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Ollscoil na hÉireann Má Nuad

Vexatious Bodies in Modern Ireland

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Summary

This dissertation examines discourses of the body in modern Ireland. It explores the development of official structures shaping the body, the habitus and ethos and the problematic disruptions of the body in nineteenth and twentieth-century Ireland. Official structures provided the scaffolding around which ideals of Irishness wrapped themselves. In locating the official body within these ideals, this thesis argues that problematic or “vexatious” bodies irritated dominant structures at the point where formative expectations of conservative Catholic morality, middle class respectability and the state meet. In a cycle of containment, these formations excluded the vexatious from recognition within dominant structures. While periodic outbursts of the vexatious pressurised official structures, the hegemonic expansion and contraction of official discourses returned it to a space beyond the parameters of dominant discourses, illustrated through examples involving infanticide and the tubercular body.

The structural capacity to maintain dominance was dependent for its continuation on partial modernisation. Changes in the second half of the twentieth century contributed to the destabilisation of the dominant attitudes and structures. The thesis examines these changes and the impact of outbursts of the vexatious in the 1980s through a theoretical lens drawing on the theories of Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. The thesis also analyses print media, focussing on national broadsheets, *The Irish Times*, *The Irish Independent* and *The Irish Press* and magazines, *Hot press*, *In Dublin*, *The Phoenix* and *Magill* and television drama, *The Spike* (1978), along with influential current affairs programs *Today Tonight* (1985/1987) and *The Late Late Show* (1987), providing a context for the examination of the emergence of the AIDS body as one that forced Irish society to confront what it had excluded and acted as a catalyst for accelerated medicalisation and in turn modernisation. Ultimately, AIDS forced Irish society to turn and look.

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Introduction:

Contentious Bodies and
Their Discourses

The body has occupied a contentious space in Irish political, social and cultural life during the last and the previous century. In the twentieth century it has been celebrated by Joyce, interrogated by Beckett, revered by William Orpen, cut like jewels by Harry Clarke, satirised by Flann O'Brien and cast in a shift by JM Synge. The previous century also saw the body take a central position within the artistic and literary consciousness of Irish society. Wilde's *Salomé* emphasised the body's physicality while Gearld Griffith's novel *The Collegians* provided the basis for Dion Bouciault's *The Colleen Bawn*, the plot of which is driven by the iconic recovery of the murdered body of a young bride from the sea. These articulations, amongst several others, all contributed to the visibility of the body within the public sphere. While they belong to what may be considered the elitist realms of art and literature, each articulation exists as part of a broader culture rather than as isolated aesthetic expression. Rich, exuberant, sensuous, sinful, injured, hurt, defiled, austere and humorous bodies; each one illuminates the sometimes veiled and sometimes obvious contradictions of the body that characterise its reception in Irish public life. Other forms of communication and expression have also exhibited the same conflicts in relation to the body. These contradictions, what constitutes them and their expression in public forums and, specifically within the print and broadcast media in Ireland, are the central concerns of this thesis.

Within recent scholarship there has been a significant amount of work that has discussed the body in relation to Irish Studies. While this work will be explored later, at this point it might be useful to clarify what is meant here by the body. For the purpose of this research the body will be defined as a biological and cultural system that occupies both a physical and an abstract space. Neither space exists autonomously; rather they are codependent. Furthermore, each one is defined through discourses that interact across those spaces. The discourses through which those systems find their expression in language have emerged from shared cultural, political and social understandings. Consequently, the contours of language delineate a body that is acceptable within the parameters of a shared system of language and shared values. That body is then, through the power of shared discourses, perpetuated across society and

vertically through hierarchical social, political and cultural structures. Power is inscribed in, on and through the space of the body; however, that power emanates from the momentum that builds around accepted official discourses and the binding they administer to disparate social groups.

The power of shared discourse reinforces abstract and physical structures across society which in turn gives rise to the growth of a monoglottic lens of perception. A monoglottic lens of perception is defined here as a perception cut from prevailing social, political and cultural ideas which are then expressed through one accepted and shared discourse. Continued consensus around this discourse and participation of the majority in it reinforces the values that shape a monoglottic lens of perception and ensure perpetuation of a socially acceptable body. Everything beyond these values goes unrecognised by a monoglottic lens of perception. The space of the physical body is also defined by the same one dimensional or monoglottic lens. This is not to say there is simply one body. Rather multiple bodies fit within the space that is recognised as acceptable and in accommodating minor social, cultural and political changes, that space undergoes constant but minor adjustments. Longevity of that acceptability is achieved through the constant aligning and re-aligning of the space of the body with changes in technologies and prevailing attitudes. By absorbing change, the space of the body remains compatible with and reflective of the society from which it emerges. It creates and reflects a kaleidoscopic dominant discourse that mirrors the demands of social majoritarianism. While this kaleidoscopic quality allows much of the tension that builds up around the body to be absorbed, acceptable bodies are also dependent on the suppression of challenges to ensure their dominant position.

Dominant positions are defined by the recognition afforded to them within the discourses that shape and influence prevailing perceptions; that is the monoglottic lens of perception demarcates what may be accommodated within dominant discourses. Bodies that lie outside of these parameters are consigned to a place beyond language and are, as a result, not simply beyond recognition but are also invisible. Suppression of these bodies contributes to their invisibility, which, in turn, compounds their continuous suppression. In failing to name these bodies dominant discourses also prevent unacceptable and unrecognised bodies from becoming part of the official space of the

body. Threatening practices or states in which these bodies engage or by which they are defined instigates a need for dominant discourses to enforce a suppression that endures and validates the body within official discourses. Consequently, incompatible bodies are isolated from each other by the repetitive agency of dominant discourses. Bodies that threaten the shared foundational ethos upon which dominant discourses are built and through which they interact are pushed to the outer limits of discourse and beyond. Since language is permeable it follows that so too are the constructed parameters of ethos suggesting that there must be a certain amount of leakage or temporary overflow between what is recognised and what lies outside the domain of recognition. Once this overflow is temporary it may be absorbed. However, certain bodies and practices continuously press upon the boundaries that isolate the dominant space of the body from everything else. At times these bodies burst from their place of silence and upset the structured order of dominant discourse. These bodies and practices will, for the purpose of this thesis, be termed “the vexatious”. Not all vexatious bodies can be absorbed into dominant discourses however, vexatious bodies that present as a threat repeatedly must be, at least partially, absorbed into dominant discourses in a way that facilitates their regulation. Regulation distils the agitation and the threat they present into a benign reminder of difference though, not before they impinge on those discourses in a way that suggests that the momentum and power they have gathered posits a real threat to the monoglotic lens of perception and by extension the shared ethos.

The terms ethos and habitus are used throughout this thesis to refer to a set of principles and practices that are expressed through both language and action. Ethos is underpinned by a world view or outlook, the credibility of which is expressed through the language used within official structures and in this case the organised Church and State. Here the term “habitus” is borrowed from the work of Pierre Bourdieu and is used to refer to the lived daily practices of individuals and communities.¹ For the purpose of this research, the national habitus is seen as shared set of lived practices that may vary from region to region, from community to community and from individual to individual but which still serves as an enforcement of binding ideals of, in this case, nationhood. Habitus is distinct from culture in that it is concerned with the visible and invisible factors that cohere daily life rather than more visible and ceremonial factors that cohere national

¹See Bourdieu, Pierre, *Outline of A Theory of Practice* Translated Richard Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

culture. The use of habitus here also points to the “casual force of the action of the dominant class” in shaping ideas of the national and their impact on daily behaviours.² Habitus is a direct product of “structures constitutive of a particular environment” and is a set of “durable, transposable dispositions”.³ Within this thesis ideas of nationhood and the contribution of an ethos and habitus that emerged in coincidence with the idea of an Irish nation-state are explored through the theories of Benedict Anderson, Ernest Gellner and Jim MacLaughlin.⁴ Throughout this research shared practices use the shared national ethos as vectors of measurement and expectations for behaviour. In other words, the credibility or recognition afforded to the national ethos sets out the parameters of practice for the national habitus. The State’s support of the Church and the institutional inter-relationship between both meant that the ethos of the Church became the ethos of the State and *vice versa*. To say that this co-dependency was achieved smoothly or over a short period of time would be reductive. Conditions which created a scenario that supported and perpetuated the ethos of the Church and State had been growing in embryonic form within Irish society since the 1801 Act of Union, if not before.

The space of the body in Ireland became defined by the concrete and abstract structures of the Catholic Church, the State and the relationship between the two in Ireland. Continuous suppression of certain bodies reinforced the socially acceptable body and loaned the ethos of the Church and, by extension, of the State further credence. In the twentieth-century the ethos of Catholicism in Ireland was characterised by the ascendancy’s conservative position within the Church. The Church underwent regularisation and modernisation during the late nineteenth century. It established institutions that would endure into the twentieth century. These institutions played a key role in the perpetuation and maintenance of orthodoxy and conservatism both within and outside of the Church in the twentieth century. Within this research, conservative

²Fowler, Bridget, *Pierre Bourdieu and Cultural Theory: Critical Investigations* (London: Sage Publications, 1997) 4.

³ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Outline of A Theory of Practice* 73

⁴ Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* Revised Edition (London: Verso, 2006) ; Gellner, Ernest, *Encounters with Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994); MacLaughlin, Jim, *Reimagining Ireland: The Contested Terrains of Nation Building* (Dublin: Pluto Press, 2000).

Catholicism is defined by the Church's advocacy of rules that sought to regulate the behaviour of the majority so that the life of the collective, as well as the individual, would reflect the traditional values and religious practices of Catholicism. Conservative Catholicism focused on, amongst other aims, maintaining purity of the body both within and outside of marriage. Following from this emphasis, came the intense regulation of sex, sexuality, reproduction and sexual relationships. As a result, the Church developed as a didactic entity that extended its social and religious teachings through an inter-institutional and biopolitical, social and cultural relationship with Catholic congregations and broader communities. While this regulation achieved widespread effect, it is impossible to determine the extent of unspoken or unrecognised resistance that occurred during the twentieth century. However, as Irish society changed in the latter half of the twentieth century, the Church's control within communities and over the behaviour of the individual diminished. Furthermore, resistance against that control became increasingly visible within the public sphere. This was, however, a gradual process and does not necessarily imply the absolute undoing of the Church or of its former social status.

Changing social profiles of men, women, rural and urban Ireland rendered some of the rules advocated by the official ethos, more difficult to enforce, adhere to and regulate. Processes of modernisation also made aspects of these rules, if not the rules themselves, incompatible with the social changes that took place in Ireland in the latter half of the twentieth century. Within this research issues arising from a consideration of modernisation are explored predominantly with reference to the theoretic work of Clare Connolly, Joe Cleary, Luke Gibbons, Declan Kiberd and Conor McCarthy amongst others.⁵ While there is a considerable amount of overlap between the issues explored by these critics, this thesis draws on the ideas of political scientists Gary Murphy and Brian Girvin, the sociological commentaries of Tom Garvin and the economic analysis of Cormac Ó Gráda and Joel Mokyr.⁶ The Program for Economic Expansion put in place

⁵ Cleary, Joe, *Outrageous Fortunes: Culture and Capital in Modern Ireland* (Dublin: Field Day Publications, 2006); Cleary, Joe and Clare Connolly, Eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Irish Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Gibbons, Luke, *Transformations in Irish Culture: Field Day Essays* (Cork: Cork University Press in association with Field Day Cork, 1996); Kiberd, Declan, *Inventing Ireland. The Literature of the Modern Nation* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1995); McCarthy, Conor, *Modernisation, Crisis and Culture in Ireland, 1969 – 1992* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000).

⁶ Garvin, Tom, *Preventing the Future: Why was Ireland so Poor for so long?* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 2004); Girvin, Brian and Gary Murphy, "Whose Ireland? The Lemass Era" in *The Lemass Era: Politics and Society in the Ireland of Seán Lemass* Ed.

in 1958, the provision of free secondary school education in 1963, the constant rise and fall of emigration figures, changes initiated by the Women's Movement, economic progress and recession, worker protest and the deepening of the crisis in Northern Ireland between the late 1960s and the 1990s, all contributed to changes in the class, cultural and social structures of Irish society after the middle of the last century. However, the inter-connections between the Church, the state and the middle class that emerged in the nineteenth century did not undergo monumental shifts. Rather the behavioural expectations set out by those inter-connections continued to bind an ethos and habitus that supported ideas of Irishness and of Ireland as an independent nation. While entry into the E.E.C impacted upon attitudes towards and modes of thinking about Ireland as an independent nation, the binding ties that had been growing since the nineteenth century continued to provide a coherency, albeit a looser one, to life in the Republic. Despite the Republic's acceptance into the E.E.C. in 1973 and the changes Ireland was experiencing during the 1980s, the Northern Irish conflict suggests it is difficult to discuss either Northern Ireland or the Republic outside of the ideas that shape the concept of nationhood on this island. Furthermore, conservative Catholic attitudes and the relationships established between the constituent parts of the state, the Church and the population continued to shape dominant discourses and to influence what was considered acceptable within the public sphere. The automatic and sometimes pronounced repetition of social mores and the energies invested in ensuring their endurance by interest groups continued to validate the web of discourse that defined the space of the body within official discourses and structures. They also continued to maintain the isolating space between the vexatious and dominant discourses.

