and their struggles. However, ‘M’ demonstrates why themes of power, positionality, and agency need to be re-contextualised in our understanding of traditional social theory and Indigenists/decolonial cannons surrounding ambiguities in the mediations between solidarity advocacy and cultural appropriation. The paper does this via critically reflecting and critiquing on a series of rhetorical shorthand’s that ‘M’ perpetuates through her activism with Indigenous people, that have been amalgamated into her epistemology. Henceforth, it argues that engaging in solidarity is a positive action because Indigenous lives matter, Brazil being one of the most dangerous countries for Indigenous Environmental Defenders; ² which is upsetting because globally Indigenous peoples protect up to 80% of biodiversity. ³ Yet, as non-Indigenous Researchers and Activists, this paper shows that we must be in a constant state critical self-

reflection to our epistemological praxis during the Anthropocene. If various Indigenous sociological shorthand's continue to be disseminated without deep understandings of their implications and meanings, we're sceptical to enter a dangerous appropriation territory, of which 'M' may already be in. This means that Sociologists may unintentionally end up sewing mistrust within Indigenous communities, whom are the some of the best protectors of mother earth of which we all depend. Therefore, this paper sets out affordances and recommendations to help alleviate this potentiality in sociological research practice.

FRI9: Migration, Intersectionality and racialisation

Matteo Moraschini (University College Cork) mmoraschini@ucc.ie

Title: Political paralysis or life impossibility? An empirical perspective on political Refugees' concerns

Abstract: This research attempts to theoretically reconstruct the landscape in which international migrations and political refugees intersects with political lives and their relations to the polity/ies of origin. It attempts to do so by using a grounded theory methodology. The relations between political lives of refugees and the political situations of their countries/communities (a prefer the word "polities") of origin is an understudied but most relevant dimension of migration studies. The research has been initiated without a specific research question. It has selected the substantive population of political refugees because here relevant data can be found on the choices that is implied when we talk about forced migrations, and ultimately here a compelling theoretical account can be given of how forced migrants, perceive and manage their political existences. Thirteen interviews with political refugees and some selected autobiographies make up the corpus of data used for this research. From this corpus of data, it emerged provisionally a strong conscience of forced migrants around the "lines of impossibility" imposed on their lives by the mere fact of existing in their polity of origin. In their experience, it seems possible to argue at this theoretically embryo-like state of the research, almost every human act seems to have a political connotation: talking about life is already talking about politics. And most of the times the mere opportunity of talking about politics is forbidden: it is a "red line". The presentation aims to render this landscape of impossibility and to spark reflection on what is taken for granted from a Western perspective any time we talk about political refugees.

Robert O'Keeffe (Trinity College Dublin) okeeffro@tcd.ie

Title: Nigerian Taxi Drivers in Dublin: Racism and the Failure of Neoliberal Governmentality

Abstract: The rise in nativist populism in the US, the UK, and some EU countries has yet to enter the Overton Window of mainstream Irish politics. Despite this, there has been a consistent rise in anti-immigration protests in Ireland that have included several arson attacks on Direct Provision housing and one case of rioting and looting in Dublin. A racialised discourse has emerged that centres on the supposed threat posed by 'unvetted' male migrants to justify these actions. The State, evoking neoliberal modes of governmentality, disavows responsibility for its

role in sustaining the socio-cultural and economic environment in which such racialised attitudes emerge. Strategies to challenge racism on neoliberal terms, with its widely debunked 'colour-blind' rationalities, frame racism as an individual concern and ignore the systemic nature with its institutional and structural forms. This paper argues that under this framework anti-immigrant protests and acts of overt racist violence are inevitable.

Incorporating Essed's concept of 'everyday racism' (2002) this paper reveals a tacit minoritisation agreement between the Irish state, the media, An Garda Síochána, and wider society towards the non-white other. It does this by examining a previous example of a 'moral panic' (Gramsci, 1979) in which Nigerian taxi drivers experienced heightened discursive hostility and racialised discrimination between 2011-2015. Based on in-depth interviews with 28 Nigerian taxi drivers it examines the spatialised racisms they experience and the mechanisms in which their 'right to the city' (Lefebvre, 1991) is restricted with the creation of majority and minority spaces (Laguerre, 1999). It argues that anti-Nigerian racism is one example of the new racisms of the cultural turn that aims to legitimise racism as a reasonable concern around cultural immaturity rather than biological difference.

Calling out racism within a Eurocentric, neoliberal framework is problematic because it is appealing to a government and society that does not admit, or recognise, its role in systemic racism. It also fails to recognise the ontological (in)security (Giddens, 1991) of those left behind by hyper-globalisation and a rapidly changing society. This article argues that new frameworks should be sought that include decolonial and Freirean approaches, that highlight intersectionality, and that look to the epistemologies of the South. Racism, under the guise of the 'refugee' or 'immigration crisis', is just one crisis amongst many. If polycrisis has taught us anything it is that (neo)liberal Eurocentric approaches have failed and an alternative framework is needed.

Pooja Priya (University College Cork) ppriya@ucc.ie

Title: Exploring the placemaking strategies of the Congolese and Nigerian migrants in New Delhi: an intersectional approach.

Abstract: In the Indian migration scholarships, placemaking for migrants has been studied as finding employment, education and healthcare opportunities in the cities. These migrants are Indians and could be classified as labour or student migrants, relocating from the small towns to larger cities. New Delhi being the Nation's capital has developed as a city in infrastructure ever since the rise of neoliberalism. However, due to the pre-existence of colourism and racialisation within Indian society creating a place of belonging or social integration for these migrants has become increasingly difficult, leading them to be considered as the 'other'. This process of othering and place-making has been studied both in the Indian migration and global migration scholarships. On the contrary, the social and economic precarities of the international and racial minorities i.e. Western and Central African migrants living in Delhi are overlooked. Although there is existence of scant scholarship that studies these social precarity from a postcolonial lens, an intersectional approach is constantly omitted in it. The postcolonial lens studies how othering comprises the category of 'us' and the 'other' but neglects the categories in individual's identities such as their gender, class and race, through which othering could be intensified or lessened, as

suggested by the intersectional approach. An intersectional viewpoint could be instrumental in developing a bottom-down approach to study the placemaking mechanisms of these racial minorities which otherwise has been studied in academic scholarship from a top-down approach.

Consequently, this paper was based on the preliminary findings from the doctoral ethnographical fieldwork conducted in Delhi in 2023. It incorporates participant observations to study the involvement of Nigerian and Congolese communities in the Pentecostal Churches of South Delhi. It studies how participation in the Church has become one of the main instruments to create a place of belonging and to combat the racialisation they experience in the city at large. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with both communities to get insights on individual place-making strategies. The interviews revealed that engagement in local businesses, learning Hindi (the local language) were individual place-making strategies.

Overall, this paper aims to re-establish how ethnography can be used to study the place-making experiences of the racial minorities in India through an intersectional approach, which is overlooked in the existing broader migration scholarships.

Keywords: racialisation, othering, place-making, intersectionality, south-south migration.

Day 2 Saturday 11th May 2024

SAT1 Foreclosing the future: challenges for social theory. Social Theory Panel

Dr Diana Stypinska, (Galway University) diana.stypinska@universityofgalway.ie

Title: ‘The future without (a) future...? - On economicization and ecological rationality’

Abstract: It is often suggested that today we are living in the “end times.” Confronted by a perpetual incursion of major global crises, we increasingly find ourselves incapable of meaningfully relating to the present, let alone to the future. The forever deferred “end” throws the very idea of time out of joint. Unable to advance, our imagination retreats, with retrograde tendencies taking over both culture and politics. From incessant movie prequels and sequels, through the re-emergence of populist fascist politics, all the way to the return of Cold War rhetoric, we witness our reality becoming increasingly substituted by a string of peculiar rehashings and reunions. History, as we knew it, is no longer “made”; we strain to cling to the past, equating the future with dystopia. Crucially, this *problematique* of the fading of temporality is not new. In fact, it has got a history of its own. This presentation explores our current (a)temporal whereabouts by reflecting upon them from the perspective of their historical trajectory. It does this by revisiting the work of André Gorz—a thinker whose contributions equip us with the insights needed to confront time out of joint effectively and embrace the idea of future. The paper argues that the roots of today’s temporal malaise can be found in the process of “economicization”, which subordinated the notion of utopia to its principles, thereby nullifying it. Examining the effects of the unbridled reign of economic rationality over our imagination, it calls for a temporal intervention by means of ecological rationality.

