



### **Popular Culture in Ireland:**

### From Leprechauns to Celtic Tigers

**UNH Course Number:** CUL331

Subject Area: Cultural Studies, Sociology, English Lang. & Literature, Geography, Anthropology

**Level:** 300

**Prerequisites:** None.

Language of Instruction: English

Contact Hours: 45

Credits: 3

#### **Course Description**

There are many globally recognized and perceived images or stereotypes of Ireland and Irish culture, ranging from a mystical green rural landscape to strong traditions in music, dance, sport, folklore and literature. These images are believed to have given rise to an attendant Irish way of life that is characterized as religious, relaxed, fun loving and welcoming, as well as by the charming leprechaun, crafty peasant and drunken Irishman. In order to explore the origins and significance of such popular images, this course will deconstruct the artistic and political 'creation' of these national stereotypes and how they affect, and are challenged by, contemporary Irish culture and identity, particularly in the wake of recent immigration.

You will read and analyze seminal texts by W.B. Yeats (*Cathleen Ni Houlihan*) and James Joyce (*The Dead*) to discuss the creation of an Irish imagery and how it is contested over time. These two texts and a short introduction to the creation and remit of the Abbey Theatre will aid a discussion of the explicit influence art has had on Irish politics. Furthermore, you will explore the role of Ireland's national sport (GAA) and the dominant Catholic religion that are paramount to an understanding of the significance of place, space and community structures in Irish culture.

To gain an insight into the impact of historical events and figures and how they are memorialized in contemporary Ireland, you will create Google maps that highlight and discuss the iconography of Dublin's architecture, street names, bridges, monuments and statues. You will also explore the contradictions between past and present representations of Irish culture by conducting small research projects on the 'St. Patrick's (day) Festival', the 'Festival of World Cultures' in Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, 'Féile an Phobail: Festival of the People', in West Belfast and the Rose of Tralee festival in Co. Kerry. This section will include a discussion on Irish music and Riverdance.

The Celtic Tiger, the name given to Ireland's unprecedented economic development and its subsequent effects on the built environment are discussed in parallel with the rapid and contentious transformation of Irish culture from primarily rural to urban. Finally, you will conduct independent group research on sub-cultures and groups that are present but veiled (segregated) in the margins of contemporary Irish society such as the Irish Traveling community, homeless and immigrants.

The course aims to give you the tools and theories necessary to explore culture and identity, which are traditionally aligned to academic fields such as anthropology, ethnography, sociology and geography, and particularly in the case of Ireland, literature. It is an aim of this course to give you an appreciation of researching culture and its disciplinary and interdisciplinary applications, as well as an understanding of how similar processes that create a national imagery apply to America.

#### **Learning Objectives**

Knowledge Skills (Historical and Social)

- To illustrate an awareness of the role emigration has played in the configuration of Irish identity.
- To situate Irish literature within the context of seminal political and social debates.
- To acquire a visual literacy that includes an understanding of semiotics and photography.
- To gain an understanding of, and appreciation for, the history of popular Irish festivals, music and dance and to situate them in the context of Ireland's Heritage industry.
- To understand the complexities and operational procedures that helped govern Irish society from without (British rule) and within (religion, sport & community organization).
- To illustrate an awareness of contentious debates surrounding contemporary Irish identity and culture due to recent immigration.
- To question the effects that globalization plays on Irish identity and culture.

#### Critical Thinking Skills (Oral & Written)

- To effectively deconstruct written texts and visual images.
- To recognize and evaluate how the built environment signifies particular historical periods and political and socio-cultural values.
- To illustrate how theories such as Modernism, Postmodernism and Post Colonialism contribute to an understanding of Irish culture.
- To demonstrate an ability to obtain and disseminate qualitative data (interviews).

#### Attitudinal Skills (Affective & Behavioral)

- To question and better understand stereotypes of Ireland and America.
- To be confident and mindful when exploring and engaging new spaces and places.
- To demonstrate an ability to empathize and interact with different sub-groups.
- To gain a better sense-of-self and identity.
- To effectively illustrate through photography one's own perceptions of places.
- To gain intercultural competence.
- To further develop inter and intra personal skills.