Official structures draw their strength from the combination of discourses that sustain them. This combination seals spaces and power positions within those structures and

Girvin, Brian & Gary Murphy (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2005); Girvin, Brian, "Political Culture, Political Independence and Economic Success in Ireland]" in *Irish Political Studies Reader: Key Contributions* Eds. Conor McGrath and Eoin O Malley (London: Routledge, 2002); Girvin, Brian, *Between Two Worlds. Politics and Economy in Independent Ireland* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1989); Mokyr, Joel and Cormac Ó Gráda, "Poor and Getting Poorer? Living Standards in Ireland before the Famine" in *The Economic History Review, New Series* 41.2(1988) 209- 235. Murphy, Gary, "A Measure of the Extent of Our Sovereignty at the Moment" Sovereignty and the Question of Irish Entry to the EEC, New Evidence from the Archives" in *Irish Studies in International Affairs* 12 (2001) 191 – 202; Ó Gráda, Cormac, *Ireland: A New Economic History 1780 – 1939* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

shapes behavioural patterns or habitus. It is difficult to separate conservative Catholicism in Ireland from the behavioural expectations that influenced the respectability of the middle classes; one shaped the other. The didactic social role adopted by the Church was reinforced by the Church's hierarchical structures. At local level, the Church developed an interventionist and enforcing role that aimed to support the binding of communities through communal and individual religious practise and the spread of shared social values. The social status afforded to the Church and the clergy created a fold in the social texture of communities that facilitated the local alignment of the Church, their representatives and the middle class that emerged during the second half of the nineteenth century and continued to support each other until the closing decades of the twentieth century. Furthermore, the intricate inter-institutional relationship between the middle class, the Church and those in government contributed to the endurance of a specific type of conservative Catholicism. On an official level that brand of Catholicism, adhered to the directives set out by the Church on issues concerning contraception, the role of women in both society and within marriage, the role of marriage. The close interaction of Church and State gave rise to a situation where decisions made by those in governmental power were often influenced by the moral directives of the Church and as a result had a direct effect on what is considered social modernisation.

Church visibility and status within Irish society was vital in sustaining its continuing capacity to provide a framework of coherency through which the national ethos and habitus could be lived out. The Eucharistic Congress of 1932, which is described by Diarmaid Ferriter as an “emphatic public assertion of Irish Catholicism”, aimed to congeal attitudes towards the eucharist amongst the public and to raise the Church's visibility as a significant force within society.⁷ While the visibility of the Church was well established, by the 1960s other factors were impinging on the ethos of the Church all across the Western World. In response to these pressures, the Church released a papal encyclical in 1968 that addressed the changing role of women, of attitudes to sex, sexuality and marriage. That encyclical, *Humanae Vitae*, had a significant impact on a traditionalism that was shifting and fracturing in the face of economic and social modernisation in Ireland. Together, this particular encyclical and social and economic modernisations provide a context to the gradual loosening of ties between the Church,

⁷ Ferriter, Diarmaid, *Occasions of Sin: Sex & Society in Modern Ireland* (London: profile books, 2009) 201.

the state and the middle classes in Ireland. In relation to this thesis the reception of *Humanae Vitae* in Ireland signifies the splintering of links between the official discourses of the Church and society's official adherence and acceptance of the behavioural guidelines specified by those discourses.

Conservative Catholicism in Ireland between the 1960s and the 1990s may be traced to the influence of Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Humanae Vitae*. *Humanae Vitae* re-affirms the stance taken by the Catholic Church before 1962 on issues surrounding contraception, abortion and marriage. The directives set out in the encyclical conflict with issues of modernisation, the growth of a politics of the individual, secularisation and the changing role of women in Western society, including within Irish society. While these directives were endorsed at an official level, people continuously transgressed the behavioural expectations they established. Where previously this transgression took place in a veiled manner which ensured that the official ethos and habitus of the nation appeared in coterminous support of a traditional conservative Catholicism, by the late 1960s and 1970s transgression was also occurring in a public way. One example of this may be found in the widely documented "Contraception Train" run by members of the Irish Women's Liberation Movement in 1971. Public transgression was also occurring within the parameters of official discourses as illustrated by the establishment of a Family Planning Clinic by Dr. Michael Solomons, Assistant Master at Mercer's Hospital in 1969. Earlier support of behavioural directives formed on moral grounds was achieved by the perpetuation of practices of self-policing and regulation endorsed by community networks and the Church itself. However, a gradual separation of Church and State may be traced through changes induced by the Women's Movement in the 1960s and 70s. Furthermore, the Supreme Court's 1973 ruling known as the "McGee Judgement", that the ban on the importation of contraceptives into Ireland was unconstitutional can be considered a significant marker in the slow unpicking of the influence of an ethos that sprang from conservative Catholicism.

This thesis asks how discourses of the body became so closely associated with a national ethos and habitus. In considering this question, this research looks at the development of the official structures of Irish society and their relationship with a habitus that supported and was lived through a specific ethos. By tracing the

development of State structures while Ireland was part of Britain in the nineteenth century, this research provides an outline of the early development of institutions at State level and their relationship with an emerging nation. The mapping of the relationship between institutions and the social, political and cultural life of the Free State and in the Republic, points to the continuation of links between nineteenth and twentieth century ideals of Irishness. Those ideals passed through both an organic and a contrived process of construction in the nineteenth century which continued to develop in line with the ideals and aspirations of the Free State and the Republic. Through an analysis of the organisational and structural scaffolding that evolved in each century, this research seeks to locate discourses of the body within official Ireland and to look at how that position and its supporting discourses forced problematic bodies into a space outside of what was deemed acceptable.

Notwithstanding difference within the Catholic Church, prevailing perceptions of the body in Irish society came to reflect the aspirations of middle class respectability and conservative Catholicism. While this ethos was widely accepted, and while it was largely reinforced by a self policing habitus, it was also contested and challenged on a continuous basis. This thesis considers a number of vexatious bodies and practices and their relationship with the concrete and abstract structures of Irish society. By examining this relationship this research considers the constant expansion and contraction of discourses and seeks to identify the motivating forces triggering these movements. In focusing on the tubercular body and infanticide in Ireland, a comparative framework is established that facilitates examination of the urgency with which this vexatious body and practices press upon official structures. TB is used to establish a comparative framework because, unlike AIDS, in an Irish context TB is not associated with sexuality; rather it was perceived as a disease rooted in poverty and uncleanness. Because of its difference rather than its similarities with AIDS, TB was chosen as one of the constructional vectors of this comparative framework rather than syphilis or venereal diseases in general. Infanticide, the second of these vectors, was chosen because it offers an insight into the continuing stigmatisation of unwanted pregnancies and issues of poverty associated with it. It also challenges the attitudes to the family expressed through ideals of Irishness that were solidified in the Constitution. Furthermore, the continuation of and the changes in attitudes towards infanticide

illustrate linguistic and social processes that facilitate the partial inclusion of these bodies in official discourse.

Conditions under which inclusion occurs are unique to each body and practice. Some vexatious entities remain vexatious and may only become acceptable if a radical shift occurs where what was once regarded as oppositional can be accommodated. The changes in society which facilitate adjustments to the prevailing perception may vary from medical, to social, to technological changes that reconfigure the parameters of dominant structures and discourses in a way that allows inclusion to take place. Each vexatious body or practise must pass through a hegemonic process of accommodation in order to participate within dominant discourses. The one shared and perhaps the defining feature of this process involves a shift in language. In focusing on discourses of the body within the media, this research seeks to analyse the reactive nature of discourse to those pressing tensions and to that process that moves towards inclusivity. This research maps the contractions and expansions of discourses of the body. Within Irish studies the body has received considerable analytical attention from literary, historical, cultural, social and political standpoints. Maria Luddy's book *Prostitution and Irish Society 1800-1940* has presented an in-depth analysis of the history of prostitution in Ireland while Conor Reidy's *Ireland's 'Moral Hospital'* provides an insight into the role of borstals and industrial schools within the structures of official Ireland until the late twentieth century.⁸ The history of institutionalisation in Ireland has also been mapped by Catherine Cox in her essay "institutionalisation in irish history and society".⁹ While the latter studies position the body within the rigid biopolitics of structured imprisonment, Luddy's work looks at the history of people who lay outside of the official rubric of Irish society. She details their acts of resistance as well as attempts made by official structures to regulate their activities.

⁸ Luddy, Maria, *Prostitution and Irish Society 1800 – 1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Reidy, Conor, *Ireland's 'Moral Hospital': The Irish Borstal System 1906 – 1956* (Dublin: The Irish Academic press, 2009).

⁹ Cox, Catherine, "institutionalisation in irish history and society" in *irish history* Ed Mary Macaullife, Katherine O' Donnell & Leenan Lane (London: Palgrave, 2009) 169 -190. All of the titles and names provided in this publication are given through lower case letters.

Diarmaid Ferriter has also produced a significant study of the history of sex, sexuality and actions undertaken by the state and the Church to order and regulate what were considered transgressive sexualities and sex acts. Ferriter's work uses sources from official state archives, which provide the details of court cases and from other institutions. In the introduction to *Occasions of Sin: Sex and Society in Modern Ireland* Ferriter acknowledges the Foucauldian approach taken by Tom Inglis in his seminal work *Moral Monopoly* which locates the body within the history of self-regulation as set out and perpetuated by the more conservative elements of the Catholic Church, Inglis traces developments in the Catholic Church and within Irish society and shows how Catholicism came to occupy such a central position in people's daily moral lives.¹⁰ In some respects Ferriter also adopts this approach to the archive; by drawing on newspaper, magazine and anecdotal sources Ferriter layers his history with details that would have been unattainable within official sources. Ferriter's approach however to has more in common with Foucault's archaeological method than the genealogical method that this research utilises. It is worth noting that while Ferriter's work addresses the untold stories of the impoverished and of daily life in Ireland, it does so through a lens that sees sex and sexuality in the past as completely constrained by the official structures, ethos and habitus of Irish society. Ferriter equates sex in the past with the dominant perceptions of society which suggests that sex, sexualities and the body have been liberated from these restraints in today's society. The sources used in *Occasions of Sin* are also sources that contend with regulation and emerge from an already regularised space. Desire that stands outside of that regulation is largely untraceable. This research acknowledges the overwhelming power of the official structures of Irish society in the past and the capacities of the culture that supported them. However, rather than seeing sex, sexualities and bodies as having been liberated by the present it seeks to identify the process that through which the vexatious became included, at least partially, within official discourses.

Other analysts such as Louise Fuller have offered an historical overview of the rise and what she sees as the partial unravelling of the Catholic Church's influence as an

¹⁰ Ferriter, Diarmaid, *Occasions of Sin: Sex & Society in Modern Ireland* (London: Profile Books, 2009); Inglis, Tom, *Moral Monopoly: The Rise and Fall of the Catholic Church in Modern Ireland* 2nd Ed (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1998).

organising social, political and moral force in Irish society.¹¹ Fuller places her analysis of the Church within broader Irish society. In considering factors such as returning emigrants, the gradual rise of urbanism and its slow displacement of rural Ireland, Fuller points to the deterioration of what Inglis termed a “moral monopoly” that was executed at a national, community and individual level. To Fuller, the interaction of individuals with forces which came from outside of Ireland coupled with the rise in media outlets, contributed to the growth of a reactionary culture that resisted the roots of middle class respectability and a conservative Catholic ethos. While this ethos was only partially and very gradually undermined by these forces, it also continued as a substantial organising force in Irish society. A number of other historians and commentators have also explored the stability of Catholicism at an organisation level in Ireland. Vincent Twomey adopts a more traditional approach rooted in theological arguments when defending the Church’s position in Ireland, while Mary Kenny’s work *Goodbye to Catholic Ireland* addresses what are seen as the concerns of the general public in relation to the Church.¹²

Much of the material that critiques the Church and its role has emerged since the beginning of the 1990s. The 1990s began with a flurry of legislative change indicating, as Chrystel Hug describes it, “the end of a system of authoritarian and homogenising moral values”.¹³ Hug links this post-moral order with the election of President Mary Robinson and the publication of details of the ‘X Case’ in 1992. What came to be known as ‘X Case’ became part of public debate when the State imposed a court injunction preventing a 13-year-old girl from travelling to Britain to avail of abortion services. The young teenager was pregnant as a result of being raped by a family friend raising child rape, incest and abortion as issues that “underlined” a “particular interrelation between the state, the nation and women.”¹⁴ While the election of President Mary Robinson and the ‘X Case’ may certainly be considered the “catalysts” for the

11 Fuller, Louise, *Irish Catholicism Since 1950: The Undoing of a Culture* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 2004).

12 Twomey, Vincent D., *The End of Irish Catholicism?* (Dublin: Veritas, 2003); Kenny, Mary, *Goodbye to Catholic Ireland* (Dublin: New Island, 2000).