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Ray Griffin (South East Technical University) ray.griffin@setu.ie

Title: Prescribing the future on a misdiagnosis: Unemployment Scarring, NEETs and Activation

Abstract: Labour market economics has long produced explanations of unemployment, with recent years seeing the emergence of ‘unemployment scarring’ and NEETs (not in employment, education or training) as a diagnosis of persistent or structural unemployment. These formations feed into social policy assemblages in the form of active labour market policies, prescribing training, education and internships for the long-term unemployed, with benefits made conditional to incentivise work. This theoretical-practical apparatus reacts to each crisis by anticipating specific sorts of problems – increased unemployment – and prescribing particular solutions – more activation. Any results are taken as validating the theory, whether higher structural unemployment which means that more activation is needed, or a quick return to ‘normal unemployment’ which means that activation was sufficient. This loop between economic diagnosis and social policy prescription inscribes the future with specific hopes, particularly social mobility and full employment. These are nostalgic projections of a future ‘retrotopia’, failing to acknowledge the ecological challenges. In a hopeful coda, we suggest that unemployment can be revalorised as ecologically sustainable leisure – but more pragmatically, that regulation against labour market discrimination can address unemployment.

João Nunes de Almeida (University of Glasgow) Joao.Almeida@glasgow.ac.uk

Title: The Crisis of Social Cures as the Crisis of Sociology of Indecision and Complicity

Abstract: A recurring theme in sociological research on crises involves making an excessive use of the medical roots of crisis but where Reinhart Koselleck's essay on crisis seems to have been sidelined to a superficial reading of the origins of such a concept if not completely obliterated. Contemporary sociological research thus thrives without the need of crisis genealogies, falling into the superficial use of such a concept as an empty signifier ready to trade "social cures" for social order. Yet this desire to cure “society” from crises overlooks a lesser-discussed aspect of Koselleck's essay: the eschatological roots of crisis, portraying it as a moment of decision and critique, that overcomes the superficial social remedies and endless policy recommendations. Sociology without the end of times thus risks revealing its complicity with positivistic and physiocratic knowledge in proposing solutions that seek to pre-emptively avoid crisis experiences and catastrophes as Foucault pointed out in his 77-78 lectures on security. This paper thus aim to explore the fracture between a sociological research through crisis as a moment of decision and contemporary sociological accounts of social cures that can only promise the endless crisis of capital.

SAT2: Mothering Futures

Maynooth University: Ciara Bradley, Roisín Freeney, Orlagh Woods, Tanya Cassidy (Maynooth University & Kathleen Lonsdale Institute of Health Research)

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Title: “Do you think Mammy’s alright?”- A interdisciplinary exploration of themes of Irish Motherhood in Anne Enright’s The Green Road.

Abstract: Anne Enright’s 2015 novel the Green Road spans forty years in the lives of the Madigan family of West Clare, the matriarch of which, Rosaleen, has summoned her offspring home for Christmas with the news that she is selling the family home. This paper will attempt to place the three depictions of motherhood in the novel in a historical and cultural context to hopefully expose how the social construction of Irish motherhood can have a presence in the perceptions, particularly self-perception of generations of mothers. Historically the construction of Irish Motherhood in our culture has a very particular legacy, placed, as it was as, as part of a post- colonial, nation building project that was both extremely catholic, conservative and hostile to modernity. In The Green Road confronts the idealisation of the Irish mother as the domestic, backbone of family and therefore society’s survival but also explores the idea of ‘Mother Ireland’ being the embodiment of the nation itself and representing all that this ideal entails for the immigrants’ notions of hearth and home. This paper will come from an approach that is based in literary criticism and cultural sociology. This is an important endeavour as the voice of the Irish Mother is one that has been muted in Irish Culture historically constantly described, represented and even impersonated by male entertainers and artists.

Ciara Bradley, ciara.bradley@mu.ie

Title: The experiences of Traveller women of pregnancy and birth during the COVID-19 pandemic

Abstract: The Traveller community in Ireland experience significant health inequalities, compounded by, the social determinants of health including, poor accommodation conditions, poverty, racism and discrimination (AITHS, 2010). Maternal and perinatal outcomes for Traveller women are exceptionally poor with higher rates of miscarriage, stillbirth, perinatal death, and infant death. The Covid-19 pandemic created further challenges for Traveller women who were pregnant and in early motherhood. International data highlighted the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on minority ethnic groups, including Travellers and Roma. Specific rules were imposed on service users of the maternity system regarding how they engage with services throughout their pregnancy and how they give birth.

This paper presents the findings of research conducted in partnership with Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre, a leading national Traveller organisation. The research explored the lived experiences of Traveller women of pregnancy and birth during the Covid-19 pandemic. The findings share this experience and also highlights particular challenges and issues which are still experienced by Traveller women and their partners post-pandemic.

Tanya M. Cassidy (tanya.cassidy@mu.ie)

Thinking about mother futures: Imagining hope and potentiality informed by memories and experiences in the past and present

Thinking about futures needs to also consider imaginings of aspects of the future (such as hope and potentiality) in the present but is also informed by memories and experiences of the past in the present and in the imaginings of the future. Anthropologists for more than a century have been thinking about mothering as part of gifting, and how this relates to exchange relations. Most recently, theorists like Marilyn Strathern argue that these relations are linked to social organisational effects, and that we need to explore these exchanges as relations, in all their temporal, social and cultural complexities. This brief discussion will explore how a Sociology of Hope has been discussed in the past and could be applied to the maternal and futures.

SAT3: Civil Society/State Relations in an age of Political Polarisation

Chris O’Connell, Governance and Civil Society Space Advisor, Trócaire

Title: A Struggle for Rights and Freedom: The Importance of Civil Society Space

Abstract: Despite national and sectoral variations, the available evidence indicates that civil society space is being systematically closed globally, with implications for human rights, humanitarian response, development and peacebuilding. This trend is driven by global economic, geopolitical and security factors but is shaped by national contexts and power relations, and often catalysed by key events. The precise mechanisms employed to close the operating space of civil society can be broadly classified as: legislative, administrative, judicial, financial, technological and extra-legal. While these methods – typically employed in combination – affect a broad range of actors, research indicates that attacks and restrictions fall most heavily on the marginalised and those engaged in ‘political’ struggles centred on land, environmental, indigenous and human rights. This finding points to the importance of establishing and employing a clear definition of ‘civil society’. Trócaire is a multi-mandate organisation that works in a range of countries, all of which experience some level of restricted civil society space. As such, to fulfil its mission Trócaire takes a broad view of civil society, an approach which necessitates balancing a range of internal and external needs and risks, largely on a case-by-case basis. This approach, however, is increasingly challenged by the global tendency toward restricting civil society space, indicating the need for fresh thinking and research. This paper represents a preliminary step on this journey. One clear key finding is the importance of local mobilising capacity to engage in struggles to resist restrictions and defend rights and freedoms, including countering stigmatising narratives. Drawing on examples from Trócaire’s work, the paper argues in favour of prioritising five key principles: localisation, flexibility, alliances, commitment and solidarity. Moving toward such an approach, however, requires engaging not only with medium-term ‘active’ risks (to operations, funding, security) but

also long-term ‘passive’ risks (to reputation, moral authority, overall mission), and balancing or prioritising issues of needs and rights when responding to threats to civil society space.

Keywords: Civil Society, Civil Society Space, Rights.

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Title: ‘We’re not right wing or racist but...’: far right myth and distributive conflict in asylum seeker related protest in the Republic of Ireland, November 2022-July 2023.

Abstract: The Republic of Ireland has seen numerous protests around asylum seeker accommodation since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, with noted involvement of the far right. But what are protestors actually demanding? And how do they feel about far right involvement in such protests? This article is based on quotes found in 144 media articles, published between November 2022 and July 2023, from people protesting in support of and against asylum seeker accommodation in the State. It finds that among those protesting against such accommodation, complaints about security, access to services and lack of consultation predominate. Nevertheless, many such protestors repeat common far right racist and xenophobic tropes while simultaneously distancing themselves from the far right. Similarly, those supporting asylum seeker accommodation reject the far right while recognizing the validity of many of the structural and political complaints of those who protest against asylum seekers. Based on this analysis, we suggest that such apparently dichotomous thinking among protestors deserves further research scrutiny particularly with regard to difficulties in disentangling far right inspired racist and xenophobic tropes from legitimate grievances around structural and resource issues.

Keywords: Immigration, Ireland, asylum seekers, protest, far right.