#### **Instructional Format**

The class will meet once per week for two-and-a-half hours. The course comprises in-class lectures, seminars and workshops. A number of instructor-led field excursions relevant to course materials and readings will illustrate the tools of researching culture and facilitate their hands-on experience of doing field work. Group discussions will be an integral part of the course, thus it is mandatory that you read and reflect upon all required reading prior to class.

#### Form of Assessment

The interdisciplinary nature of this course and the teaching methodologies employed by the instructor will be reflected in the forms of assessment. There are no exams. However, there will be on-going structured discussion and activities that will test your progress throughout the semester. For the record, these are listed and weighted below. The content, criteria and specific requirements for each assessment category will be explained in greater detail in class. You must complete all grading assessment categories to receive a grade for this course. In addition, student work and behavior in this course must fully conform to the regulations of the CEA Academic Integrity Policy to which you are subject. Finally, all formal written work you carry out in this course (research papers, projects, studies, etc.) must be submitted in electronic format. Your instructor may also require that you hand in a hard copy of such work.

Class Participation	10%
Photo Essay	20%
Midterm Google Map	10%
Student-led Walking Tour	10%
Festival Research Presentation	15%
Final Group Research Project & Presentation	15%
Final Exam	20%

Class Participation (10%): The grade will be calculated to reflect your participation in class discussions, your capacity to introduce ideas and thoughts dealing with the texts, your ability to interpret different uses of literary language and to express your analysis in intellectual, constructive argumentation. When determining your class participation grade, traditional criteria such as material preparation, completed reading before class, and collaborative group work are also evaluated. But it is the active, meaningful and informed verbal and written contribution that you make that is most important to your overall participation grade. Additionally, it is important to demonstrate a positive and supportive attitude to the instructor and your classmates, and give full attention to class activities (i.e., cell-phones off, laptop for notes only, etc.).

Questions that will assist you in measuring the effectiveness of your class participation:

- 1. Is the comment relevant to the discussion? (Relevance)
- 2. Is the comment backed up with data gathered in this class? (Evidence)
- 3. Is the comment clear, complete, and concise? (Form)
- 4. Is the comment original and insightful? (Originality)
- 5. Does it broaden the discussion with all its implications? (Implications)

Guidelines to Assess Class Participation	Numerical Grade Range
You make significant and original contributions that spark discussion, offering both critical and analytical comments clearly based on readings and research and displaying a working knowledge of theoretical issues.	9.00-10.00
You make major contributions that spark discussion based on readings and research, demonstrating insight as well as knowledge of theoretical issues.	8.00-8.99
You make voluntary and useful contributions, which are usually based upon some reflection and familiarity with required readings.	7.00-7.99
You make voluntary but infrequent comments that generally reiterate the basic points of the required readings.	6.00-6.99
You make isolated contributions to class discussion, display disruptive behavior during class, and/or take a passive approach to overall class interaction.	0-5.99

Photo Essay (20%): During the first 10 days of your course, as you initially explore Dublin and Ireland, you will take numerous photographs of what *you consider* to be culturally significant places, landmarks/buildings and everyday events that represent Irish culture. Based on class readings you will select and critically analyze a number of your photographs to create an academic photo-essay. You must discuss the use of photography as a research tool, the theory of semiotics and how Dublin has created an impression on you and how you, in turn, have projected your own meanings/feelings onto the city. You should also reflect on the places you have lived in America.

Title: Seeing Culture (plus a subtitle of your choice)

Format: This circa 1,500 word essay must be typed, printed and submitted on time as a Word Document / A4 / Font: Times New Roman, 12 / Text fully justified. All photographs must be titled and inserted neatly into the document – you will receive a handout that illustrates this formatting.

Midterm Google Map Assignment (10%): This exercise will illustrate your ability to create a Google Map (mash-up) and your understanding of how nations memorialize their history through, for example, street names, statues and monuments. A link to your map must be emailed via Google Maps. As part of this assignment you will identify on your map particular landmarks in Dublin and write / insert accompanying text about their history and cultural significance. In support of your arguments you must also include photographs and video clips.