13 Hug, Chrystel, *The Politics of Sexuality Morality* Ed Jo Campling (Hampshire: Palgrave, 1999) 7.

14 Smyth, Lisa, “Narratives of Irishness and the Problem of Abortion: The X case 1992” in *Feminist Review* 60 (1998) 61.

legislative change that occurred, as well as of the review of the position of women in Irish society that ensued, change had been occurring across society throughout the 1970s and 1980s.¹⁵ Other events and episodes point to the gradual unpicking of legislative, social and cultural constructions that had created the scaffolding around which ideas of Irishness had become wrapped. The 1979 Health Act, “The Kerry Babies Case”, the death of Ann Lovett at Granard, Senator David Norris’s challenge to the illegal status of homosexuality in Ireland, the abortion and divorce referenda and the emergence of AIDS during the 1980s were all significant episodes that may be identified as challenges to the national ethos and habitus. Within this research the 1979 Health Act and “The Kerry Babies Case” are considered closely. “The Kerry Babies Case” provides an insight into the effect outbursts of the vexatious have on society while the 1979 Health Act illustrates how social, political and cultural pressure builds between different groups within society. Both of these examples demonstrate the expansion and contraction of discourses of the body in official Ireland. As a result and because of the limits of this research the other events are not examined in the same way. However, they may also be considered indicators of the weakening of what were once considered the dominant structures and perceptions of society.

The “X Case” broke taboos surrounding sex, sexuality and bodies in Ireland that had been previously touched upon. While the earlier episodes forced the veils of language and silence, that had created a boundary between official Ireland and the vexatious, to be pulled apart, the “X Case” pulled that veil asunder. While the problematisation of constitutional issues raised by the “X Case” remain unresolved, since the details emerged the Church, State and their respective institutions have been challenged on a continuous basis. Although the “X Case” in some respects demonstrates the power of the relationship between the Church and the state and the extent to which they continued to reflect each other’s values in 1992, the effects of the case also pointed to a population who were resisting the ethos formerly enforced through social and institutional surveillance as well as self-policing on a nationwide basis. The role the media played in ensuring the “X Case” became part of the public sphere became a pivotal element of the mobilisation of further challenges against what had presumed to be a monolithic ethos and habitus.

¹⁵ Hug, Chrystel, *The Politics of Sexuality Morality* 6.

In the late 1990s and the early twenty-first century, film and television production provided fictional and documentary space to narrate the stories of victims of physical, psychological and sex abuse that occurred while children, teenagers and young men and women were in the care of both Church and State during the mid to late twentieth century. Some of these productions include *Dear Daughter*, *States of Fear* and *Song for a Raggy Boy*, *The Butcher Boy* and *The Magdalen Sisters*.¹⁶ Each production tells the story of children who had been abused, of people who had been excluded from mainstream Irish society because of what were perceived as their sexual transgression or because of their unacceptable differences. Fictional literary accounts of the repressive elements of the national ethos and habitus also detail the lives of those who lay outside of official discourses and who were un-recognised by official structures. These accounts include Mary Morrissy's *Mother of Pearl*, Edna O' Brien's *In the Forest* and Pat McCabe's novels *The Butcher Boy* and *Call Me The Breeze*.¹⁷

O' Brien's novel is of particular significance because it broaches the complex issues of Church and state responsibility for the care of children and those who exhibit signs of threatening behaviour as a result of poor mental health. *In the Forest* was based on a murder that occurred in County Clare in 1994 when a young man named Brendan O' Donnell killed artist Imelda Riney, her son Liam and local priest Fr. Joe Walsh in Clegg Woods. O' Donnell, who was ostracised from the community, had spent time in an industrial school in Britain after the death of his mother and the breakup of his family. O' Donnell later died in the Central Mental Hospital while serving multiple life sentences for the triple murder. A disturbed teenager and young man Brendan O' Donnell had come to the attention of the authorities in both Britain and Ireland on a number of occasions throughout this life. While his actions horrified the nation, he has also come to be seen as a person who was mistreated as a child and as a young adult by the official structures of the state. As this thesis considers the history of institutions as

¹⁶ Lentin, Louis, *Dear Daughter* (Dublin: Crescendo Concepts, 1996); Rafferty, Mary, *States of Fear* (Dublin: RTÉ, 1999); Walsh, Aishling, *Song For A Raggy Boy* (Ireland: Fantastic Films, 2003); Jordan, Neil, *The Butcher Boy* (Ireland: Greffen Pictures, 1997) and Mullen, Peter, *The Magdalen Sisters* (Ireland & Scotland: PFP Film productions, 2003).

¹⁷ Morrissy, Mary, *Mother of Pearl* (London: Vintage, 1997); O' Brien, Edna, *In the Forest* (Britain: Paperview U.K in association with the Irish Independent, 2002); McCabe, The Butcher Boy (London: Picador Books, 1992) and Call Me the Breeze (London: Faber & Faber, 2003).

part of a wider narrative of Irish, the significance of O' Donnell's mistreatment and of O' Brien's fictionalised account of his life, lies in the novel's capacity to retell the story of a vexatious person who lay outside of the official structures of society while also being partially managed by them.

Edna O' Brien's novel portrays O' Donnell's fictionalised character as a child who is subject to neglect, maltreatment, physical and psychological abuse. Close to his mother and in fear of his father the boy, who is addressed as "he" throughout the novel, shows violent tendencies from a young age, but is also heartbroken when his mother dies. The novel offers an insight into the boy's deteriorating mental health and behaviour as he grows into a young man, while also presenting the institutions in which he was placed as inappropriate, austere and brutal. In a similar vein, Pat McCabe's novel *The Butcher Boy* presents care institutions that were responsible for orphans and young offenders as highly structured institutions that operated within the laws of the state but which also carried out brutal acts of abuse and violence against children who were both powerless and voiceless within dominant discourses. Like the young women in the *Magdalen Sisters*, these children did not exist once they were within the boundary walls of their respective institutions. Annexed into silence institutions provided society with zones where vexatious bodies and practices could be consigned. Similarly McCabe's novel *Call Me The Breeze* gives provides an insight into the life of a young man who lives on the periphery of society and who is largely regarded as the "village idiot". Partially through the serendipity of social relations and partly through the manipulation of paramilitary organisations at work in the area he is eventually jailed for a crime he did not commit. The significance of these narratives, for this research lies in their respective capacity to show that that what was once seen as a sealed monolith of control has been cracked open over the past thirty years. As a result the story of Irishness and the constructions of the ideals associated with it is being re-told. Through an episodic inquiry into the events leading up to the emergence of AIDS, this research seeks to add to the retelling by considering alterations that have occurred in official discourses of the body and consequently within the official narrative of Ireland and Irishness in the latter half of the twentieth century.

The narration of these stories in both fictional and documentary form has provided the public with the means of approaching the past and of reconsidering the constitution of our national narrative, as well as facilitating a questioning of the ideals of Irish identity that developed over a number of centuries. In this respect the work of Elizabeth Butler Cullingford in *Ireland's Others* contributes to and acknowledges the re-telling of Ireland's past in a way that facilitates the flexing of voices that had once been seen as vexatious.¹⁸ More recently the release of the Ryan, Ferns, Dublin, Cloyne and Murphy reports have detailed the abuses perpetrated by those in authority within Church and State institutions. While these reports include individual stories their analysis in the news and within current affairs programmes has provided another mode of re-constituting discourses of the past and of that present. In creating an opening through which the language of defilement, abuse and injury can be included in our daily lives, that is within our habitus, bodies that may have been alluded to through the vectors of aesthetic expression may become acknowledged within a re-working of more inclusive official discourses.

The body in Irish society has been undergoing significant shifts in relation to discourses and perception. By considering discourses of the past this thesis seeks to investigate the contradictions that exist within discourses of the body which came to the fore in the 1980s in Ireland. The media provided a public forum for the playing out of tensions within bodily discourses that climaxed in the mid 1980s with the emergence of AIDS. In the years preceding the emergence of AIDS the body was impossible to avoid. It was everywhere. It occupied a central position within the Women's Movement and within the debates that surrounded contraception, abortion, divorce and homosexuality. Through the analysis of material located in print and broadcast archives this research develops a theoretical framework that can be used to consider issues of the body in Irish society in the late twentieth century. In applying Foucault's genealogical approach to the archive the complexity of issues in which discourses of the body are entrenched will be analysed. As a result analysis of material is presented in a chronological way that reflects the expansion and contraction of discourses of the body as they occurred within the sources consulted.

¹⁸ Cullingford, Elizabeth, *Ireland's Others: Ethnicity and Gender in Irish Literature and Popular Culture* (Cork: Cork University Press in association with Field Day Monographs, 2001).

In garnering significance within the dominant narrative of Irish history, particular moments, texts and incidents, like the Kerry Babies Case, have been somewhat mythologised. Reading these moments through texts that lie outside the established narratives removes them from their foregrounding position and sets them within a broader narrative thus creating new possibilities for considering connections between language, power and the visibility of particular bodies at particular points in our history. By presenting material achronologically analysis of texts identified in the archives are read in relation to each other rather than being specifically tied to the historical moment. In this way connections are established across the archive. These connections de-privilege previously established narratives resulting in the unsettling of dominant and accepted power positions and also facilitate the querying of webs of relations surrounding texts. While approaching texts in this way means that new narratives are made possible, it also means that the structure of this thesis is determined by the practice itself. Consequently, in re-contextualising and re-reading moments this thesis moves up and down through time. It establishes horizontal and transversal connections between texts and moments and in doing so creates a reading that resists the established narrative of history that confined certain bodies to sites outside of the official narrative. In exploring resistant actions archive analysis is filtered through elements of the theories of Judith Butler and Deleuze and Guattari. Terms utilised in Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* facilitate the narration of the move from medicalisation towards biomedicalisation which was to occur in the early 1990s as Ireland became a more globalised country that also impacted upon by clinical innovation and changes in within the pharmaceutical industry.

Each chapter contributes to the gradual construction of a theoretical approach. The analysis of archive material builds on analysis of material presented in the previous chapter. As a result the theoretical framework is teased out of an immanent critique of archive material, social, political and cultural change. This framework details the effect and operation of official structures in Irish society as well as acknowledging the consequences of repetitive outbursts of the vexatious on those structures. The analysis of those structures shows how official discourses react to outbursts of the vexatious in order to accommodate those that threaten to overwhelm the stability of dominant perceptions. Cumulative analysis identifies a shift in the monoglotic lens of perception

from utilising moral discourse towards the use of scientific and medical terms. Since medicalisation is associated with modernisation, this shift suggests that during the 1980s Ireland experienced an accelerated modernisation in some areas of its social, political and cultural life. The emergence of the AIDS body and its impact on official discourse is pivotal in the exploration and substantiation of this theory. Throughout this thesis the emergence of the AIDS body is considered through language and its position within language. In comparing the AIDS body to the TB body and to practices of infanticide this thesis seeks to juxtapose material that illustrates the contradictions of Irishness that are encapsulated within the body.

The AIDS body is seen as a vexatious one that forces official discourses to accept a shift in language in order to accommodate its partial inclusion. By locating the space of the body within these official discourses and structures chapter one traces the development of modern power in Irish society. It looks at this development while Ireland was part of the British Empire as well as when it was undergoing the transition from being a colonial state into being the Irish Free State and eventually the Irish Republic. Chapter one and two provide a practical and a theoretical fold for each other. Chapter one positions the AIDS body within discourses of the body and the conditions that create moral panic. In considering a number of different theoretical approaches chapter one establishes the theoretical underpinnings of this thesis. This chapter concludes by determining that it is the aim of this research to show how discourses of the body shifted, contracted and expanded during the emergence of AIDS in Ireland in the 1980s and it sets out to do this through a theoretical lens constituted by elements of Foucault's, Butler's and Deleuze and Guattari's theories. The constituent elements of this lens are teased out in the following chapters through an analysis of archive material. By allowing the 1980s and the different parts of Irish identity to speak through the archive, the constructed nature of Irish identity is shown. The space of the body in the 1980s, as outlined by that voice, also becomes clear. The contradictions that exist within that space are highlighted by the archive material and act as a reference for the contradictions at work in Irish society which, by the 1980s, could no longer be contained. While Northern Ireland was in flames, the tensions that had been building in the Republic began to exceed the containing structures that had bound Irishness together for so long. Ideals of Irishness that find their roots in the nineteenth century were tapering out and yielding to a new emergent idea of Irishness that was quickly

outgrowing the structures that belonged to a partially modernised Ireland. Significant shifts were taking place in Irish society during the 1980s and in consulting a section of the print and broadcast material available this thesis develops a lens through which those changes may be considered. This offers possible answers to questions about how elements that troubled, disturbed, upset and vexed Irish society in the 1980s can be talked about.

A genealogical approach to the archive was adopted throughout this research as a useful tool through which the vexatious can be analysed and traced. This approach borrows from Michel Foucault's earlier archaeological approach to the archive but is largely dominated by the concepts upon which his genealogical turn is built. This genealogical approach, as set out in chapter two, highlights the expansion and contraction of discourses of the body. As a result this thesis consists of an a-chronological analysis of those discourses. By analysing episodic contractions and expansions, this thesis aims to show that shifts in discourse are influenced by the attempts by cultural, social and political structures to maintain the dominance of official discourses and consequently to manage what have been termed here as vexatious bodies. In preparing this research for this type of a-chronological analysis, chapter two will consider the construction of official structures in Irish society in the nineteenth century. It will look at the roots of institutionalisation in Irish society and by extension the systems of categorisation imitated by processes of modernisation initiated while Ireland was part of the British Empire. These processes and systems contributed to the emergence of an idealised identity of Irishness that accompanied the emerging nation in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The unspoken and latent effects of the Famine and mass emigration also contributed to the Irish experience of modernity and the mass movements of people associated with modernisation. The latent effects of these events however belong, in some respects, to the unspoken elements of Irish identity that shape memory and habitus.