Nessa Ní Chasaide (Maynooth University) nessa.nichasaide.ie

Title: Challenging Ireland’s corporate tax games? Options from ‘from above’ and ‘below’

Abstract: Inequality of taxation is a polarising question of our times. Low taxation of wealthy individuals and global corporations has revealed major inequalities in wealth accumulation as a result of the tax avoidance of globally mobile actors (EU Tax Observatory, 2024). While unprecedented tax reforms have occurred globally in recent years, they appear stalled and less successful than claimed (Garcia-Bernardo et al, 2022). This paper focuses on the case of corporate tax avoidance via Ireland. It outlines the key dimensions of Ireland’s corporate tax policy and how they have been adjusted over time to sustain both ‘real’ and ‘artificial’, or tax driven, foreign investment into Ireland by U.S. corporations. The paper shows that, in the case of Ireland, political change on corporate tax policy has historically been imposed ‘from above’, catalysed by powerful states or global institutions. Signs that civil society ‘from below’ has prompted certain changes in Ireland are evident. However, these challenges have been hindered by what the article terms ‘infrastructural power’ (Braun 2018, Pistor, 2023). This is defined as corporate power operating at a distance, through every-day, state-corporate interactions in the

market. This form of power is held in place in Ireland through the opacity of corporate decision-making in interaction with technical tax rules, within a national context of sophisticated public-private tax administration and policy making. Challenging this form of power is extremely difficult. The paper proposes two routes forward, one analytical and one organisational. Firstly, an analytical project focused on the industrial implications of disentangling Ireland's 'real' and 'artificial' FDI in the context of global tax reforms. And secondly, the formation of a political alliance between labour and global justice actors alongside reform-minded states.

Keywords: global inequality, taxation, tax avoidance, Ireland, civil society.

John Brown, (Maynooth University) john.brown@mu.ie

Title: Radical-left governments and popular sector relations: Tensions and contradictions in the building of Venezuela's Communes

Abstract: Following a speech given by former Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez just before his death in 2013, a state policy based on the formation of communes was advanced. Thousands of local communities promoted and undertook the organization of communes which were understood to represent a vital step toward building "Socialism of the 21st Century." The communes took a range of differing forms, with varied relations to the state. Some focused on the construction of autonomous spaces of decision-making and economic production for the inhabitants of the space, free from political party or state interference. Other communes, however, shared close relationships with the ruling party as participants focused on gaining access to government programs. While international attention (academic, media, political) has focused on state repression of middle-class, elite, and opposition civil society spaces in Venezuela, there remains a major blind spot in analysing the relationships between a supposedly radical-left governing party and popular sector spaces of organizing. Drawing on data gathered from interviews with commune organisers in urban and rural Venezuela, this article explores the relationships between the (varying forms of) communes and a state whose branches are dominated by Chávez' party – and whose objective has been the capture/control of the communes. Such efforts to limit the autonomous spaces and democratizing potential of the local experiments in grassroots participation have triggered differing responses from the communes, ranging from contestatory street mobilizations to quiescence. In turn, varied responses by the communes have fostered a range of state/party responses, including attempts to co-opt spaces, foster internal divisions and parallel "loyal" communes, as well as the jailing and physical repression of commune organisers.

Keywords: Venezuela, communes, Chavismo, autonomy

SAT4: Critical Problems in Public, Social Theory Panel

Aslı Kandemir (University of Birmingham) a.kandemir@bham.ac.uk

Title: In Spatiality of Populism: Discourse of Tolerance as Symbolic Border

Abstract: Considering Louis Althusser’s education as an ideological state apparatus and David T. Goldberg’s racial neoliberalism, this paper discusses that education policy in Britain is instrumentalised in discourse-making for ‘othering’. The government self-responsibilises ‘ethnic’ youth for governance within the ideological (populist) project of the right. Populism in Britain has intensified in the discursive realm over the last two decades and prevailed into the education policy to redeem the state’s failing hegemony and legitimate its (in)effective governance. To achieve it, right-wing populist discourse has perpetually presented a ‘problem’ or a ‘threat’, facing ‘the people’ to be socially fragmented due to self-segregation of ‘the Other’. Hence, it has re-imagined the nation, re-defined ‘deservingness’ to be part of the nation, and relied on education policy and practice to appropriate children and young people as future ‘deserving’ citizens. Transforming into a discursive practice, populism seeks and finds its spatiality to be operational in a material form through the promotion of former ‘Fundamental British Values (FBVs)’ and current ‘British Values’. Therefore, this chapter aims to respond to three key questions: 1) how is populism effective in the instrumentalisation of FBV discourse as a governing tool within education policy, 2) how are young people shaped through meaning-making of ‘appropriate citizen’ and ‘ideal student’ within the FBV narrative, and 3) how is tolerance constituted as a symbolic border to mark and spatialise the ‘appropriateness’ of ‘ethnic’ youth in the populist realm. Drawing on reflexive thematic analysis of a corpus of education policy documents released in Britain between 2010 and 2022, this paper argues that the value of tolerance becomes a spatiality of populism and is materialised as a symbolic border between deserving and undeserving British citizens.

Key words: Spatiality of populism, symbolic border, Fundamental British Values, tolerance

Jody Ponce (University College Cork) jpounce@ucc.ie

Title: “I feel like....”: A digital ethnography and linguistic genealogy of representations of ‘lived experience’.

Abstract: In the highly polarized experience of globalization - This article explores through digital ethnography and linguistic genealogy how ‘lived experience’ is deployed to make claims of authority and authenticity, where the phrase ‘I feel like’ transverses social and cultural boundaries and is used as a form of ‘knowledge production’. Taking a Foucauldian approach to discourse, this article introduces the work of historical linguist Anna Wierzbicka to generate a critical genealogy of this commonplace expression. Wierzbicka traces how historically ‘experience’ was understood grammatically as a noun; knowledge, skills, and expertise were gained through the ‘long experience’ of apprenticeship, education, and work. Today ‘experience’ refers more often to ‘felt experience’ – or the use of ‘experience’ as a ‘verb’, thus knowledge is produced by what an individual felt like while experiencing an event, a moment, or repeated events, generating knowledge which is unique to the individual. The term ‘lived experience’ encapsulates both ‘long experience’ and ‘felt experience’, it entwines them to create a new form of knowledge production that is highly individualised, embodied, and authoritative. My reading suggests that widespread online claims around ‘lived experience’ tend to invisibilise structures that create ‘lived experience’, leading to individualistic approaches to politics and identity which tend to be splintering and polarising.

Keywords: Lived experience, I feel like, polarisation, linguistic genealogy, digital ethnography, individualism, knowledge production, self and society, authority.

Billy Goodwin, (University College Cork) bgoodwin@ucc.ie

Title: Combatting hyperreality with Rosa's Resonance.

Abstract: On the 6th of February 2024 the former Fox News Anchor Tucker Carlson became the first Western journalist to interview Putin since the beginning of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Consequently, this paper uses this event as a means of empirically exploring the contemporary applicability of Baudrillard's concept of non-events and the ways in which said non-events play a role in 'deepening the well' of cacophonous critique within contemporary society. Additionally, this paper also seeks to show the ways in which the work of both Foucault and Baudrillard can be used in concert to give a much more robust understanding of the contemporary/digitised media landscape than would be achieved by using either theorist in isolation. Accordingly, the paper begins by addressing the idea that Baudrillard's (1977) Forget Foucault should not dissuade us from identifying the compatibilities between both theorist's work, before then going on to explore the ways in which non-events are utilised within 'regimes of truth' [the mass media] to give credence to pre-determined 'discourses of truth'. Thus, this paper will firstly seek to explore the idea that the forms of critique which arise from engagement with non-events essentially leads to what this paper considers to be a form 'pseudo-critique', or the forms of critique which have arisen through engagement with "...models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal" (Baudrillard, 1994, p.1). However, for many, hyperreality is born of alienation (Langman and Braun, 2011; Hosterman, 2013; Buchanan, 2017). Accordingly, Rosa (2019) argues that the effects of alienation can be lessened by forming positive relationships with the world by focussing on the dualistic movements of affect and emotion. Therefore, this paper will also seek to explore the idea that Rosa's (ibid) work in Resonance may provide us with the opportunity to escape the clutches of the hyperreal.

Keywords: non-events, critique, truth production, hyperreality, resonance, Baudrillard, Foucault, Rosa.