Student-led Walking Tour (10%): You will be assigned a street or park in Dublin. You will then research the history and cultural significance of its name and its statues and monuments. As part of this assignment you will be encouraged to ask local people and tourists their views on your designated places and landmarks. During class you will lead your fellow class-mates on a fully-prepared educational tour of your research site. As much as possible, you should avoid reading from a script. However, before class you must email your research findings and notes to the instructor – this is not a formal essay.

Festival Research Presentation (15%): Small groups will research festivals in Ireland to explore how the nation, past and present, is projected for a national and global audience. This 10 minute (minimum) presentation must include a PowerPoint that includes a brief history of the festival, its main aims, and photographs and video footage. Your presentation *must* include a critical analysis that reflects previous class

readings and discussion. Prior to your presentation you must present your class-mates with a one-page fact sheet.

Final Group Research Project & Presentation (15%): Small groups will conduct research on an Irish subgroup, for example immigrants and Travellers or an organization such as Focus Housing, which works with homeless people. As part of the research, students must visit their sites / organizations to conduct semi-structured interviews. They may also conduct random interviews along popular streets to obtain common perceptions about the groups and issues they are researching. There is more information concerning the communities to be researched in the 'Online Reference & Research Tools' section below. Each group will make 20 minute (minimum) multi-media presentations of their research sites and communities and submit an accompanying research paper. This paper should include a short review of relevant literature, research methodologies employed and main findings. Each group will also create a two-page educational fact-sheet for their fellow students.

Final Exam (20%): Details of the format and objectives of the exam will be distributed on the first day of class.

CEA Grading Scale				
Letter Grade	Numerical Grade Low Range	Numerical Grade High Range	Percentage Range	Quality Points
A+	9.70	10.00	97.0 - 100%	4.00
Α	9.40	9.69	94.0 - 96.9%	4.00
A-	9.00	9.39	90.0 - 93.9%	3.70
B+	8.70	8.99	87.0 – 89.9%	3.30
В	8.40	8.69	84.0 – 8 <mark>6.</mark> 9%	3.00
B-	8.00	8.39	80.0 - 83.9%	2.70
C+	7.70	7.99	77.0 – 79.9%	2.30
С	7.00	7.69	70.0 – 76.9%	2.00
D	6.00	6.99	60.0 - 69.9%	1.00
F	0.00	5.99	0 - 59.9%	0.00
W	Withdrawal			0.00
INC	Incomplete			0.00

#### **CEA Attendance Policy**

Every student is expected to attend all scheduled class sessions on time and be thoroughly prepared for the day's class activities. In compliance with NEASC and UNH accreditation requirements, CEA instructors compile regular attendance records for every course and take these records into account when evaluating student participation and performance.

- In each three-credit 15-week course, a maximum of the equivalent of two weeks of accumulated absences due to sickness, personal emergency, inevitable transport delay and other related impediments will be tolerated.
- Your final course grade will drop one full letter grade (e.g. A- to B-) for each additional class missed beyond this two week period, regardless of the reason for your absence.
- You will automatically fail a course if your absences exceed the equivalent of three weeks of class.

Furthermore, to comply with immigration and financial regulations, you must maintain full-time student status and attend at least 12 hours of class every week. Consequently, the Dean and Program Director will

dismiss from all CEA courses, programs, activities and housing any student who fails to maintain full-time status.

#### Required Readings

Due to the interdisciplinary nature and content of this course, the required readings are drawn from a number of texts. CEA will ensure that all of the required readings will be made available.

Additional sources may be required for certain class sessions in electronic format (pdf, digital, etc.) consistent with applicable copyright legislation. Direct access to additional resources and databanks are available to you through the online library of the University of New Haven.

Barry, Peter (3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 2009) *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory.* Manchester: University Of Manchester Press, 352pp.

Corry, Eoghan. (2006) An Illustrated History of the GAA. Dublin: Gill & McMillan Ltd., 256pp.

Doyle, Roddy. (2008) The Deportees. London: Vintage, 256pp.

Graham, Colin. (2001) *Deconstructing Ireland: Identity, Theory, Culture*. Edinburgh. Edinburgh University Press, 192pp.