Chapter two ends by moving forward to 1984 and to "The Kerry Babies Case" which will be drawn upon as an example of the vexatious which could no longer be contained by the official concrete and abstract structures of society. What came to be known as "The Kerry Babies Case" came about when the murdered body of an infant was found on a beach in Co. Kerry in April 1984. Following this discovery a young woman named

Joanne Hayes was arrested on suspicion of having committed a violent act of infanticide. Hayes was known locally to be engaged in a romantic affair with a married man. Garda suspicion was aroused in relation to Joanne Hayes when it became known that she had presented at a local hospital with signs of a miscarriage.¹⁹ When the body of her miscarried baby was not found, Joanne Hayes was arrested and was later committed to an institution for the mentally ill. Despite the later discovery of the body of Joanne Hayes' baby on the grounds of the farm where she lived proving thus her innocence, Joanne Hayes remained incarcerated for some time. A number of concerned interest groups, which consisted mainly of people from the Women's Movement, continued to apply pressure on the structures of the state until 1985 when a tribunal was held which examined the details of the case. While it quickly became clear that the baby found on the beach could not be the corpse of Joanne Hayes' infant, the State continued to invoke a defence that sought to prove her guilt. Despite, accusations of police brutality in relation to the exhortation of statements from Joanne and her family, neither the family name nor that of Joanne Hayes has ever been fully cleared. The proceedings of "The Kerry Babies Case" illustrate the extent to which official state structures supported an ethos and habitus that worked continuously to maintain a bounding isolation between official Ireland and the vexatious. The body of the murdered infant found between rocks on the sea packed sand in Cahersiveen, Co. Kerry in April 1984 shocked Irish society and unsettled the defined and tightly bound "mechanisms" that had sealed the space of the body within official discourse.²⁰ Unspoken traces of the past, and that which cannot be fully controlled through language or through official structures, arrived into the liminal space between the sea and the land and upset the official ethos and habitus of the population. In this respect "The Kerry Babies Case" acts, within this thesis, as a reference point for the effects of outbursts of the vexatious on Irish society.

Chapter three will develop this theme but, in a genealogical twist, will return to a map of the Cahersiveen area that was compiled in 1842 as part of the first Ordnance Survey of Ireland. Analysis of this map will facilitate an inquiry into the visual expression of Irish identity through a consideration of the re-naming of a children's burial ground as a *cillín* in the twentieth century under the auspices of the Republic. In extending this analysis, chapter three will explore the physicality of the state through its institutions

¹⁹ Garda here refers to the Irish police force.

²⁰ Colebrook describes the type of mechanisms to which Deleuze and Guattari refer as a "closed machine with a specific function". Colebrook, Claire, *Gilles Deleuze* (London: Routledge, 2002) 56.

and their visibility within society. The Irish Free State and the Republic both built on these physical expressions of the state established while Ireland was part of the British Empire. This chapter will also look at the development of an ethos closely aligned with an emergent conservative Catholicism and middle class respectability that found its expression in the enforcement of dominant discourses. Those discourses outlined a “field ... of operations” that facilitated the recognition of acceptable bodies.²¹ Following from this, unrecognised bodies were deemed unacceptable and were consigned to the silent zones beyond dominant discourse. Bodies that were pushed beyond the zones of recognition include the TB body. Infanticide is also considered as a practice that emerges from its specific cultural context. In considering these types of vexatious bodies and practices, chapter three will lead into a closer analysis of modernisation and the tensions that accumulated around it as a process of change in Irish society; this theme will be developed in chapter four.

Chapter four will concentrate largely on discourses of the body and their relationship with modernisation as well as attitudes towards modernisation in the twentieth century. This analysis locates discourses of the body within the tensions that were building in Irish society during the late 1970s. The continuous use of Foucault’s genealogical approach facilitates a movement up and down through the changes instigated by The Women’s Movement and other groups before the late 1970s. However, the focus of this analysis will lie in the emergence of pronounced liberal and conservative discourses and will examine their position within the dominant discourses of official Ireland. The work of Ruth Barton, John Horgan, Chris Morash and Lance Pettitt provide useful contextualisation for the history of the development of film and media in Ireland through which this research traces the contraction and expansion of discourses of liberalism and conservatism during the late 1970s and 1980s.²² Discourses of the body will be traced through an analysis of print material in newspapers and popular cultural and political magazines of the time in a way that facilitates a critique of the role of media in the portrayal of conservative attitudes towards the body as atavistic. Atavism is used here in reference to what appears as the return of conservative attitudes wrapped

21 Butler, Judith, *Undoing Gender* (London: Routledge, 2004) 32.

22 Barton, Ruth, *Irish National Cinema* (London: Routledge, 2004); Horgan, John, *Broadcasting and Public Life: RTÉ News and Current Affairs 1926-1997* (Dublin: Four Courts press, 2004) ; Morash, Christopher, *A History of the Media in Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Pettitt, Lance, *Screening Ireland: Film and Television Representation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000).

up in a type of Catholicism that some sectors of society perceived as belonging to the past and not in the manner in which the term atavism was used by critics such as Gibbons and Kearney in the 1980s.²³ In examining representations of the body and social inequalities with the serial drama *The Spike*, chapter five will build on this analysis. This examination will be supported by an analysis of the reaction within the print media to *The Spike*. The series, which was removed from programming before its completion, provoked a strong reaction within conservative pressure groups. The mobilisation of these groups not only led to the truncation of the series but as well as to the removal of the Director of Programming from his post in Radio Telefís Éireann, or RTÉ which is the national broadcaster, indicating that, while a conservative Catholic and respectable middle class ethos may have seemed atavistic and as belonging to a small sector of Irish society, it continued to exert considerable influence on ideals of Irishness and behavioural expectations.

The final chapter, chapter six, will continue to analyse the impact of the vexatious on official discourses of the body by looking at the emergence of the AIDS body within 1980s Ireland. This chapter will consider the AIDS body as a vexatious one that was considered a universal threat but which is seen to have emerged from the previously unrecognised space of society where the vexatious lurks. It will also look at the growth of interest groups as knots of activity that occur laterally in society. In the absence of a government response, these groups aimed to provide information on AIDS largely to the gay community. Chapter six will examine the effect these groups and the information they were providing had on official structures and the moves they instigated in facilitating the recognition of gay rights groups within dominant discourses via the language of medicalisation. While the positivity of this inclusivity must be acknowledged, it simultaneously served to contradict efforts made within the global scientific and medical communities to communicate the universality of AIDS to the public. In this respect chapter six will conduct an inquiry into the context which facilitated moves towards a social inclusivity that allowed what were previously seen as vexatious bodies to become partially included. In doing so, this chapter will move towards an analysis of the shift towards discourses of medicalisation and biomedicalisation and the expression or inclusion of the vexatious within official discourses through that shift.

²³ Gibbons, Luke, "Peripheral Visions" in *Circa* 35 (June – July 1987) 12 – 13; Kearney, Richard, "Poetry, Language and Identity: A Note on Seamus Heaney" in *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 300.75 (Winter 1986) 552 – 563.

In the final chapter the analysis of print and broadcast material will be conducted through ideas drawn from Deleuze and Guattari's work *A Thousand Plateaus*.²⁴ In this respect the closing parts of this research will inquiry into the usefulness of post-structuralist theory in approaching the archive and in examining official discourses of the body within Irish society. The closing analysis of this chapter will focus on the space of the AIDS body within official discourses between 1985 and 1987. However, the concluding section of this research will focus on the changing position of the body within an Ireland that was on the cusp of globalisation and how the vexatious fits within that Ireland. As with each other chapter, chapter six will draw on the print media to contextualise the shifting discourses of the body and the pressures that build up around outbursts of the vexatious. Here the print media includes the national broadsheets, *The Irish Times*, *The Irish Independent* and *The Irish Press* as well as the popular magazines *Hotpress*, *The Phoenix* and *In Dublin*. The national broadsheets were chosen in order to provide a context for the discussions of the body that were taking place on a national level. In this respect the use of broadsheets facilitates, to some extent, an insight into the overall mood of the nation and the role these broadsheets played in supporting and challenging official discourses and the ethos and habitus in which they were located. The magazines chosen acted as conduits for the expression of counteracting voices within mainstream discourse and as a result provide a forum through which some of the counteracting tensions that build up around unrecognised bodies may be played out. Finally the broadcasts used in this thesis were chosen for a number of different reasons. *The Spike*, which will be analysed in chapter five, provoked a strong reaction within media audiences as did *The Late Late Show* broadcast in 1987. *The Spike* and *The Late Late Show* bookend the analysis of the vexatious and the body within official Irish discourses, while the analysis of popular current affairs program *Today Tonight* enables a mapping of the slight changes that occurred within the contours of language used to discuss the AIDS body in the mid 1980s.

The space of the body within official discourses of Irishness has a contentious history. This thesis seeks to explore the complexities of the history through an a-chronological

²⁴ Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus : Capitalism and Schizophrenia* Trans Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

episodic examination of the archive. Analysis of archive material is conducted through a genealogical approach that facilitates the mapping of hegemonic accommodations of the vexatious within dominant discourses. This thesis argues that the official discourses of Irish society could no longer contain elements of the vexatious bodies which the emergence of AIDS brought to the fore. In response to that pressure official Ireland adopted a genealogical turn within dominant discourses by facilitating a move towards accelerated medicalisation and the elements of modernisation. In this respect, the emergence of the AIDS body may be considered a watershed within Irish society and the hegemonic accommodation of that body opened up new semantic channels within dominant discourses that allowed the discussion of what had previously been consigned to sites of silence beyond what had previously been considered acceptable within a dominant ethos and habitus shaped by conservative Catholicism and the behavioural expectations of middle class respectability. In developing a theoretical lens from an analysis from archive material this thesis considers what happens when what we have ignored surfaces, shocks and disturbs official discourses and forces us to confront what we had previously refused to recognise

Chapter One

Locating the Body

In considering a range of different texts this thesis examines the connection between historical moments, the narratives that dominated and the narratives that lay outside of those moments. Moving between texts and narratives in this way facilitates the emergence of connections across the archive thus opening new spaces of narration and documentation. Responding to these new spaces requires the development of a theoretical model that addresses the issues surrounding the body in Irish society. In developing a theoretical model that is a response to analysis of archive material this thesis locates the body within the theories of Michel Foucault and draws on Foucault's genealogical method as a practise that informs the structure of analysis presented here.²⁵ Where Foucault's archaeological method seeks to identify discursive formations, the genealogical method seeks to inquire into the system of connections that work in the creation of these formations thus de-privileging the narratives that surrounded particular historical bodies. This chapter also explores the theories of Judith Butler, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari and identifies aspects of their work that responds to the problematisations of established narratives.

Prevailing perceptions of the body and official discourses passed through a number of turbulent moments during the 1980s. The unfolding of these moments pitched issues surrounding the body into the public sphere inducing temporary states of agitation within official discourses that impacted upon the very space that defined the body. Temporarily destabilised by each moment the otherwise defined discourse of official bodies was infiltrated by unofficial bodies. However, the robust nature of official structures enabled discourses of the body to absorb interruptions and agitations. Notwithstanding the deep rootedness of the body in official discourses within Irish political, social and cultural life, gradually the position of the body and perceptions of it were undergoing adjustments gradually. To some, however, a stable discourse of the body pointed to a moral, social and political consistency that supported abstract ideals of Irishness and the lived practices associated with those ideals. While minor

25 Foucault, Michel, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* Translated A.M Sheridan (Bristol: Tavistock, 1974); Foucault, Michel, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1976) & Foucault, Michel, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1980). Together these three publications chart the development of Foucault's genealogical approach to history and to the archive. The first volume of his work on the history of sexuality advocates genealogy as a way of exploring discursive and non-discursive formations that come to surround specific moments in time. Foucault, Michel, *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality Volume 1* (London: Penguin Books, 1990).

adjustments were constantly at work within Irish society the changes they induced were almost imperceptible or occurred at such a pedestrian rate that they posed little threat to official ideals or discourses. However, this was not the case in relation to AIDS. As happened with the emergence of a number of other bodies the AIDS body was received as a more than a challenge to official discourses; rather, it was considered a threat and one which led an audience member of *The Late Late Show* in 1987 to state “This is death”.²⁶

The words, “This is death” imply a conclusive threat to people, to the dominant perception of bodies, to official discourses and to the space of acceptable bodies within those discourses. Infected bodies were largely perceived as belonging to what were known as high risk groups such as homosexuals, haemophiliacs, intravenous drug users and prostitutes and the emergence of AIDS brought those groups, who were usually consigned to the outside, into the public sphere. Discourses of the body that had been sealed within the structures of official Ireland were upset and unsettled by the emergence of an unfamiliar body. This shift from the margins towards the centre prompted the integration of medicalised knowledge into the national habitus thus displaced some of the accepted tenets of middle class respectability and conservative Catholic morality. Following from this, it is important to explore the process set in motion by the emergence of the troublesome bodies which caused this shift and to ask if the eventual integration of the troublesome AIDS body meant “death” for ideals of Irishness and the official discourses that created and sustained those ideals. It could be argued that the emergence of AIDS and the integration of medical knowledge largely associated with modernity spelled the end of Ireland that had been developing since the Act of Union and indicated a move towards a society where the outside became part of the inside.