SAT5: Love, Marriage and the Family

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Title: "Trends and Patterns in Intermarriage in Ireland: 1971 to 2016"

Abstract: Using census microdata from 1971 to 2016, we document the incidence of and trends in mixed marriage within the Republic of Ireland. While rates of intermarriage have increased over time, there are significant differences across couples. The share of intermarried couples comprising of UK-Irish partnerships has declined since the mid-1990s. Irish men and women who marry out are most likely to marry UK, European and US born partners in that order. At least by 2011, there were few interethnic marriages. In terms of occupational differences, men in foreign-born and intermarried couples, particularly UK-Irish unions, have high rates of employment in professional and semi-professional occupations and in general, the highest rates of female employment were found among foreign-born couples. Mixed marriages were the most religiously diverse with Irish/Other couples most likely not to share the same religion. Across all couples, the number of couples where the man has the higher educational level appears to be in decline while the percentage of all marriages, most especially Irish and intermarried couples, where the wife is more educated than her husband has risen over time. The paper concludes by discussing how these trends are related to broader changes within Irish Society as well as changing migration patterns.

This work is part of a co-edited collection forthcoming with Palgrave Macmillan's 'Genders and Sexualities in History' series: Mixed Marriage and Mixed Relationships in Twentieth Century Ireland.

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Title: Dating experiences and perspectives among LGBTQ+ university students in Northern Ireland

Abstract: Most studies on relationship formation among university students has come out of the US specifically detailing processes around 'hook-up culture' that is tied to fraternity parties and campus social culture generally (Wade 2017). A small but growing literature has developed around how relationship formation processes might work among LGBTQ+ populations (see Reczek 2020). Despite the number of social changes in Northern Ireland, little is known about relationship formation among LGBTQ+ young people within the context of a culturally conservative and largely rural society. Moreover, no known study has examined how LGBTQ+ university students in Northern Ireland view, experience, and navigate relationships. This research addresses this gap by drawing on interviews of 25 LGBTQ+ university students studying in Belfast, Northern Ireland about their perspectives on their romantic lives. The findings shed light on both the ways that relationships are thriving while also identifying some of the challenges in forming and maintaining romantic relationships. Three primary themes emerged. First, students highlighted the unique contradictions of Belfast being both small, yet also the primary community for LGBTQ+ in Northern Ireland. Second, although students frequently discussed having had positive dating and relationship experiences, many encountered challenges with dating due to homophobia and mental health, often in terms of finding partners emotionally ready to form healthy relationships. Lastly, students discussed their experiences with safe places and how that interwove with their perspectives on forming and maintaining romantic relationships.

Meng Zhen Lim, (Meiji/ Temple University) mengzhenlim@gmail.com

Title: What if a romantic relationship can be short-term?

Abstract: The experiences of young adults in romantic relationships may be influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic and technological advancements, raising uncertainty about the future. It remains unclear whether traditional long-term romantic relationships (LTR) will remain prevalent or if short-term relationships (STR) will gain traction. Hence, we investigated how individuals perceive short-term romantic relationships in comparison to long-term ones across the UK, Japan, and Malaysia. To understand the social reality about romantic relationships, we collected data from 850 respondents in the United Kingdom, Japan, and Malaysia, with 13.53% Japanese, 59.53% Malaysian, and 26.94% British participants, 62.24% identifying as female and 36.94% identifying as male, and an age range of 18 to 41 with a mean age of 21.98. We asked respondents to describe what comes to mind when they think of these concepts. Using the structural approach of the theory of social representation, we analyzed the core values and norms of our respondents regarding these concepts. The results showed that respondents in all three countries did not associate "sex" with long-term romantic relationships. Regarding short-term romantic relationships, respondents from Malaysia and Japan indicated that sex is important, whereas respondents from the UK had other priorities in romantic love, such as fun, excitement, flings, and passion. The results suggest that there may be cultural differences in how young adults perceive the role of sex in romantic relationships. This study also provides insight into the contemporary social reality that young adults hold regarding sex and romantic love .

Ann Burke (South East Technological University) ann.burke@postgrad.wit.ie

Title: Exploring the Moral Dimensions of Pro-life Feminism in the Irish Pro-life Movement.

Abstract: This paper utilises Boltanski and Thévenot's pragmatic sociology's justifications model to reorient social movement theory towards a focus on moral justifications and actions and contributes to the emerging discussion on the insufficient attention given to morality in movements, having been considered only fragmentally since its marginalisation and then in sometimes abstract and ad hoc ways albeit with a couple of notable exceptions. The proposed model facilitates an opportunity to critically evaluate theoretical assumptions within social movement studies and critical sociology. Foregrounding the critical capacities of actors themselves and taking critiques at face value as opposed to critical sociology which sees actors as unreflexive 'cultural dopes', ensnared in historically reproduced structures of domination, pragmatic sociology's justifications model offers an innovative methodological tool which allows for a departure from understanding movements such as the pro-life movement in terms of countermovement dynamics and locates such sociological objects as analytical in their own right. The study that informs this paper involved in-depth qualitative interviews with self-identified pro-life feminists in Ireland coupled with a justificatory analysis of pro-life movement media content. Justifications analysis expands approaches to content analysis and frame analysis in response to the neglect of 'the moral dimension of public deliberation' and political claims in the public sphere and the relational dynamics originally associated with framing theory.

The study analysed the broad meanings of ethics, care, and justice generated by those who challenge what it means to be feminist.

Keywords: morality; feminism; prolife; ethics; justice; care.

SAT6: Securitization and its discontents

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Title: Facial Recognition Technology: The Expanding Security Assemblage in Irish Policing

Abstract: The recent push for adoption of facial recognition technologies (FRT) by An Garda Síochána (AGS) has been justified by the growing uncertainty around public order policing and a supposed demand for securitization (Bowden, 2021) following the Dublin riots in November 2023. Legislative mention of FRT was first introduced in Ireland as an amendment to the 2022 Recording Devices Bill. This bill expanded the rights of AGS to use of recording devices, including body-worn cameras (BWCs) and drones. The amendment was withdrawn following criticisms and concerns raised by Irish civil society. Despite claims that FRT will safeguard communities and reduce harm, Irish experts have called for a full moratorium of policing FRT arguing that it normalizes mass surveillance, erodes privacy, and exacerbates discriminatory practices against minority communities (Ferries et al., 2022). Furthermore, attaching FRT to BWCs could turn AGS ‘into roaming surveillance units’ with pervasive capabilities to scan, identify and store facial imagery of members of the public altering the way in which the public navigates public and online spaces (Bracken-Roche et al., 2023). Other potential effects of FRT include issues of bias, privacy and function creep (UNIVERSITY COLLEGE DUBLIN) Centre for Digital Policy, 2022; Bracken-Roche et al., 2023). The Department of Justice (DOJ) reopened the case for FRT again in November 2023 despite the concerns, introducing an amendment Bill accompanying the recently enacted Recorder Devices Act 2023. This paper uses qualitative thematic analysis to examine the dialogues surrounding policing FRT in Ireland, including: public and media discourse, government debates, policy documents sourced from government and government agency websites; adding to ongoing debates about police use of FRT internationally (Fussey et al., 2021; Fussey and Murray, 2019). While the analysis is ongoing, initial findings sGalway University gest that the introduction of FRT in Ireland may infringe aspects of the forthcoming EU AI Act, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (2016) and the Data Protection Act (2018). Furthermore, the parameters of FRT use remain unclear and are overshadowed by recent social issues justifying the use of FRT ‘as an essential tool’ to identify perpetrators of the recent riots (The Irish Times, 2023). Introduction of biometric technologies such as FRT is futile in the aim of achieving safer societies where debates surrounding its adoption do not go beyond limited legal safeguards (Gates, 2011: 199). This study aims to situate the Irish FRT discourse within the wider

international literature which highlights the racial and gender biases built into databases and AI (Crawford, 2014) and contests that such technologies will achieve safer societies.