Joyce, James. (2000) 'The Dead', in *Dubliners*, ed. Terence Brown. London: Penguin Books.

Kelly, Darren (2005). Dublin's Spatial Narrative – The Transition from Essentially Monocultural places to Polycultural spaces. Irish Geography, Vol. 38(2).

McCann, May Osiochain, Seamus and Ruane, Joseph. Eds. (1994) *Irish Travellers: Culture and Ethnicity*. Belfast. Institute of Irish Studies, 198pp.

Mac Philib, Seamus. (2007) Come Back to Erin: The Irish Travel Poster Collection. Castlebar National Museum of Ireland.

McDonald, Frank. (2000) The Construction of Dublin. Dublin: Gandon, 384pp.

Moore, Niamh. (1999) Rejuvenating Docklands: The Irish Context. Irish Geography, Vol. 32(2) Ireland.

O'Toole, Fintan. Black Hole, Green Card: The Disappearance of Ireland. (1994) Dublin: New Island Books., 223pp.

Sibley, David. (1995) Geographies of Exclusion. London and New York: Routledge, 224pp.

Susan Sontag. (1997) On Photography. New York: Penguin, 224pp.

Whelan, Yvonne (2003) Reinventing Modern Dublin: Streetscape, Iconography and the Politics of Identity. Dublin. University College Dublin Press, 336pp.

Yeats, W.B. (1991) Cathleen Ni Houlihan in John Harrington, Modern Irish Drama. WW Norton and Co: London, 1991.

#### Recommended Readings

Gibbons, Luke. "Projecting the Nation: Cinema and Culture", in Joseph Cleary and Claire Connolly (2005): *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Irish Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Brown, Terence. Ireland: A Social and Cultural History, 1922-2002. London: Harper Perennial, 2004

Drudy, P.J. and Killen James Eds. (2001) *Dublin: Economic and Social Trends*. Vol 3 Dublin. The Centre for Urban and Regional Studies

During, Simon Ed. (1993) The Cultural Studies Reader. London. Routledge

Johnson. James H. (1994) The Human Geography of Ireland. England. John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

Kiberd, Declan. (1996) Inventing Ireland. London. Vintage

Killen James and MacLaren. (1999) *Dublin: Contemporary Trends and Issues for the Twenty First Century*. Ireland . The Geographical Society of Ireland

Mahon, Derek. (1997) The Yellow Book. The Gallery Press. Ireland

McWilliams, David. (2006) The Pope's Children: Ireland's New Elite. Dublin: Gill & McMillan

Mac Greil, Michael. 1996. Prejudice in Ireland Revisited. St. Patrick's College, Maynooth. Co. Kildare

Mac Lachlan Malcolm and O'Connell Michael. (2000) Cultivating Pluralism. Dublin. Oak Tree Press

Raban, Jonathon. (1974) Soft City. Great Britain. Fontana

#### Online Reference & Research Tools

The following web sites will be used as part of class content for certain class sessions. They will also provide vital background information for your research projects.

#### http://www.discoverireland.ie/ http://www.failteireland.ie/

These two websites can be used to critique how government agencies promote Ireland for the purposes of tourism. You will explore how such agencies, as well as artists, 'create' globally recognized images / stereotypes of Ireland and question their authenticity, particularly in the context of physical, socio-economic and cultural changes in contemporary Ireland.

#### http://maps.google.com/

This is the link to Google Maps. You can view this website to peruse Irish and Dublin tourism and information maps made by official agencies and individuals. As part of the course, you will learn how to make a Google Map.

The following is a list of the official websites of the festivals that you will research. The images and videos that they contain will aid your research PowerPoint presentations. At this stage of the semester, you should have the research tools and theories to critically deconstruct the explicit and implicit messages that these sites project.

http://www.stpatricksfestival.ie/cms/home.html

http://www.festivalofworldcultures.com/

http://www.feilebelfast.com/

http://roseoftralee.ie/catalog/

http://www.cso.ie

This is the site of the central Statistics Office of Ireland. You can access (previous and) the most recent of Census of Ireland. You will pay particular attention to the rapid, statistically significant, increase in the numbers of people residing in urban spaces as well as the changing ethnic, socio-economic and religious make-up of the country.