In relation to this research, the HIV body is seen as a body that has been ordered by discourse. Formerly a healthy body, it has been disturbed by a virus. The body as a natural form has been changed; it has become something else. Nature has disturbed nature. The body, whilst remaining singular, has also been transformed; it has mutated

²⁶ Byrne, Gay, *The Late Late Show Extra* RTÉ archive reference 96D00773 Recorded 15/05/1987.

and morphed into new entities, still in communication with nature, but also divorced from the discourse of the healthy body.²⁷ It has become a site of multiplicity that as a cultural form resists itself and, as such, throws the discourse of the healthy body into chaos. In time, the discourse of medicine orders that chaos so that the body may occupy the singular space that dominates perceptions in social macro-politics once more. Beyond the surface, however, the body itself, that is the biological body, remains chaotic and systemised simultaneously. This chaos emerges through representations of the body as an infected entity and as an entity that is to be feared. Simultaneously, the body also demands, from the dominant singular site it occupies and through its organised social voice, medical care, and thus a return to its state as a healthy body via participation in restorative paradigms.

In order to consider the process through which the AIDS body moved from being an outside disturbance, constituted by multiple diseases, to being perceived as a singular entity defined as a syndrome, it is necessary to look at how other vexatious entities became integrated into Irish society. Examples of this include the integration of the TB body. Considered unclean, hyper-sexualised and disturbing, the TB body was eventually managed into an ordered, surveyed, medicalised and managed space within discourses of the body. Infanticide and the changing perception of it in nineteenth and twentieth century Ireland also offers a useful insight into the gradual changes a vexatious entity or phenomena undergoes when moving from being shock-inducing to being managed and ordered by both the concrete institutions and abstract structures of society. This management and integration of the sick, ill or abject body is achieved through surveillance and self-policing. Within Western medicine, the sick body occupies a space that has been transformed by epistemological changes and social attitudes alike. Susan Sontag regards the modern “myth of TB”²⁸ and the notion of “premodern illness”²⁹ as foils of each other. TB is mythologized and romanticised as an invisible disease, rendered opaque by the mechanics of an X-ray but only after specks of red blood

²⁷ Here nature is referred as a biological system at work around and within us.

²⁸ Sontag, Susan, *Illness as metaphor and AIDS and its Metaphors* (London: Penguin Classics, 1990) 32.

²⁹ Sontag, Susan, *Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and its Metaphors* 120.

coughed out onto a handkerchief³⁰ have signalled its existence. By contrast, premodern medicine is experienced, Sontag writes, as “intuitively, as a relation of outside and inside”.³¹ What appears on the surface of the body is an expression of what is experienced as an “interior sensation”.³² Exteriors come to be seen as an outward mapping of the interior that is confirmed by the intricacies of the post-mortem. Once results are articulated, they become formalised in medical discourse, the vectors of which touch upon and overlap with other types of discourse. Following from this, Catherine Walby comments that biomedicine “translates and rearticulates ‘non-scientific’ ideas about sexuality, about social order, about culture in its technical discourses”.³³ Indeed, the ill body, and its relationship with western medicine as an “establishment” is an expression of the interdependency of cultural perception and the knowledge generated by institutions in specific circumstances to create the discourse of a site of singularity that the body comes to occupy. In *The Birth of the Clinic* Michel Foucault writes that patients, doctors and nurses are “tolerated as disturbances that can hardly be avoided” in the “rational space of disease”, but by mapping the body through a combination of pictures and narrative, disease becomes “apparent” in the body and it meets “the concrete space of perception.”³⁴ We come to see, through our bodies, to the site of the disease, to the point within us where disease lives, to where it seems to hibernate and from where it strikes. While that site garners its information from the nexus of the language of medicine, technology, the body and society, the generation and reception of this knowledge may also indicate the dominance of certain cultural concerns and issues, pertaining to a given society at a given moment.

Discourses of the body map the reception of this knowledge and act as spatial coordinates for the organisation of that knowledge. In this respect, the discourses that surrounded AIDS in Ireland during the mid 1980s are significant. Analysis of these discourses suggests the vulnerability of the objectivity of science and medicine to the

30 Sontag, Susan., *Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and its Metaphors* 11.

31 Sontag, Susan., *Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and its Metaphors* 120.

32 Sontag, Susan., *Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and its Metaphors* 120.

33 Walby, Catherine, *AIDS and the Body Politic. Biomedicine and Sexual Difference* (London: Routledge, 1996) 5.

34 Foucault, Michel, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1976) 9.

pressures of moral, cultural and political panic. The unhealthy AIDS body destabilises the operation of social and cultural processes. When considered in this way the leisioned body is reminiscent of the premodern but also of something unnamed, prior to that. Breakouts on the skin bespeak the interior failure of the machines of the body, of the clash of interconnecting “machinic” parts of the body that induces a potentially chaotic flow of new connections that render the usual systems and connections incongruent with each other.³⁵ The understanding of bodily functions and organs organised into a hierarchy becomes corrupted as the problematic inside cannibalises itself, the conflict boils over, cracks the skin and colonises the exterior thus corrupting how we see ourselves. The overspill of this corrupted body into official structures is a pure event, an unordered and resistant one that upsets the social structures and behaviours that have grown in conjunction with changes in economics, technology, belief understandings of nature, visualizations of god, society and culture, rendering them momentarily un-narrated. In seeking to name this unordered body, medical discourse attempted to draw the HIV body in line with pre-existing ordered medical narratives. A confluence of narratives produce prevailing perceptions of moral and social order in our society, which then seek to draw the AIDS body into its web of discourse, to narrate it and, hence, to make sense of it by locating the AIDS body in a space that relates to the dominant centers of these discourses, so that collective identities and emphatic understandings may be drawn around the space it occupies. Discourses of the body name, categorise and render bodies recognisable within our society. In examining the appearance of AIDS in Ireland, this process of naming, recognising and understanding were be considered as a vital element of the processes through which the public are informed and come to accept, at least partially, disturbing, unsettling bodies.

Arriving at the point whereby AIDS was partially included within official structures involved overcoming the moral panic that initially defined the emergence of the AIDS body in Irish society. That emergence disrupted official discourses of the body in a way that contributed to moral tension and eventually moral panic. Moral panic is a process of containment and narratisation. Stanley Cohen describes it as a process through which certain groups or conditions “emerge to become defined as a threat to societal values

³⁵ This term is borrowed from Deleuze and Guattari. Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari, *Thousand Plateaus : Capitalism and Schizophrenia* Translated Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

and interests”.³⁶ Moral panics emerge from pre-existing social narratives and the order that has been set in place. The discourses of earlier moral panics are recycled in the labelling of a new moral panic and the identification of people, events or conditions as “folk devils”, as “visible reminders of what we should not be”.³⁷ As a process of containment and narration, it invokes extreme reactions and interventionist tactics. For instance, Cohen notes that in the four days that followed the clashes between Mods and Rockers in Margate on Whit Sunday in 1964 the *Evening Argus* printed 23 letters: of those 23 letters, seven suggested corporal punishment as a solution to the perceived mob activity of adolescents. The publication of such letters, perhaps at the expense of letters that offered less sensationalist solutions, adds to the fever already generated around the adolescents in question. Suggestions of extreme intervention also imply that the behaviour of these young people is something that must be not only contained but also stamped out with a preventative seal of reoccurrence as quickly as possible before the moral order of the whole state is upset. This notion that clashes between adolescents on a beach in an English resort could undermine the social and moral order of Britain is the result of an inflated sense of panic that involves a certain amount of “shadow boxing” through the staging of a “very bad case of false consciousness”, after which the state will, by and large, remain the same.³⁸ The moral panic which came to surround AIDS in 1987 can also be seen as an attempt to narrate and contain the threat the syndrome posed to a moral structure rather than simply an attempt to contain the spread of infection.

On the one hand, Cohen acknowledges that many moral panics may simply exist as media maelstroms which disappear forever. On the other hand, a number of them may also have “more serious and long lasting repercussions” upon legal and social policy, and indeed on how “society conceives itself”.³⁹ In relation to Ireland, Luke Gibbons has noted that a collision of issues with a seemingly established moral order has, in the past, often reined in media discussion. This happened in 1983, when the RTÉ Authority prevented a discussion about the upcoming referendum on abortion from taking place

³⁶ Cohen, Stanley, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics. The Making of Mods and Rockers* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980) 9.

³⁷ Cohen, Stanley, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics. The Making of Mods and Rockers* 10.

³⁸ Cohen, Stanley, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics. The Making of Mods and Rockers* xi.

³⁹ Cohen, Stanley, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics. The Making of Mods and Rockers* 10.

on an episode of *The Late, Late Show*.⁴⁰ This thesis will argue the media in Ireland in the 1970s and 1980s also challenged and questioned traditional values.⁴¹ During this time a mobilisation of traditional values, or what may be perceived of as conservatism, also occurred within the media. Angela McRobbie has suggested that moral panics have become “inextricably connected with conservatism” and continue to be one of the “most effective strategies of the right for securing popular support for its values and its policies.”⁴² McRobbie’s analysis draws on Stuart Hall’s Marxist perspective which sets moral panic in the context of the political manipulation of interest groups.⁴³ Her observations have useful implications for this research and will be considered in later chapters in relation to the role the Irish media played in shaping the debate surrounding issues of AIDS, discourses of the body, morality, secularisation and the body in 1980s Ireland. McRobbie and her co-writer Sarah L Thornton, argue that moral panics “act as a form of ideological cohesion which draws on the complex language of nostalgia”.⁴⁴ This will be considered in conjunction with Gibbons’ remarks on the mobilisation of the media in Ireland, in the intended exploration of discourses of the body in Ireland and the emergence of the AIDS body in the 1980s. Such concepts will be of particular relevance to the analysis of the RTÉ drama *The Spike*, which was perceived by some audiences as a challenge to the conservative sectors of society. Reactions to an episode of the *The Late, Late Show* in 1987 point to a similar reception. *The Late Late Show* found itself caught between the pressing urgency of AIDS and its pedagogical role in Irish society.

It is important to note, as McRobbie does, that the “turn over” of moral panic has increased with the “massively expanded mass media”.⁴⁵ Furthermore, she observes that

40 Gibbons, Luke, *Transformations in Irish Culture* (Cork: Cork University Press in association with Field Day Essays, 1996) 79.

41 Gibbons, Luke, *Transformations in Irish Culture* 44.

42 McRobbie, Angela, “The Moral Panic in the Age of the Postmodern Mass Media” in *Postmodernism and Popular Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994) 198.

43 Hall, Stuart, *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order* (London: Macmillan Press, 1978).

44 McRobbie, Angela, and Thornton, Sarah L., “Rethinking ‘Moral Panic’ for Multi-Mediated Social Worlds” in *The British Journal of Sociology* 46.4 (1995) 562.

the creation of moral panic has become a technique frequently used by journalists to manufacture news. This suggests a close alliance between journalists and the media and the perceived moral guardians of the right, in what Nachman Ben-Yehuda calls the reification of panic.⁴⁶ However, whether such alliances are the results of conscious development in the mainstream media or not has become of lesser consequence since the development of the internet and other types of media. Indeed, to a great extent the mobilisation of new media by minority and opposition groups in recent times serves to counteract the significance of such alliances. At this point the term moral panic has become somewhat redundant and it may be more accurate to describe the current practices in the media as patterns “of problematisation”, as noted by Sean Hier in his analysis of drug use in 2002.⁴⁷ The media in 1980s Ireland was embedded in a web of cultural relations that had not yet been exposed to the huge developments in new media that occurred in the 1990s. Nevertheless, as Chris Morash notes, the Irish media underwent a period of expansion in the 1980s.⁴⁸ RTÉ, the national broadcaster, existed within a network of media relations that was influenced by the headlines of the popular press and national broadsheets, while being a significant agenda-setter itself. When read through Hall’s Althusserian lens it becomes clear that the type of media mobilisation that surrounded moral panic in Britain in the 1960s is closer to the model of moral panic Irish society experienced and engaged with through the media during the emergence of AIDS in the mid 1980s than to the type of contemporary “probelmatisations” described by Hier.

In instances of moral panic, media representations are a significant mode through which the public engages with the body. Indeed, Deborah Lupton observes that “people construct their understanding of the world, including their beliefs about medicine and disease from their interaction with cultural products as well as personal experience and

45 McRobbie, Angela, “The Moral Panic in the Age of the Postmodern Mass Media” in *Postmodernism and Popular Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994) 198.