Sarah Carol (University College Dublin) sarah.carol@ucd.ie & Faouzia Zeraoia (University of Jijel)

Title: The social architecture of checkpoints: the case of Palestine

Abstract: Borders constitute a timely topic all over the world. While globalization has generally fostered movement, we see that the freedom of movement has recently been impeded and excludes certain parts of the population posing an obstacle to a hopeful future. Thus, they constitute a sphere of discrimination where socio-political conflict occurs. In a recent survey, borders were named as the number one location where the Palestinian population experiences discrimination. This paper studies the explanatory power of core sociological concepts such as identity and emotion for understanding borders as instrument of surveillance. Given the importance of the topic, this project proposes to study borders from a different angle by employing state-of-the-art mixed methods. Google reviews of checkpoints across the West Bank are analysed in a quantitative and qualitative fashion to grasp the discourse on borders from a new angle. The newly created dataset contains the name of the author (Arabic, Jewish, other), the comment, the number of stars, how many people like the comment, the time point and any pictures that have been uploaded. Preliminary analyses focus on one of the main checkpoints – Qalandia, which is located outside of Ramallah. Currently, 69 reviews have been completed, whereas other checkpoints, for instance, Hizma counts 581 reviews, which we will include at later stages. First analyses show that most reviews are written by users with names of Arabic origin (67%), 15% by people with names of Jewish origin, and remaining names could not be classified or were international. People with Jewish names rate the checkpoint with significantly more stars than people with Arabic or other names. A qualitative analysis shows that safety is the main aspect addressed in those comments (e.g., “Border Protection keeps everybody SAFE”). However, some users with names of Jewish origin also give low ratings to the checkpoints. One user calls it a “terrible place”, whereas another addresses practical issues. Users with Arabic names would typically use words such as “Apartheid”, “occupation” but also mention inhumane conditions and crowdedness. Again, there are unexpected findings by name with one quarter of users with names of Arabic origin giving the full number of stars. On average, the number of stars has increased over time. More frequent reviewers give higher ratings as well.

Keywords: borders; Palestine; google reviews; mixed methods

SAT7: Education Across the Life course

Delma Byrne (Maynooth University) Delma.Byrne@mu.ie

Title: Negotiating Provision for School Choice for a Diverse and Inclusive Society

Abstract: The Department of Education in the Republic of Ireland and the Catholic Bishops agreed a process that led to the pilot Schools Reconfiguration Process in eight towns and cities. This agreed process sought to support the transfer of patronage of Catholic primary schools to

multidenominational school provision. Yet, by the end of the pilot process just two out of 63 participating schools transferred their patronage to date. While a rich literature exists relating to how families and young people negotiate school choice in the Irish context, much less understood is how provision for school choice is negotiated nationally. While the availability of school choice is frequently identified as a market based educational reform that is neoliberal in nature (Apple 2006), in the Irish context more nuance is required when reflecting on school choice. That is, the issue of school choice is not so clear cut in the Irish context as a result of the dominance of the Catholic church in the ownership and management of primary education. As it stands 88% of primary Catholic schools are under private patronage of the Catholic Church. These schools are privately owned and managed by religious denominations but publicly supported by the State. In other institutional contexts the issue of school choice has been explored in a context of neighbourhood change and gentrification (Bridge 2006; DeSena 2006; Butler, Hamnett and Ramsden 2013; Mordechay and Ayscue 2022; Roda 2023), and wider debates around public education and education reform (Brown 2010). More recently, research has considered the tensions that exist for school provision in recognising a diversity of religions and beliefs (Hemming and Hailwood 2018; Smyth et al., 2009). Other research has focus on the role of local social movement organisation (Gordon 2022) as well as religiopolitical activism (Barnes, Myers and Knight 2023) in school choice. This paper is informed by these works. This paper reports on an Irish Research Council funded research project that uses this pilot reconfiguration scheme to better understand how school choice is negotiated in contemporary Irish society. This paper employs a mixed method approach using existing quantitative data, as well as new qualitative data collection across a number of case study sites and with key stakeholders to better understand the network of forces that determine how school choice is negotiated in contemporary Irish society, and how these operate at national and local levels.

Emily Murphy (University of Limerick) Emily.murphy@ul.ie

Title: Changes in gender inequality among young people with disabilities: examining education and economic dependence in Ireland

Abstract: The employment gap in Ireland between young people with disabilities compared to young people without disabilities is among the largest gaps in Europe; and suggests those with disabilities may fall under a particularly vulnerable category of economic dependence. Prior research in the U.S. has shown disability and gender to be compounders of economic insecurity within ‘hierarchies of disadvantage’ (Maroto et al. 2019). From a social understanding of disability, society can be argued to bring about several forces of stigma and prejudice that bear directly on the chances for young people with disabilities to engage in education and employment. Phelan and colleagues’ (2008) typology of stigma and prejudice is used to frame an empirical examination of how young people with disabilities can suffer inequalities in which processes of exploitation and domination feature most prominently (“keeping people down”), by processes of norm enforcement (“keeping people in”), or by processes of disease avoidance (“keeping people away”). I draw on Irish census data between 2002 and 2016, as well as longitudinal cohort data from the Growing up in Ireland survey (GUI waves 1-4) to analyse domain changes in 1) a gender and a disability gap in educational attainment among younger cohorts; 2)

the socio-economic security of households in which a dependent child, or adult is living with a limiting physical, intellectual or mental, health issue.

Keywords: disability; inequality; education; employment; young people; social change; Ireland

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Title: The Impact of Indigenous Knowledge in Enhancing Lifelong Learning within the Marginalized Communities; the case of San Communities of Botswana

Abstract: Education and lifelong learning play a pivotal role in social and economic development of many communities including those of the Botswanan communities at the centre of this PhD project. However education systems often do not recognise the richness of the indigenous knowledge, intangible heritage and cultural practices that is core to many communities. This research with the San communities in Botswana explores how indigenous cultural knowledge acts as a form of lifelong learning that can be recognised by education and development programmes of such communities as well as the national development strategies. Lifelong learning in indigenous African communities and what can be learnt from the way knowledge is produced and shared in such communities is not well understood. The San people of Botswana hold immense reservoirs of indigenous knowledge as well as living in areas of natural resources but they are still swamped with severe socio-economic challenges (Hitchcock & Blesele, 2006). There is a huge gap in education and development within indigenous communities like the San in comparison to non-indigenous communities. Many marginalised communities are rich in indigenous knowledge, intangible heritage and cultural practices that has not been fully tapped into in order to improve the wellbeing of these communities. There is a need to focus on a transformative model of learning and development that will address the needs of African indigenous communities in a participative manner. Research on development has shown that the intervention of programmes and initiatives is affected when universal principles are applied without adopting them into the specific setting (Griffin and Miller, 2007, p. 33 as cited by Armani 2014). Therefore this research intends to explore elements of indigenous knowledge that can inform more sustainable strategies of endogenous development that originates from the global South. Community-based Participative Action Research methods of fieldtrips, group discussions and observations within the San Communities, as well as interviews with key stakeholders will be used in this research study.

Keywords: Marginalised communities, Indigenous knowledge, Intangible heritage, Cultural knowledge, Transformative learning, and lifelong learning.

SAT8: Political polarisation, policy tensions and ways forward

Kieran Allen (University)

Shifts in political cleavages in Ireland 2024

Niamh Kirk (University of Limerick)

Decolonising Ireland? Narratives of hospitality and anti-colonialism on a shared Island

Lisa Smyth, (Queens University Belfast) L.Smyth@qub.ac.uk

Title: Liberty and Solidarity : Ireland's Moral Revolution

Abstract: How can we understand the moral transformation which Ireland has undergone over the course of a century, culminating in the introduction of equal marriage for same sex couples, and the ending of its notorious abortion ban? How did this transformation occur? Does the emergence of liberal morality in the twenty-first century indicate a radical transformation in social structures? Has Ireland become a society where individual self-interest promoted by neo-liberalism has replaced the solidarities of nationalism? This paper examines the dimensions of Ireland's moral revolution, arguing that it has been underpinned by a transformation in solidarity, moving from repressive moral absolutism to a more egalitarian democratic form in the twenty-first century.

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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. While current studies do offer important insights into the Qanon phenomenon, we believe that they don't go far enough as they only offer insights on the effects of the relationship *after* the shift or fracture in the relationship, without mapping and formalising the journey to that point.

Through a feminist, relational lens and drawing on data from a digital ethnography of the Subreddit forum 'QAnonCasualties', our paper addresses the research gap above 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 more generally. 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 constantly (re)negotiate their relationships.

The paper contributes to our understanding of how family relationships and dynamics deal with and are affected by complex politically motivated conspiratorial beliefs. Its central aim is to demonstrate why Qanon can no longer be treated as a 'fringe issue' going forward, but must be considered a far-reaching social and highly politicized problem. We explore how the social and relational consequences of Qanon belief affect both individuals and communities, from the perspective of the primary social network communities of the Qanon believers, and uncover the impact such conspiratorial theories have on the lives of 'outgroup' members and their relationships with their loved ones. ThroGalway University h investigating the banality of the everyday experiences of those affected, we create space for the emergence of broader social

responses to redress what has become a wicked social problem that requires a multifaceted, holistic and empathetic approach to solving it.