You will conduct your final (group) research project on one of the following organisations or communities:

#### http://www.paveepoint.ie/

This is the official web site for the Pavee Point Traveller centre. According to the website, "Travellers are an indigenous minority, documented as being part of Irish society for centuries.... Pavee Point is a partnership of Irish Travellers and settled people working together to improve the lives of Irish Travellers through working towards social justice, solidarity, socio-economic development and human rights.

#### http://www.focusireland.ie/

This organisation works with, and on behalf of, homeless people in Ireland. It has been at the forefront of innovative funding campaigns, which will be discussed in class. According to the website its objectives include, "respond to the needs of people out-of-home and those at risk of becoming homeless, through a range of appropriate high quality services...provide emergency transitional and long-term accommodation for people out-of-home...campaign and lobby..."

#### http://www.brl.ie/

Ballymun was a community that consisted of large tower blocks, built in the late 1960s as part of a large-scale slum clearance project in Dublin. Over time it became synonymous with unemployment, associated social and health problems and physical degradation. It has also been home to numerous successful community organizations. Currently it has been undergoing a radical physical make-over presided over by Ballymun Regeneration Ltd. You can read about the history and plans for this community, as well as view the demolition of the tower blocks on the website.

### http://www.stpetersphibsboro.ie/vrc.htm, http://www.sari.ie, http://www.spirasi.ie

These three websites represent different organizations that provide a range of services for refugees and immigrants in Ireland. Amongst the services of these important voluntary organizations, St. Peter's Church provides excellent information for immigrants and housing support; SPIRASI provides much needed support for people who have experienced torture in their countries of origin, and Sports Against Racism in Ireland (SARI) "supports and promotes cultural integration and social inclusion through sport" - former Republic of Ireland manager Brian Kerr is one of its board members.

Session	Topic	Activity	Student Assignment
1	Course Introduction What is culture and identity? What are my perceptions of Ireland? What are my perceptions of America? Introduction to Postcolonial theory  Methodology How are culture & identity studied?	Presentation of Syllabus  Lecture & Discussion  Clips Review: Seminal Hollywood Images of Ireland	Readings:  • Colin Graham. (2001) Deconstructing Ireland: identity, theory, culture. Chapter 6, "Maybe that's Just Blarney: Authenticity and Irish Culture". Edinburgh. Edinburgh University Press pp132-153  Fintan O'Toole, (June 27th 2009) "How 'Darby O'Gill' captured an Ireland rapidly fading": http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/weekend/2009/0627/1224249636182.html
2	Images of Ireland: Early 20th Century Stereotypes How Ireland Marketed Ireland American Images of Ireland Deconstructing Images Explicit & Implicit Messaging An Introduction to Semiotics  Photography as Research Tool Ethics & Use of Photography in Social Science Research	Onsite Instruction: National Museum of Ireland Come Back to Erin: The Irish Travel Poster Collection	Readings:  • Seamus Mac Philib (2007) Come Back to Erin: The Irish  Travel Poster Collection, Castlebar. National  Museum of Ireland, pp 6-53  • Susan Sontag. (1997) On Photography. New York:  Penguin. pp 3-27  • Peter Barry (2002) Beginning Theory: An Introduction to  Literary and Cultural Theory. Manchester:  University Of Manchester Press. pp6-16;119-203
3	Writing Ireland: The Central Role of Literature in the Construction of 20th Century Irish Identity	Lecture & Discussion <u>Clips Review:</u> The Dead (1987) Dir. John Huston	<ul> <li>Readings:</li> <li>W.B. Yeats, Cathleen Ni Houlihan in John P.  Harrington, Modern Irish Drama. London:  Norton. pp 3-12, 375-391</li> <li>James Joyce, "The Dead" in Dubliners. Penguin  Modern Classics, 2000. pp vii-xlviii; 175-226</li> </ul>