46 Ben- Yehuda, Nachman, “The Sociology of Moral Panic” in *The Sociology Quarterly* 27.4 (1986) 499.

47 Hier, Sean P., “Raves, Risks and the Ecstasy Panic: A Case Study in the Subversive Nature of Moral Regulation” in *The Canadian Journal of Sociology* 27.1 (2002) 35.

48 Morash, Christopher, *A History of the Media in Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) 193.

discussion with others.”⁴⁹ She notes the significance of the mass media in portraying medicine, healthcare, illness and the body itself, as well as the contribution such representations make to the available knowledge and the pool of interpretations which people select in constructing their individual understandings of the world and the place the ill body occupies within it. Media representations reinforce the stigmatised identity of the HIV and AIDS body as threatening and undermining the seemingly inherent moral order of our society.

Consequently, an analysis of the space which the body occupies in Western culture is vital in moving closer to achieving such an engagement since, in the case of the HIV and AIDS, the body is the locus in which speech, performance, agency, medical knowledge and biological processes converge. Traditional analyses of the space the body occupies in western culture, whether an empirical analysis, a Marxist analysis or a feminist analysis, cannot adequately account for the unique cultural, social and political circumstances under which Ireland developed in the twentieth century. Empirical analysis enables the investigation of the broad structure of a society and seeks out the causes and effects of change in concrete, tangible events. However, this mode of inquiry does not provide an adequate explanation for the complex cultural exchanges central to the moral panic or “probelmatisations” that surrounded AIDS in Ireland in the 1980s. Likewise, while valuable work has been done by both Marxists and feminists in Ireland, both theoretical standpoints tend to distil the causes and effects of change to a robust association with the dynamics of power and structure. For instance, in their work documenting the Women’s Movement in Ireland, Linda Connolly and Tina O’Toole have provided cultural studies with a productive insight into the role of feminism in nation building.⁵⁰ As Connolly observes, prior to the formalisation of the Women’s Movement, through the establishment of the Council for The Status of Women in 1972, many women’s groups were “integral to the State-building agenda.”⁵¹ Of course, when considered in conjunction with traditional accounts of the marginalisation of women in the State, this statement may imply a certain scepticism in relation to state agendas.

49 Lupton, Deborah, *Illness and Culture. Disease and the Body in Western Culture* (London: Sage Publications, 2003) 19.

24 Connolly, Linda & Tina O’ Toole, *Documenting Irish Feminisms: The Second Wave* (Dublin: The Woodfield Press, 2005).

51 Connolly, Linda, *The Irish Women’s Movement: From Revolution to Devolution* (Dublin: The Lilliput Press, 2003) 90.

Indeed, Carol Coulter's work on the involvement of feminism with nationalism in Ireland, notes that prior to the establishment of the Free State women were involved in many of the emancipatory organisations that set the events of 1916 and the War of Independence in motion. The Women's Movement became absorbed into what Coulter terms "a generalised eruption of resistance to the *status quo*."⁵² Despite this involvement however, the Cumann na nGaedhael government that headed the state upon its establishment introduced legislation that, as Coulter writes, "restricted the rights of women and modified the statements of equality contained in the 1916 Proclamation and the 1922 Constitution."⁵³ In addition, Article 41 of the 1937 Constitution "underpinned discriminatory measures against women" and assigned their primary role in society to that of a mother.⁵⁴ This prescription has had a long term impact on the status of women in Irish society as dependent carers, who, as a result, were often excluded from public life. Women, as Anne Coakley writes, "are dependent because they care for other dependents" which had a significant long term impact on discourses of the body.⁵⁵

While acknowledging this valuable feminist analysis of Irish history, for the purpose of this project, its significance lies in how that analysis uses language. Feminism successfully de-centres narrative strategies; it also distils the language of narrative to terms that are specific to feminism. One feminist approach to power may be traced through such language evidenced in Gerardine Meaney's *Sex and Nation: Women in Irish Culture and Politics*. Meaney argues that the results of the referendum on the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution demonstrated the "extent to which women only exist as a function of their maternity in the dominant ideology of Southern Ireland" as well as the "distrust and fear" of women that is rooted in "the idealisation of the mother in Irish culture as an all-powerful, dehumanised figure."⁵⁶ While such language may

52 Coulter, Carol, *The Hidden Tradition: Feminism, Women and Nationalism in Ireland* Ed. J.J. Lee (Cork: Cork University Press, 1994) 20.

53 Coulter, Carol *The Hidden Tradition* 9.

54 Coulter, Carol, *The Hidden Tradition* 27.

55 Coakley, Anne, "Gendered Citizenship: The Social Construction of Mothers in Ireland" in *Women and Irish Society: A Sociological Reader* Ed Anne Bryne and Madeline Leonard (Britain: Beyond the Pale Publications, 1997) 183.

56 Meaney, Gerardine, "Sex and Nation: Women in Irish Culture and Politics" in *Irish Women's Studies Reader* Ed. Ailbhe Smyth (Dublin: Attic Press, 1993) 230-231.

very well be aimed at its readership as a rallying cry, it also ignores the many women who have voted against the amendment and emphasises a totalizing understanding of what the gender may mean to the individual member of the electorate. It presumes that to be female is to desire the same results for women as the agendas set out by the Women's Movement and ignores differences between the individual female voters. Such totalizing language may also be found in a paper given by Ailbhe Smyth in 2005. Smyth decries the flattening out of language in discussions of gender politics and the resulting "displacement of feminist politics."⁵⁷ Smyth calls for a return to the language of contestation that facilitated and characterised the politics of the Women's Movement in the 1970s and a departure from what she sees as the "dilution" of feminist agendas and its involvement in "weak integrationist politics of consensus and partnership."⁵⁸ In one way, Smyth seems to be overlooking the inappropriate nature of protest politics for a movement that has already been integrated into constitutional politics. In another way, however, she is also urging constitutional feminist politics to be more radical and to resist complacency. Emer Nolan argues that feminism in Ireland "can no longer claim a purely "subaltern" or "subversive status for Irish women" thereby implying that feminism is a fully fledged participant in constitutional politics while simultaneously suggesting a need for a more radical approach.⁵⁹ Ideally, constitutional politics legislates for the nation and, while it strives to protect vulnerable groups, the disruption of such legislation through protest politics is an extreme measure that can only be effective in extreme circumstances. Protest politics within constitutional politics holds the potential to disrupt the smooth running of the state and to overwhelm other vulnerable groups. Having said this, Smyth may also be using language to incite the Women's Movement to become more active in constitutional politics. This research however, requires a theoretical framework that, as far as possible, can consider the constitution of gender, sexuality and the body in Irish society and the disruption of that constitution through language that does not privilege the agenda of one gender over another. It considers the

57 Smyth, Ailbhe, "Gendering on Down: Reflections in Gender, Equality, and Politics in Ireland" in *Feminisms: Within and Without. Papers Delivered at the Women's Studies Conference July 2005* Ed. Rebecca Pelan (Galway: Women's Studies Center NUIG, 2006) 9.

58 Smyth, Ailbhe, "Gendering on Down" 9.

59 Nolan, Emer, "Postcolonial Literary Studies, Nationalism, and Feminist Critique in Contemporary Ireland" in *Éire-Ireland* 42 .1&2 (2007) 345.

impact a disruptive body had on official discourses of the body and the positions within which prevailing perceptions held it.

Marxism presents a similar difficulty in its potential application to this research. Mark Poster and Hayden White agree that Marxism constructs a narrative of history that privileges one factor above all others and as a result, constructs a “deterministic” narrative of history.⁶⁰ This determinism is dependent on a type of structuring that renders the narrative gaps between the modes of production “invisible” and creates a “totalizing history” that is anti-emancipatory rather than liberating.⁶¹ Deveraux Kennedy outlines “total history” as a concept that attempts to lend coherence to all the activities in a temporal time and space to form “a unity stemming from some form of pervasive or central cause”.⁶² In terms of Marxism, this “central cause” is economics and the means of production; thus the interpretation of history becomes entrenched in economics. White criticises Marxism for its interpretation of historical data as a mode of predicting the next stage in historical narrative. While the irony of predicting the future of history cannot be dismissed here, White interprets such prediction as “reductionist” and diminishes events in the historical field “to the status of manifestations of impersonal casual agencies” motivated by economics as the “central cause”.⁶³ In addition, Jon Elster argues that Marxism sees politics on the one hand as “part of the superstructure and hence of the forces that oppose social change, wherein the political system stabilizes the dominant economic relations, on the other hand, politics is a medium for revolution and hence for social change.”⁶⁴ This being the case, elements of Marxism can prove very useful when analysing institutions and discourses as elements of a stable macro-political and social network of relations that also possess the capacity to drive change from within those same structures. Indeed, in drawing on Marxist terminology this thesis points to the extent that terminology has become engrained in discourses of

60 White, Hayden, “The Historical Text as Literary Artifact” in *History and Theory: Contemporary Readings* Eds. Brian Fay, Philip Pomper & Richard T. Vann (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1988) 26.

61 Poster, Mark, “Foucault, the Present and History” in *Cultural Critique* 8. Winter (1987-1988) 107.

62 Kennedy, Deveraux, “Michel Foucault: The Archaeology and Sociology of Knowledge” in *Theory and Society* 8.2 (1979) 272.

63 White, Hayden, *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985) 66.

64 Elster, Jon, *An Introduction to Karl Marx* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) 141.

culture and economy. While those terms themselves can be reduced to the level of a mechanistic analysis, they also provide channels through which the links between culture, daily practises and the effects of the economy may be discussed. In using vocabularies of ideology and hegemony this thesis also points to the weaknesses within some applications of Marxist theory which see this terminology as a way of accounting for entities and experiences which lie beyond language and which therefore, can never be fully accommodated within official discourses.

Additional criticisms of what will be termed here “umbrella Marxism” include those voiced by Hayden White, who brings attention to a second weakness in Marxist analysis that is relevant to this research. In *The Content of Form*, White notes the radicalism of Marxism as both a “social philosophy and especially as a critique of capitalism”, but criticises it as being no more “visionary than its bourgeois counterpart”.⁶⁵ White suggest that Marxists see the future in terms of economic development only. The type of development that will take place can thus be predicted by the type of economic strategies put in place by a government. One aspect of this research is to analyse the role of media responses and representations as integral forces of change in the Ireland in the 1980s, as, what Gibbons terms, “modernization agencies”.⁶⁶ Therefore, to adopt a deterministic and an economistic type of theoretical framework, such as Marxism, would limit the analysis of the archive material to interpretations of economics and furthermore, serve to overlook the insight that archive analysis may give in to the invisible and often spontaneously triggered dynamics of Irish society. In this respect, Marxist theory presumes that culture, as a part of a society’s superstructure, functions as an expression of the ideology of a capitalist system. Consequently, culture comes to be considered as the visible link between the base of society and its superstructures. While culture is influenced by the system from which it emerges, that is not the only influence to be considered.

65 White, Hayden, *The Content of Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989) 73.

66 Gibbons, Luke, *Transformations in Irish Culture* (Cork: Cork University Press in association with Field Day Essays, 1996) 4.

Having said this, and also having considered the general accepted weaknesses of Marxism, it must be noted that Marxism in Ireland has been adapted to include considerations of colonisation and its impact psychologically as well as economically and politically on the population of Ireland. To interpret Irish culture, as Terry Eagleton does, through the confluential lenses of Marxism and psychoanalysis certainly opens Irish culture up to a more multifaceted analysis than a pure Marxist approach does on its own. Eagleton has noted that the “unconscious is a site of ambivalence”.⁶⁷ Eagleton considers Ireland as Britain’s “monstrous unconscious” that suffers as the “secret materialist history of the endemically idealist England”; he also sees Ireland as a playful release from the ideological principles that drove Britain during the industrial revolution.⁶⁸ In a slight fracturing of Marxism, Eagleton’s Ireland is as “nature to England’s Culture”, thus facilitating an analysis of Ireland as a psychological and economic effect of Britain.⁶⁹ This unshelling of Marxism, while welcome, is also limited. The constraints of such an interpretation, to some extent, have the potential to hoodwink Irish cultural studies because through this lens Ireland as a cultural entity remains the production of an interpretation that places it on the limits of colonial policy or in the shadow of Britain. In this sense, Ireland continues to be seen as the historical product of the past. Furthermore, colonisation continues to be considered as an historical experience that haunts the present; that is the difficulties experienced as a result of colonisation added to the failure of the British to modernize Ireland.

The loss of culture and consequently the erosion of a common centre of understanding, the monumental loss of life and the brutality to which the colonised were subjected contributed to what Joe Cleary describes as a gradual process of – “dispossession, subordination and the loss of sovereignty, the collapse of the indigenous social order, the gradual disintegration of its Gaelic cultural system and successive waves of politically or economically enforced migration.”⁷⁰ As Cleary writes, a socially,

⁶⁷ Eagleton, Terry, *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger: Studies in Irish Culture* (London: Verso, 1995).

⁶⁸ Eagleton, Terry, *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger: Studies in Irish Culture* 8-9.

⁶⁹ Eagleton, Terry, *Heathcliff* 9.