SAT9: Health, Technology and Agency

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Title : Health Beyond Healthcare: Demonstrating Non-Traditional Public Sector Relevance for Population Health through University h ‘Smart D8’

Abstract: As the global urban population continues to increase, the relationship between citizen health and the built environment foregrounds itself as an increasingly critical one. However, healthcare delivery continues to be challenged by factors within, and across, domains outside of formal healthcare remit, such as chronic diseases, ageing populations, workforce shortages and unplanned emergencies. This foregrounds a necessity for public sector bodies beyond traditional healthcare remit to engage local populations for health and wellbeing solutions. While there is an increasing number of public engagement frameworks that have been formalised, their potential community applications within technological contexts are less represented — particularly within the Irish public sector landscape. This restricts the inclusion of local knowledge and perspectives within tech-driven urbanism, understanding of associated health disparities, and the identification of patterns in city planning and urban governance that could otherwise scale impact on social and economic health determinants (e.g. Balio, et al., 2022; Young and Denize, 2008). Smart D8 is a population health and wellbeing demonstrator based in the Dublin 8 region of Ireland's capital city. Connecting a diversity of public sector bodies in a consortium led by The Digital Hub Development Agency, Dublin City Council, Smart Dublin and St. James' Hospital, Smart D8 seeks to match community needs with emerging technologies to address local health and wellbeing challenges. This provides a unique testbed to trial frameworks for public engagement, offering a cross-sectoral template that reflects the multivariable nature of citizen engagement frameworks (e.g. Greenhalgh, et al., 2019; Arnstein, 1969: p.216) as well as the challenges of population health themselves. Informed by the needs identified in a survey of the local Dublin 8 community by Smart D8 in 2020, Dublin City Council's Smart City Unit is collaborating with the Science Foundation Ireland's ADAPT Research Centre for an engaged research and ethics framework. Trialling different modes of engagement to support Smart D8 pilot solutions to these community-identified needs, the public sector landscape is intermediated in response to alternative service delivery models, their impacts on social and economic determinants and, extendedly, their limitations. Consequently, cross-organisational challenges are identified and addressed, an ethics and data governance framework and best practice are embedded from the start in pilot projects, and the results of the pilots will be evaluated to establish their potential to address some of the

Keywords: population health, wellbeing, innovation, demonstrator, community, testbed

Harriet Wilkinson (Maynooth University) harriet.wilkinson@mu.ie

Title: From ‘Old Wives Tales’ to Digital Trackers- The shifting social imaginaries of menstruation in Ireland.

Abstract: Menstruation, previously a hidden and “unspeakable” physiological process has quickly become an object of cultural, social and political contest. Until recently, coping with the menstrual cycle has been highly individualised, falling within the remit of medical advice, limited educational interventions or commercial interests including digital tracking technologies. To date, there have been no sociological studies of menstrual ‘management’ in Ireland that demonstrate how the process of menstruation is socially constructed, culturally framed, politically situated, and ultimately lived as a specific physiological experience that resonates across the life course.

I advance a research agenda on menstrual ‘management’ that explains the nexus between knowledge, meaning, affect and emotional work across generations and in peer networks to discover the impact of forces that politicise, commercialise, and digitise menstruation. I argue that aspects of gendered progress are at risk especially where illiberalism and right-wing populism demand a retrogression in access to sexual education and reproductive rights (Vida 2019). The power of cross generational dynamics in shaping how women and girls frame their embodiment as well as their sexual and reproductive lives is a dynamic force that can tell us much about the ‘stickiness’ of gender cultural stereotypes, and indicates sources of resistance, creativity and change in how we ‘do gender’ in Irish society.

Menstrual management is understood as operating on three levels: at the subjective micro level of individual management, the meso level of kinship and peer dynamics and at the macro level of cultural, institutional, and commercial framings including technological management. These levels interact to produce a particular social imaginary, a set of values, institutions, and symbols through which menstruation is experienced, regulated, commodified, digitized and contested. This paper will provide a contextualizing framework that maps shifts in medical advice, cultural representations around menstruation and actors/interests mobilizing on menstrual inequity and stigma. Menstruation is situated in the terrain of everyday experiences to assess it as a site of stigma but also of resistance. A sociological investigation of menstruation, perceived by many as a mundane, invisible, and shameful experience, offers a valuable insight into the realities of both gendered embodiment and gendered social change in Ireland.

Keywords: menstruation, embodiment, gendered social change.

Elena Cristina Pislariu (Universidade Complutense Madrid) elenacpi@ucm.es

Title: “Mapas locos”: the recovery of agency from surveillance of mental institutions.

Abstract: In this paper I will focus on analysing the “crazy maps” as a tool for the agency of people with psychiatric diagnoses. Biomedical institutions end up imposing methods of “healing” that are highly influenced and constructed from normativity. Besides, their intention is to get the patients back into the cycle of hyper-productivity. For the case study, I focus on an approach that has been taken in Spain, from crazy collectives called “crazy maps”. These crazy maps aim to give a guide of support and help to the affected people, which allows them not to depend on

institutions and to find other ways to wellbeing. They are focused on having a network of support and collective help by the people in these circles (who in many cases, having gone through the same situations, are of great help thanks to their perspective). Through this creation exercise, on one side, the person can learn to identify what are the triggers of a crisis, what things they like to avoid in such a situation, what kind of things can help them, etc. In this way, a manual is created with guidelines that allows both the affected person and their environment to know how to cope with these moments of discomfort in an autonomous way. Therefore, on the one hand, personal agency is recovered, while at the same time the patient's identity is not constrained by social and institutional expectations. This makes it possible to create a future where mental health can be coped with through self-management, affection, and collectivity.

15:45-17:15

Panels and Venues: SAT10: SE010 SAT11: SE011 SAT12: SE012

SAT10: The Sociology and Political Economy of Work

Amy Healy (University of Limerick) Amy.Healy@mu.ie Sean O'Riain (Maynooth University) Sean.Oriain@mu.ie

Title: The mean side of lean: work organisation, gender and workplace abuse'

Abstract: Adverse behaviour experienced at work is associated with damage to both physical and mental health. The greater exposure of women to these adverse behaviours is an important dimension of everyday gender inequality. This research explores how gender, work organisation and abuse interact. We are predicting the likelihood of experiencing threats, violence, harassment/bullying and unwanted sexual attention while working across the EU-15 from 1995-2021.

Methods: Our research uses Latent Class Analysis with EU-15 data from the European Working Conditions Survey 1995 – 2021 to build “work regimes” related to work organisation with variables for: working time, pay, opportunities to learn, control mechanisms, and level of worker autonomy. We produced four standard types of work organisation - Lean production, Discretionary learning, Taylor and Simple – and six variants – Lean pressure, Lean extreme, Learn pressure, Learn extreme, Simple pressure, and Simple extreme. “Pressured work” variants are characterised by relatively more intensive control mechanisms than related “standard” work regimes. “Extreme work” variants combine pressured work with non-standard pay and hours, (see Ó Riain and Healy (2023) for in-depth description of analysis and findings).

Using logistic regression, we then predicted the likelihood of experiencing threats, violence, harassment/bullying and unwanted sexual attention while working based on the interaction of gender and work organisation controlling for age, contract type, occupation, sector, region of Europe, and year.

Findings: Experiences of adverse behavior while working are more likely in Lean production jobs and variants of work organisation that are “extreme” (i.e. Simple extreme, Learn extreme, and Lean extreme). Women are more likely to experience abuse or other adverse behaviours at work. However, when predicting experiences of work-based abuse and adverse behaviour, gender and

work organisation interact; men and women's likelihood of experiencing different types of abuse varies across work regimes. Across all types of abuse, the work regimes Lean and its variants (Lean pressure and Lean extreme) are “riskier” for women. For men, Lean and the extreme regimes - Simple extreme, Learn extreme, and Lean extreme - are consistently more risky than other work regimes.