Session	Topic	Activity	Student Assignment
4	How to Make a Google Map	Google Map Workshop	Photo Essay Due
5	Writing and Reading the City: Inscribing memory in stone How nations memorialize their history through the naming of public spaces and the creation of monuments and statues  Short Introduction to Interviewing Skills	Onsite Instruction: Interpreting central Dublin's streetscape	Readings:  • Yvonne Whelan (2003) Reinventing Modern Dublin:  Streetscape, Iconography and the Politics of Identity.  Dublin. University College Dublin Press pp 1-  17; 92-213; 233-242
6	Inscribing Memory in Stone	Onsite Instruction: Interpreting central Dublin's streetscape	*In preparation of their tours, students, as directed by the class lecturer, will be expected to have read historical material relating to their designated research sites; relevant material can be found in Whelan (2003).
7	Inscribing Memory in Stone	Onsite Instruction: Interpreting central Dublin's streetscape Refugee or Traveller centre	Student-Led Walking Tour Google Maps Due  • May McCann et al (1994) Irish Travellers: Culture and Ethnicity. Belfast: Queens University. Pp ix-xxvi

Session	Topic	Activity	Student Assignment
8	Doing Qualitative Research  Ethnography & Field Notes Interviewing Data collation and writing	Lecture & Discussion  In-class interviews	Readings:  • Martin Denscombe (2007), The Good Research Guide for Small-Scale Social Research Projects (3rd Ed)  Maidenhead, Berks: Open University Press.  pp84-96; 163-192; 267-284
9	Community Organization and Cultural Resistance During British Rule:  The role of Ireland's national sport (GAA) & religion in community organization and Irish people's sense of space and place.	Onsite Instruction: Croke Park GAA Stadium & Museum	Readings:  • Eoghan, Corry (2006) An Illustrated  History of the GAA. Dublin: Gill  and McMillan. pp 1-98;156-242  • Fintan O'Toole (1994) Black Hole, Green Card, The  disappearance of Ireland. Dublin: New Ireland  Books. pp123-133
10	Irish Festivals, Music & Dance  Ireland's Heritage Industry Riverdance & the Globalization of Irish Music and Dance Culture	Lecture & Discussion  Clips review: The Best of Riverdance (1995) Dir. John Colgan	Readings:  • http://www.stpatricksfestival.ie/cms/home.html • http://www.festivalofworldcultures.com/ • http://www.feilebelfast.com/  Student Research Presentations
11	The Transition of Ireland from Rural to Urban Culture: Chicago School of Urban Sociology Introduction to Postmodernism	Lecture & Discussion	Readings:  Class Hand-Out  http://www.cso.ie/statistics/Population.htm  Peter Barry (2002) Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory. Manchester: University Of Manchester Press. pp 81-94

Session	Торіс	Activity	Student Assignment
12	Folk Tales & Moral panics  Social Exclusion in Ireland Fear of Change, Fear of 'Others' Mental Mapping	Lecture & Discussion  Creating Mental Maps	Readings:  • David Sibley (1995) Geographies of Exclusion. London: Routledge. pp. ix- xviii; 1-71
13	Celtic Tiger & Gentrification:  The Effects of Globalization on Irish Identity	Onsite Instruction: Dublin's Docklands	<ul> <li>Readings:         <ul> <li>Niamh Moore (1999) Rejuvenating Docklands: The Irish Context Irish Geography, Vol. 32(2) Ireland. pp135-149</li> </ul> </li> <li>Frank McDonald (2000) The Construction of Dublin. Dublin: Gandon. Pp 10-134</li> <li><a href="http://www.dublindocklands.ie/">http://www.dublindocklands.ie/</a></li> </ul>
14	Immigration:  Literary and Artistic Representations of Contemporary Ireland  Review and Evaluation	Lecture & Discussion  Clips Review: Selection of Contemporary Irish Films  Presentations	Readings:  • Darren Kelly (2005) Dublin's Spatial Narrative — the transition from essentially monocultural places to polycultural spaces. Irish Geography, Vol. 38(2) pp209-224  • Roddy Doyle (2008) The Deportees. London: Vintage. pp 1-242  Final Student Research Presentations*  *As part of this research, each group, in consultation with the class
			lecturer, will be expected to do some external reading related to the topic; some of this material will be accessed by going to the research organizations' offices and websites.  Final Exam
15	Review and Evaluation	Presentations, continued	I mai Ezam