⁷⁰ Cleary, Joe, “Capital and Culture in Twentieth Century Ireland: Changing Configurations” in *Outrageous Fortunes: Culture and Capital in Modern Ireland* (Dublin: Field Day Publications, 2006) 59.

politically and economically fallow period was to be expected after the upheaval of the Irish revolution and the Civil War. However, the near shuddering halt of the Irish economy, social policy and political change between the 1920s and 1960s cannot continue to be interpreted as the effects of colonisation that would have, in any case, come to an end.⁷¹ Elsewhere Cleary writes that discourses that contextualised Ireland in terms of colonisation disappeared from Irish historiography in the twentieth century to be replaced with discourse of modernization, indicating that there has been a move away from interpretations of Ireland as simply being an effect of colonisation.⁷² An analytical paradigm may emerge from somewhere between Marxist ideas and theories of modernisation. In considering Ireland as the consequence of the Act of Union in 1801 which was, in Eagleton's words, more a reflection of "Britain's self-interested decision to set it aside" than a political and legal conjoining of the colonised with the coloniser,⁷³ in conjunction with the theories of modernization Cleary proposes for Ireland, as part of a long history of modernization and integration into an Atlantic economy, we may be able to identify that paradigm.⁷⁴ Cleary cites aspects such as discussions of the negotiations for equal rights for all citizens, discourses of moral order, the place of the body and the return of the chaotic un-understood, defiant body reminiscent of an entity that existed prior to the pre-modern. In addition, humanism, like Marxism, also fits into Kennedy's definition of a concept that creates a "total history". Explanatory humanism infers that there is a correct explanation for social phenomena that will "terminate in an appeal to human nature".⁷⁵ In this era of globalisation and the increasingly close ties between humans, the environment, business, politics, culture and technology, explanations that rely solely on human nature as their endpoint seem inadequate and burdened with an inferred weight that they are simply not robust enough to carry. The overall aim of this research is to explore the archive of material available and allow an

71 Cleary, Joe, "Distress Signals: Sean O'Faolain and the Fate of Twentieth Century Irish Literature" in *Field Day Review* Ed Seamus Deane, Brendan Mac Suibhne and Ciarán Deane 5. 2009. 72.

72 Cleary, Joe, "Irish Studies, Colonial Questions. Locating Ireland in the Colonial World" in *Outrageous Fortunes: Culture and Capital in Modern Ireland* (Dublin: Field Day Publications, 2006) 18.

73 Eagleton, Terry, *Heathcliff* 26.

74 Cleary, Joe, "Misplaced Ideas: Colonialism, Location and Dislocation in Irish Studies" in *Theorizing Ireland* Ed Claire Connolly (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003) 100-101.

75 Paden, Roger, "Foucault's Anti-Humanism" in *Human Studies – Foucault Memorial Issue* 10.1 (1987) 125.

analytic approach to the “problematizations” of discourses of the body and their relationship to ideals of Irishness in the late twentieth century.

Chaotic bodies become ordered, pure events become narrated and both require a theoretical framework that enables an analysis of this process of ordering. Thus the ideas of Michel Foucault offer an alternative to totalizing theories that seek to locate the disordering body within knowledges and the web of relations between discourses. While Foucault’s ideas will be utilised in this research, alongside those of Judith Butler, Gilles Deleuze and Guattari, this chapter will concentrate on those features of Foucault’s work most useful in the analysis of AIDS body in Ireland in the 1980s. Foucault’s ideas were borne out of the debates about the end of grand epistemologies. Indeed, a problematic relationship existed between Foucault and Marxism and between Foucault and humanism. Marxism’s totalizing narrative depends upon rigid structures that deny in depth analysis of the mechanics of compliance and resistance on both macro and micro levels. Jeffrey Weeks argues that Foucault saw Marxism as an “authoritarian discourse” that constructed and imposed its meaning as truth.⁷⁶ Such a systematic type of power, or narrative of power and history, does not sit comfortably with Foucault. To the French theorist, power is, as Best and Kellner observe, “irreducibly plural”.⁷⁷ Following from this plurality, is the presumption of the prolific and multi-layered operations of institutions and indeed the diffusion of the mechanics of power between institutions.⁷⁸ The construction of history may facilitate the narration of these operations, firstly, to privilege the effects of one institution over another in order to create a sense of a dominant ideology or, secondly, in order to encapsulate an all encompassing *zeitgeist*. Such a narration implies, as Alan Megill writes, “an irreducible interpretive element in history”.⁷⁹ To do this, however, is to ignore all other institutions and the effects of the agency of individuals in between the lines of power, no matter how stringent or relaxed those lines of power may be.

⁷⁶ Weeks, Jeffrey, “Foucault for Historians” in *History Workshop Journal* 14. Autumn (1982) 108.

⁷⁷ Best, Steven & Kellner, Douglas, “Foucault and the Critique of Modernity” in *Postmodern Theory: Critical Investigations* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1991) 56.

⁷⁸ Fox, Nick J., “Foucauldians and Sociology” in *The British Journal of Sociology* 49.3 (1998) 419.

⁷⁹ Megill, Alan, “Foucault, Structuralism, and the Ends of History” in *The Journal of Modern History* 51.3 (1979) 457.

Central to Foucault's ideas, as noted by Deveraux Kennedy, is his identification of the "historical conditions of possibility" that are enabled by his interpretation of history as possessing an "irreducible" element.⁸⁰ Since a critique of history and power is central to the intended analysis of the representation of AIDS in Ireland in the 1980s, this identification will form a significant element of the theoretical approach adopted in this thesis. Moreover, aspects of Foucault's theories of archaeology and genealogy will be used in order to mine and explore the archive of material that has become available in the conducting of this research into the representation of AIDS in Ireland in the mid-1980s. In conjunction with Foucault's theoretical underpinnings, elements of the theories of Judith Butler and Gilles Deleuze, to be explored in chapter two, will enable a consideration of the exchanges of protest, co-operation and resistance between the macro structures of our society and the individual. This exploration of the representation of AIDS in 1980s Ireland calls for a theoretical position responsive to the delicate relationships between the institutions, both cultural and political, that upheld an apparently homogenised society. It is important to stress the potential of the AIDS body to disrupt the political, cultural and social context into which it arrived in Ireland. As a result, this theoretical position must also respond to the sometimes delicate, and sometimes obvious, nuances of change induced in the seemingly robust political, social and cultural structures through disruption and the gradual reorganisation of perception.

Michel Foucault's consideration of the body, institutions and the creation of discourse offers a useful analytical tool for the exploration of representations of the AIDS body in the Irish media during the outlined time-frame. This time-frame illustrates Foucault's idea of history being constituted by constant change and continuity, simultaneously, in that social structures endured but were faced with incessant challenges. This view is an interpretation of history, and is as much, a result of the methods through which we construct history as the occurrence of the events themselves. In relation to Foucault's methodologies, Ian Hacking writes that his is "a way of analysing and coming to understand conditions of the possibility for ideas".⁸¹ In utilising Foucault, the conditions

⁸⁰ Kennedy, Deveraux, "Michel Foucault: The Archaeology and Sociology of Knowledge" 270.

⁸¹ Hacking, Ian, "The Archaeology of Foucault" in *Foucault: A Critical Reader* ed. David Couzens Hoy (Blackwell: Oxford, 1996) 30.

that enabled the challenges made to strong social, political and cultural structures and expectations will be investigated. In other words, in conducting archive analysis, this research will explore the challenges posed to dominant ideas and the changes they incurred. However, it must be stressed that while these structures were at times challenged in a manner suggestive of sharp changes in attitude, these changes cannot be assumed to be the consequence of all that went before them. Nor, can the times that followed, in social, cultural and political terms, be deemed to exist as the sum of all of the challenges and changes that occurred during the 1980s. These changes and challenges were singular, occurred within a given moment and within a precise combination of circumstances. A Foucauldian methodology does not assume an omniscient view over the past but analyses the relationships between times, events, institutions and people in a descriptive rather than an empirical manner. However, description and descriptors are limited, the mode of analysis is limited, as indeed the quantity of documents available to the archive being analysed are limited. The archive itself reflects the methodology and *vice versa*. Hacking remarks that tactical power changes within institutions and discourse “take shape in a piecemeal fashion without anyone’s wittingly knowing what they add up to”.⁸² To an extent, this is also true of Foucault’s methodologies, for, while they cannot be described as piecemeal, they do not begin analysis by mapping archives onto a predicted model or thread of development. Just as events are singular, so too are the results of archaeological or genealogical investigations, conditioned by the times that enable their undertaking and the material that is available to the archaeologist/genealogist at that time. Thomas Flynn writes, archaeology has a “contrapuntal relationship” with traditional history and, in what seems an admission of the limitations of archaeology, he comments that its conclusions are rearrangements of those of traditional history which in itself is treated or “mined” as a source.⁸³ In response to this apparent limitation however, Ian Hacking observes that Foucault is not involved in a project to reinvent history but rather develops methodologies that reorganize the way we perceive disciplines and consequently conceive of knowledge.⁸⁴

82 Hacking “The Archaeology” 35.

83 Flynn, Thomas, “Foucault’s Mapping of History” in *The Cambridge Companion to Foucault* Ed. Gary Gutting (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) 33.

84 Hacking, Ian, “Michel Foucault’s Immature Science” in *Nous* 13.1(1979) 40.

Foucault's social critique involved the analysis of institutional power, its evolution, and role in western culture. His archaeological method considers statements as part of a "system of dispersion" and does not concern itself with a subject or subjects who may have produced them.⁸⁵ Instead, Foucault excavates the conditions of an object's emergence and is involved with the process of "de-realizing" objects.⁸⁶ The benefits of using Foucault's methodologies of archaeology and genealogy lie in their capacity to analyse what Hacking deems to be a "web of possible alternatives" and to "de-realize" objects.⁸⁷ Hacking argues that Foucault's archaeology deems competing regimes to be built upon the same general grammar or set of rules; that is, the principles either set, regular rules or invisible cultural expectations that the social systems develop from are the same. These rules and structures are part of the social scape while also existing as separate entities; that is they weave through our societies in both explicit and seamless ways. Moreover, power structures woven through competing social systems are the same and emerge from the same bases. However, the superstructures, to borrow a Marxist term, of these competing systems differ. This disparity leads to a differentiation between modes of signification and signs. In relation to this research, Foucault's ideas facilitate the exploration of the conditions that gave rise to an Irish identity that projected an image of Ireland as a coherent and seamless society, where it seemed being Irish and being Catholic were synonymous with one another. Foucault's methodologies pressurise centralised perceptions and facilitate an investigation of the signs and symbols that compounded and constructed this perceived identity. In exploring contemporary documents and texts, it is possible to trace evidence of agency in society that lay outside of the dominating influences and the official centres of power that existed in the past.

The nature of power and its relationship with the body remained a central focus of Foucault's work. However, the development of his ideas prompted him to move from an analysis of power in classical thought, as a form which filters through society from the

85 Paras, Eric, *Foucault 2.0 Beyond Power and Knowledge* (New York: Other Press, 2006) 56.

86 Rajchman, John, "The Story of Foucault's History" in *Social Text* 8.Winter (1983 - 1984) 12.

87 Hacking, Ian, "Michel Foucault's." 42.

top down, to a type of power or governmentality which rules and controls society remotely. As Eric Paras suggests, this transformation of power enabled the emergence of the individual, albeit within a controlled environment, where power underwent a “kind of slackening”. It also “functioned with precision inasmuch as it let natural processes pursue their course” and “it let individuals follow their inclinations.”⁸⁸ Indeed, in Foucault’s later writings, the idea of the individual is linked directly to the emergence of interdisciplinary institutional power and the subject is considered a construct of this type of power. In relation to the concept of the individual, it must be noted that Foucault’s individual is the result of “reflexive technologies”.⁸⁹ Furthermore, Deveraux Kennedy claims Foucault’s individual is “an empty function” who operates within parameters that lie completely out of his control.⁹⁰ In this sense, Foucault’s individual is an ironic one, since it is created by its context and can only exist within this context thus defying the very idea of individuality. The remote precision of the form of power which characterises industrial and post-industrial societies, whereby power lies between institutions, has given rise to the concept of the individual subject that changes, diversifies, shrinks, disappears, mutates, and so on, in accordance to the changes in discourse.⁹¹ Following from this, one can say that to Foucault, discourse is a response to the non-discursive, and creates a web of relationships between institutions that facilitate the remote, invisible type of power at work in contemporary Western society, but at the same time, hints at the capacity of the individual to engender and respond to change in their environment. The facilitating theories of Judith Butler and Deleuze and Guattari provide a channel through which a closer exploration of the response of the individual to changes experienced in Irish society in the decade prior to the appearance of AIDS in Ireland, as well as during the initial appearance of the virus.