Sasha Noonan (Technical University of the Shannon) Sasha.Noonan@tus.ie

Title: ‘Becoming and being a Social Profession: how the sociology of professions can those support those in the social professions to become agents of influence and change in and for their professions’

Abstract: Social professions (Banks, 2004) in Ireland are in a time of transition as they navigate their way through the twists and turns of becoming a profession. Being a full-time endeavour, education and training, professional associations, legal protection, and a code of ethics (Wilensky, 1964) are all significant milestones for social work, social care work, youth work and community work in recent times. To gain a better understanding of these allied professions and the similar challenges and opportunities emerging from the social, political, and economic context they occupy, I suggest looking at the development of these practice-based professions through the sociology of the professions (Evetts, 1999, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2011, 2012, Friedson, 1994, McDonald, 1995). Looking back at constructions of the concept profession is useful (Devlin, 2012) along with reflecting on ideas related to professionalisation and professionalism. This approach provides a starting point with various perspectives supporting an analysis of where professions are today and how they may develop in future. This has never been more pertinent as ‘the conditions of trust, discretion and competence which historically have been deemed necessary for professional practice are continually being challenged, changed or regulated’ (Evetts, 2005 p. 2). Analysis, as suggested here, also supports a consideration of agency amongst practitioners in these professions, how they influence and shape the structures they are accountable to, address challenges, for example how they communicate their work to policy makers and funders, and finally, how they understand their own professional identity. In my Doctoral research I spoke to 6 youth workers about their perspectives on professional youth work and draw from the sociology of the professions, specifically the concept of professionalism, when analysing how youth workers understand their role and agency in shaping immediate and future constructions of their practice as a profession. Quite often this analysis is done separately in the respective social professions (McHugh, 2020), which is a starting point, but I suggest social professionals are stronger together. Comparing and contrasting the path of each one using the lenses provided by the sociology of the professions and learning from each can, I propose, build stronger, more sustainable working relationships whilst empowering and informing social professionals to be agents of influence and change in their own professions.

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Title: Types of feminine subjectivities in modern nightclubs

Abstract: This paper explores the types of feminine subjectivities that are present within nightclubs by using Foucault's framework (1982) on the subject and power. The paper (and wider PhD project it is based upon) explores themes of agency, identity, subjectivity and governmentality to analyse the power structures that operate in the night time economy (NTE), reflecting the themes of the 'Framing the Future' section of the conference.

The music reverberates around the nightclub. Neon lights are flashing. The atmosphere is charged with dancing bodies as scents of sweet cocktails and earthly beer fill the air. On the dance floor, her *hyper-sexualised femininity* is evident as she adorns high heels, a short skirt, low-cut top, fake tan, makeup, false lashes and styled hair (Griffin *et al.*, 2013). Standing at the bar, laughing and swearing is the *phallic girl* (McRobbie, 2009), who engages in stereotypically masculine behaviour, showing that she is one of the lads. Sitting in a booth in a dark corner is a group of women sipping drinks, displaying *appropriate femininity*. They attempt to navigate a conflicting dichotomy of maintaining respectability while signalling that they are up for a good time (Bailey, Griffin and Shankar, 2015). In the smoking area, a woman is challenging a man who has sexually harassed her, displaying a *feisty femininity* (Gunby *et al.*, 2020) that surrounds the notion of non-compliance, resistance, and refusal of the male dominated power relations that can impact women's enjoyment of the NTE.

These four types of feminine subjectivity are most common amongst the literature on women in the NTE. From my review of the literature, it appears that feminine subjectivities can intersect with one another, with women performing and flowing between one or more subjectivities at a time. This can be viewed as positive, in that women embody their own ideas of femininity, suggesting that although they fit into the idea of one type of feminine subjectivity, women are increasingly creating their own meaning and definition of femininity. However, I argue it can also be viewed from the perspective that women must engage in continuous emotional labour and stress to navigate the contradictory nature of the NTE, depending on the circumstance. There is a lack of women's experiences in the NTE in an Irish context, and as a result, a lack of research of feminine subjectivities within Irish night life. My PhD aims to fill this gap.

Mary P. Murphy (Maynooth University) mary.p.murphy@mu.ie

Title: Navigating tensions between care income proposals in eco-social welfare policy proposals

Abstract: Framing strategies of the welfare state are an important part of political and policy processes that seeks to transform or reinforce gender inequality in care work. A primary challenge and obstacle to progressive and proactive policy-making aimed at addressing gender inequality in the private sphere is the underlying focus on productivist work at the centre of contemporary welfare rationales advancing economic over social outcomes.

Welfare states have evolved through projects of decommodification and recommodification with participation in productivist employment at the centre of policy to address gender inequalities, with less focus on gendered redistribution of social reproduction or care work. This paper examines the potential of eco-social welfare strategies that encourage gender equal participation in caregiving and others forms of socially valued work and presented as forms of Care Income. All forms of such proposals require flanking proposals such as those anticipated

in the EU's Work Life Balance Directive. In this context the paper examines their potential to promote a more gender equal sharing of care.

The various proposals for Care Income range across conditional and non-conditional universal basic incomes and likely have different potential to impact on the division of paid work and caregiving among individuals of varying socioeconomic backgrounds, ethnicities, races, or castes and as such may have different relevance across the globe. They also differ in that some proposals encompass enabling statutory or societal institutions while others are stand-alone income supports. Yet, in the context of wide interpretation of and framing of eco-social care as care for and about humanity and the planet there is opportunity to converge on the need to recognise, value and support social reproduction and care work. Such global framing increases capacity to contribute to a degenderisation of care.

SAT11: State capacity: European, national and local perspectives Chair: Nessa Ni Chasaide SE011

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The Imperative of state capacity in addressing polycrises: a comparative analysis of wicked problem management in Europe

The 21st century has presented the global community, particularly Europe, with a series of complex challenges, most notably the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2008 financial crisis. Characterized by their multidimensional, interrelated, and ambiguous nature, these "wicked" problems pose significant obstacles to understanding and resolution. This paper investigates the critical role of state capacity in effectively managing such crises, focusing on the success rates and recovery velocities of European states post the 2008 economic downturn and the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic in 2019. State capacity is delineated as a state's proficiency in establishing and enforcing collectively binding norms, encompassing four crucial dimensions: extractive capacity, public administration efficiency, the ability to provide basic public services, and the development of a robust informational infrastructure.

Employing qualitative comparative analysis, this study assesses the influence of various factors on the efficacy with which countries have navigated the financial crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic. Through this assessment, it then identifies the necessary conditions for a successful management of the wicked problems.

Given the inevitability of facing further wicked problems and polycrises, which will impact diverse societal facets, this research elucidates the essential aspects of state functionality that require enhancement for the effective mitigation of future challenges. Through its insights, the paper contributes to a deeper understanding of the indispensable role of state capacity in crisis management and resilience building within the European context. This study also illustrates that the concepts and frameworks of "wicked problem" and "state capacity" give us a considerable analytical power to understand polycrisis in the society.

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Title: Growth models and futures in Ireland's Political Economy

Abstract: One, dominant, framing of the path to the future is through the lens of economic growth, and in particular ‘growth models’. In Ireland, the most obvious leading force behind that growth is foreign direct investment, to the extent that some have argued that Ireland is an ‘FDI led growth model’ (Bohle and Regan).

While FDI is no doubt central to the Irish economy, this paper argues that trends in the quantity or character of FDI cannot explain key elements of Irish economic development and its societal consequences. In order to understand the variety of Ireland cycle of ‘crises’ and ‘recoveries’ it is necessary to examine the interaction of a variety of socio-economic ‘projects’, that offer different versions of the future to different parts of the society.

Having assessed the ebbs and flows in the recent history of Ireland’s political economy, the paper then reflects on why the social order is so striking in its ability to recover from crises, but also to reproduce them. Finally, the paper considers what kinds of ‘futures’ are available in a political economy and society that lurches between ‘recoveries’ and ‘crises’.

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Title: Urban space as contested space: the struggle to make and sustain liveable neighbourhoods in Dublin

Abstract: At least some of the current housing crisis in Ireland is attributable to a decades long retrenchment of the state from its role as a housing provider, compounded by the neglect of housing estates within its remit and the privatisation of much of the existing housing stock. Over the years, as social housing became residualised, many urban housing estates fell into a cycle of decline.

This paper interrogates the liveability and lifeworld of deprived urban neighbourhoods, arguing that the vicissitudes of the external environment amplify a preoccupation with home as shelter, safety and security. Enforced privatisation manifests as an “inward orientation” that has implications for associational life something that has been exacerbated during and in the aftermath of the pandemic. It also raises issues about the decline in neighbourhood social infrastructure (Klinenberg 2018). On the other hand, residents also manage to generate resonance across social, material and existential axes (Rosa 2019), by drawing on an emotional rootedness in their locality, history and heritage, and the desire to sustain community against all odds.

This paper draws on a data set accumulated over four decades from national projects investigating quality of life in social housing in Ireland (3 waves of study); European comparative projects; local collaborative projects on the creative practices of home-making, and a 2023 exploratory project on creating a dashboard for residents’ of an inner-city Dublin neighbourhood. I offer an empirically grounded account that centres theorisations of home in understanding how community is achieved, sustained and/or eroded by urban policy-making.

SAT12: Digital Futures

Eric Deibel (Maynooth University)

STS, AI and the Social Contract AI

This paper is about the social contract and Artificial Intelligence (AI), and it proposes an approach derived from Science and Technology Studies (STS). STS can be seen as a relatively consistent approach to social contract theorizing, whether as Winner's technical constitution, Latour's nonmodern constitution or Jasanoff's bioconstititionalism, or otherwise. Each of these revolves around related but specific sociological styles with a clear theoretical link to the social contract. Developing the perspective in the context of AI is useful as it demonstrates the need to remain detached from the superimposition of moralistic terms on AI, like *responsible AI*, *open AI*, *constitutional AI* and so on. The goal is to create a forward-looking approach, one that seeks to acknowledge the need to remain detached while incorporating and thinking across a wider diversity of experimental settings.

These settings, thereby, remain within the realm of STS, as rooted in debates around the sociology of scientific knowledge and the subsequent wave of laboratory studies. These were sociological studies that sought to understand the persuasiveness, the ability to circulate and the disruptiveness of science and technology. On the one hand, this points to how each setting is sociologically specific and should be investigated accordingly, also in AI. On the other hand, the emphasis on social contract theory is not external to STS, it should be understood in terms of the "ambivalence" of its own democratic and political theory.

In sum, it is argued that a perspective is needed wherein not only artefacts are political and ambivalent (invoking the titles of two papers that shaped the field, by Winner and Woolgar respectively). AI shows how today STS has gotten heavily invested in its governance and, by extension, the relation between power and knowledge that it set out to critique. The aim of the paper is, therefore, methodological; pointing towards a detached perspective that, while theoretical, retains its ability to establish proximity to its cases, as a sociology that is able to examine AI as at the same time responsible and disruptive, open and opaque, trustworthy and persuasive, "human-centric" and allied with dubious nonhumans.

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Title: A new 'world of information': shifting parameters of power at the dawn of the dataistic episteme

Abstract: We live in interesting times. A turbulent twentieth century that appeared to conclude with the 'end of history' has been followed by decades of conflict and crises prompting a reevaluation of what we thought we already knew. Accumulating uncertainties and emergencies are accompanied by accelerating technological developments, all of which are contributing to new forms of power and governance. It is these new forms, their aspirations and applications, that are the subject of this presentation.

Drawing from his forthcoming book 'From Atoms to Algorithms' Dr Hewson combines Foucauldian theory with a unique epistemic analysis to interrogate shifting targets and strategies of power in the modern era. Moving swiftly through 'Atomistic' and 'Mechanistic' epistemai, the presentation focuses on the contemporary shift from 'Organic' conceptions of

reality and how we are governed within it to ‘Dataistic’ conceptions. Related to, but ultimately different from forms of power outlined by Foucault, Dataistic targets and technologies of control are founded upon the growing reconceptualization of our reality (and ourselves) in terms of pure information. Whereas disciplinary power seeks to eliminate risk, and governmental to manage it, Dataistic power draws upon an unprecedented and accumulating collection of data to perpetually, often surreptitiously, minimise risk. This new way of conceiving and conducting populations potentiates an exponential, inescapable efficiency that promises/threatens to govern all aspects of our lives.

Referring to artificial intelligence, social credit and management of the recent COVID-19 pandemic, the presentation contrasts new Dataistic practices of power with those deployed by preexisting modalities. Looking to the future, it explores the potential for these new forms of power to be adapted to, and appropriated by, existing biopolitical projects, or to protect and produce life in entirely new ways.

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Title: ‘Digital Twins and their potential use in democratising urban futures’

Abstract: Today’s sustainability and urbanization challenges call for more democratic processes, thus requiring us to explore alternative future planning methods. Digital twins may provide a useful tool to conduct citizen engagement and public consultations to visualise the impact of different policy interventions, thus informing future planning decisions. Usually, they are defined as virtual replica of any physical asset(s), system(s) and process(es) targeting a bidirectional information exchange between them throughout their lifecycle (European Commission, 2020; Shahat et al., 2021). Digital twins are currently positioned as a cutting-edge technology for people under the Europe’s Digital Decade framework with growing applications in city management, infrastructure planning, traffic modelling, and climate change (Digital Europe, 2021a, 2021b; European Commission, 2020, 2021; Government of Ireland, 2018). This paper is based on a systematic literature review of research articles on urban digital twins published over the last two decades as well as is informed by our analysis of existing examples from other international cities.

Our analysis indicates towards likely use of digital twin technology for deployment of AI-driven 3D city models, which could further be simulated with future ‘what-if’ policy scenarios to understand city dynamics in real-time (Caprari et al., 2022). A potential gamified version of these urban digital twins can then be harnessed to create user-friendly, interactive, and immersive experiences (Deng et al., 2021). Several case studies exist which explore the use of participatory digital twins to bridge the gap between target users and decision-makers. For example, the city of Herrenberg in Germany employed an immersive digital twin visualization platform by integrating volunteered geographic datasets, mobility simulations and wind flow analysis for a public participatory process (Dembski et al., 2020). Similarly, several Dutch cities are translating their publicly available open datasets into a user-friendly 3D web-interface, proven useful during public meetings (Ávila Eça de Matos et al., 2022).

In our study, we are examining emerging uses of digital twins in the Irish context by collaborating with several Dublin city partners and exploring potential ways to employ them as participatory

tools for making city futures more humane and the decisions about our city futures more democratic (Dhingra & Kerr, 2024). Given how contentious and technocratic current city planning processes are, and how tokenistic public consultations can be, any tools that are better informed by robust datasets, easily understood 3D visualizations, and that can enable more dialogic engagement between city planners, public representatives, and citizens are worth exploring.

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Title: Resilience through Resistance: Digital Sociology as Necessarily Technoskeptic

Abstract: This is the 33rd year of the World Wide Web. In that generation, the long-discussed ‘information age’ has been steadily set aside for the ‘network society’ (Castells, 2010; van Dijk, 2010), and we are now some years into the reign of the ‘digital age’ as the term of choice. ‘Digital’ is a slippery adjective in the social sciences – it seems to play a role similar to that of the formerly ubiquitous ‘cyber’ and ‘virtual’. The emergence of ‘digital’ arguably coincides with the growth of new, specifically social, media and its normalization as a realm for social inquiry. Digital sociology is now well established as a subfield, at least nominally (Lupton, 2015; Daniels, Gregory and Cottom, 2017; Marres, 2017). But in contemporary contexts of deep mediatization (Couldry and Hepp, 2013), why distinguish digital sociology from other social inquiry? While there are more holistic understandings of digital sociology as denoting current efforts towards ‘live methods’ in highly mediated and deeply mediatized contexts (Back, 2012; Selwyn, 2019), such understandings seem somewhat marginalized by the constant press of new tools and new developments – of ‘innovations’ that are claimed to demand specialized study. I argue here that the marginalization of the holistic understanding of digital methods is due to processes of technological capture whereby interests external to academia proper redirect its practices and subject matters to suit those interests. To demonstrate such processes, I trace some historical threads of political science and communication studies. In their earliest years and disciplinary origins, such work was done by sociologists and indeed was sociology. Yet in both cases, developments in methods and practices that suited the nexus of government and business drove such work towards scales and topics that eventually led to the emergence of disciplinary distinctions and barriers. Only now, a hundred years later and in light of pressing need, is there a call and mood for some reconciliation and reintegration (cf. Hepp, 2022). To avoid risking the repetition of that capture and fission, I argue further that sociology writ large should embrace the holistic view of digital methods noted above – that digital sociology is not about advancing methods per se, but rather about revivifying social values and approaches in contemporary contexts. I also argue that the subfield now so named should rather be understood as that perpetual subset of social inquiry which engages most immediately with technological change and its impacts on social structure, societies, and the lived experiences of individuals. That subset of inquiry should be jealously guarded as properly within the remit of sociology, so that we may at first hand study the emergence of tomorrow’s societies and do our best to keep the pace, and better navigate the institutional and structural changes of immediate import for the discipline and for academia as a whole.