By treating power and the individual as inter-linked, Foucault was able to move away from the bind created by binary dualisms that dominated his discussion of the body and

88 Paras, Eric, *Foucault 2.0 Beyond Power and Knowledge* (New York: Other Press, 2006) 103.

89 Fox, N.J., “Foucault, Foucauldians.” 417.

90 Kennedy, Deveraux, “Michel Foucault: The Archaeology” 274.

91 Fox, N.J., “Foucauldians and Sociology” 419.

the construction of meaning in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*.⁹² However, the deeper Foucault inquired into the modes through which traditional approaches to history were constructed, the more removed from these modes his own methodologies became. It is impossible, however, to determine the extent to which this removal was the self-conscious and historically reflexive result of Foucault's desire to alert the reader to the predictable and privileged structure of traditional historical narratives. In any case, Foucault's methodologies usefully de-privilege dominant discourses, allowing us to shine a light on previously unattended aspects of these discourses. In relation to Ireland in the 1980s, these methodologies facilitate an inquiry into the historical narrative of the body in Ireland, exposing the complex, reflexive representation of a 'corrupted' body in the national broadsheets, in the mainstream popular press and by the national broadcaster. Foucault's methodologies also enable a survey of esoteric voices that lay outside the dominant discourses, thereby questioning those discourses and the modes through which they were constructed. This refreshes our perception of the past as a set of discordant multi-vocal events rather than a homogenised, sequenced, ordered whole. In turn, this allows the mapping of other possible identities and historical narratives that lie outside official structures and discourses. Using Foucauldian modes of analysis, in conjunction with the theories of Judith Butler, Gilles Deleuze and his co-writer Félix Guattari, allows for the exploration of the discursive construction of the AIDS body in specific political, social and media spaces and within, what Edith Kurzwell terms, "structural codes of knowledge".⁹³ Central to this analysis will be an exploration of the discord between speech acts and performance, collective discourse, the body and the existence of a body-disturbing virus. As Janet Bennett observes, "there is an existence peculiar to a thing that is irreducible to the thing's imbrication with human subjectivity."⁹⁴

Human subjectivity will itself be an important aspect of this exploration of representations of the chaotic, virus-disturbed body. The subject emerges from the

92 Foucault, Michel, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* Translated A.M Sheridan (Bristol: Tavistock Publication, 1974).

93 Kurzwell, Edith, "Michel Foucault: Ending the Era of Man" in *Theory and Society* 4.3 (1977)395.

94 Bennett, Janet, "The Force of Things: Steps Towards an Ecology of Matter" 348.

construction of a discursive space shaped by the degree of differentiation between it and other discourses. Judith Butler has written that the “paradox of subjection implies a paradox of referentiality: namely that we must refer to what does not yet exist.”⁹⁵ If this is the case, then it could be said that to some degree discursive formations are anticipatory and hold direct implications for the construction of subjectivity for the chaotic body. Of course, the complexity of relations between discursive formations is another influential definer of discourse.⁹⁶ Thus the human subject is a result of its position within both the independent growth of discourse and subsequent interactions with other discourses. Consequently, it is both a concrete and a reflexive position that responds to the web of secondary relations surrounding it. In this research the representations of the AIDS body will be considered as the representations of a body anchored in a constructed Irish identity, as well as the representation of a body emerging from the constantly shifting web of relations between the AIDS body and Irish society, a body consequently growing as a form that challenges and “de-realises” that identity.

AIDS appeared in Ireland in the middle of an era dubbed as “The Uncertain 1980s” by cultural historian Terence Brown.⁹⁷ The political, cultural and economic instability of that time grew from the onset of a recession in the late 1970s. Frequent changes of government may have added to the increasing levels of economic contraction. As Brown remarks, political instability made it increasingly difficult for successive administrations to respond to the “worsening” economic and social conditions Ireland was experiencing.⁹⁸ After the positive social and economic impact of the 1958 *Programme for Economic Expansion*, the steady economic growth of the 1960s and the stability of the Lemass era, Ireland in the late 1970s and 1980s seemed to be in a trough. Indeed, when compared retrospectively with the relative boom years of the 1960s, the late 70s and 1980s seemed even worse. In the 1960s the policies of Sean Lemass brought about an end to protectionism and succeeded in attracting new foreign

95 Butler, Judith, *Theories in Subjection: The Psychic Life of Power* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997) 4.

96 Foucault, Michel, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* 45, 53.

97 Brown, Terence, *Ireland: A Social and Cultural History 1922-2002* (London: Harper Perennial, 2004) 315.

98 Brown *Ireland: A Social* 320.

investment into Ireland. This expansion contrasted sharply with the preceding decades described by Brian Girvin and Gary Murphy as “lost years” during which poverty in Ireland reached a real crisis point.⁹⁹ Stunted by an economic war with Britain in the 1930s, exacerbated by the staunch adherence of successive De Valera administrations to “tortuous rationalisations” and protectionism and the return of emigrants after World War Two, in the 1960s the Irish economy seemed to be striving towards and beyond the potential many nationalists had hoped for at the turn of the century.¹⁰⁰ The economy in the 1960s seemed to present stability and prosperity as never before. Tom Garvin writes that John F Kennedy’s presidential visit to Ireland in 1963 consolidated a sense of the Irish Republic as a nation being recognised amongst and by others, signalling an end to what Garvin describes as its post war “relative isolation”.¹⁰¹ By contrast the early seventies was a time of contradictions. The political instability of Northern Ireland threatened to spill into the Republic, as it did in the Dublin bombings of 1974. On the other hand, when Ireland entered the EEC in 1972, it seemed to many, as Foster writes, that “old moulds were broken.”¹⁰² However, entry into the EEC was not applauded by all. An exploration of the commentary on Ireland’s entry into the EEC in 1972 gives a brief insight into the competing narratives prevalent at the time. In a Foucauldian sense, it offers an opportunity to observe and describe the “interplay of relations within ... and outside” an event, in this case acceptance of entry into the European Economic Community.¹⁰³

The decision by the Irish electorate to enter the EEC was described by James Moynagh in *The Furrow* in 1971 as “the gravest Irish citizens have ever taken” indicating that it was not greeted with the welcome Foster suggests by all sectors of Irish society.¹⁰⁴

99 Girvin, Brian and Gary Murphy, “Whose Ireland? The Lemass Era” in *The Lemass Era: Politics and Society in the Ireland of Seán Lemass* Ed. Girvin, Brian & Gary Murphy (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2005) 5.

100 Maume, Patrick, “Irish political history” in *Irish History* eds. McAuliffe, Mary, O’Donnell, Katherine & Lane, Leeann (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009) 29.

101 Garvin, Tom, *Judging Lemass: The Measure of the Man* (Dublin: RIA Press, 2009) 11.

102 Foster, R.F., *Modern Ireland: 1600 – 1972* (London: Penguin Books, 1989) 569.

103 Foucault, Michel, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* 29.

104 Moynagh, James, “Ireland and the EEC” in *The Furrow* 22.9(1971) 547.

Moynagh expressed his anxieties about Ireland becoming involved with a political entity that liaised with the countries of the Eastern bloc that moved, as he perceived it, in the “Marxist orbit”.¹⁰⁵ He also notes the increased pressure membership of the EEC would place on emigration from Ireland. In Moynagh’s view, Irish emigration had already given an enormous “boost” to the British economy.¹⁰⁶ In this instance Moynagh seems to suggest that Irish workers should benefit the Irish rather than the British economy, implying that economics is an issue of patriotism rather than business. His argument is streaked with a form of economic patriotism that is critical of the benefits the British economy earned from toil of Irish emigrants and is, at times, blind to the lack of opportunity in Ireland. High levels of unemployment meant that many workers could rarely contribute to the economy whether they wanted to or not. This economic patriotism echoes De Valera’s message to emigrants living in substandard conditions in Britain to return home despite the continuation of the impoverished conditions that had led to their emigration.¹⁰⁷

Such retrospective criticisms may, however, be easier to draw in an Ireland that has experienced a recent economic boom, peace since the signing of the Good Friday Agreement and consequently a political period that has not been dominated by political violence or issues surrounding the sovereignty of the state. Moynagh’s criticisms of Ireland’s entry into the EEC were written in an era when the effects of economic modernisation in the Republic had only begun to be felt. Indeed Girvin notes that between 1932 and 1966 the Irish economy declined significantly in comparison with most other European states and the period stretching from 1966 into the 1970s involved a “gradual reversal” of this decline.¹⁰⁸ While Moynagh’s discussion seems at times to be characterised by an expectant and urgent fatalism, it may be that in 1971 memories of oppressive colonial rule and the patriotism such cultural traces may invoke, were closer to the structural and abstract surface of Ireland’s collective recollections than now and, furthermore, that such reminiscences may dissolve more slowly than economics may

105 Moynagh “Ireland and the EEC” 549.

106 Moynagh “Ireland and the EEC” 550.

107 Girvin, Brian and Gary Murphy, “Whose Ireland? The Lemass Era” 4.

108 Girvin, Brian, “Political Culture, Political Independence and Economic Success in Ireland” in *Irish Political Studies Reader: Key Contributions* Ed by Conor McGrath & Eoin O’Malley (London: Routledge, 2002) 61.

have progressed between 1922 and 1971. At the same time, Moynagh's argument, that the pressures increased competition would place pressure on Irish production and exports, was a common anxiety, expressed in campaigns undertaken in both Northern and Southern Ireland against entry into the EEC. In his brief assessment of pamphlets published on the EEC question, Martyn Turner notes the widespread nature of this campaign trait.¹⁰⁹ Despite extensive questioning of Ireland's economic validity within the EEC in his retort to Moynagh, John Horgan writes that isolation is "not the cure to a disease as endemic" as the embedded nature of emigration in the Irish psyche, and what both critics term a bankruptcy of creative ideas in response to it and the state of the Irish economy.¹¹⁰ In this vein, Horgan calls for an end to the mental isolation that seems to have emerged from the island's physical isolation and the encouragement of a spirit more willing to address the nation's social and economic problems.¹¹¹ In addition, Horgan sees little difference between competition generated between Irish capitalism or between Irish and foreign capitalism indicating that for some, economics had very little to do with patriotism or perceptions of what it meant to be Irish.¹¹² Indeed, in his 2001 assessment of documents released from the archives, Gary Murphy surmises that while sovereignty was a central question in the campaign for entry to the EEC in 1970, the debate shows that "economic necessity ... was the main rationale for Irish entry."¹¹³

In any case, in 1972 the Republic seemed to be turning a corner. The electorate's decision to enter the EEC suggests that large sections of Irish society desired change even if, as Murphy suggests, this desire was driven by an economic rationale alone. Ireland, it seems, was moving away from the type of government that had often been dominated by issues of domestic ideology. The political culture of the 1930s that Girvin writes "obstructed change" had damaged economic progress long after the 1930s had

109 Turner, Martyn, "EEC Pamphlets" in *Fortnight* 33 (1972) 9.

110 Horgan, John, "Ireland and the EEC II" in *The Furrow* 22.11(1971) 704

111 Horgan "Ireland and the EEC II" 706.

112 Horgan "Ireland and the EEC II" 707.

113 Murphy, Gary, "A Measure of the Extent of Our Sovereignty at the Moment" Sovereignty and the Question of Irish Entry to the EEC, New Evidence from the Archives" in *Irish Studies in International Affairs* 12 (2001) 191.

ended and was partly to blame for the continuation of poverty and emigration.¹¹⁴ At last, this small nation seemed to be reaping the economic benefits implicit in the progress set in motion by the *Programme for Economic Expansion* and was ready to take its place amongst a cohort of other European nations. Change, it seemed, was imminent. Some of that change may be traced through alterations made to official discourses, structures and institutions. For instance in the early seventies, Vatican II recognised the “distinction”¹¹⁵ between civil law and Catholic morality, the ‘special position’ previously held by the Catholic Church in the Irish constitution was annulled. Life on the island of Ireland seemed to be passing through a particular moment that point to a long term erosion of official structures and discourse. Foster notes that the Stormont parliament in Northern Ireland was also suspended indicating a breakdown in the government practices that had been established in the North.

In some ways 1972 could have been considered a hopeful and stable moment for the Irish Republic as it was growing fully into the ideals of democracy it had been built upon. Shadows cast by unrest in Northern Ireland and the breakdown in government haunted this stability however. Nevertheless, Foster attributes this stability to the success of a middle class state built upon “a powerful state apparatus” inherited from the Ireland’s colonial experience and adapted to suit life within the twenty six counties.¹¹⁶ Such an interpretation of stability, however, is more a result of the unification of discourses that is dependent upon the exclusion of other events happening in Ireland at the time. The unity of discourse derives its solidity from what Foucault terms the “constant recurring absence”¹¹⁷ that involves the suppression of other discourses and of the complexity of the interaction between the said and the unsaid, between the explicit and the unspeakable.¹¹⁸ However, what may have seemed to be a

114 Girvin, Brian, “Political Culture, Political Independence and Economic Success in Ireland” 61.

115 Dillon, Michael, “Catholicism, Politics and Culture in the Republic of Ireland” in *Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective: The One, the Few and the Many* Ed by Ted Gerard Selen and Clyde Wilcox (Cambridge: The Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, 2002) 58.

116 Foster, R.F., *Modern Ireland: 1600 – 1972* 592.

117 Foucault, Michel, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* 25.

118 Foucault, Michel, *The Birth of the Clinic* 38-39.

gradual move towards stability was soon interrupted when the optimistic climate of 1972 was marred by the onset of recession and the continuing intensification of violence in Northern Ireland. Not only did it seem that Irish identity was to remain in the shadow of colonial Britain, but an impending oil crisis suggested its vulnerable position within the axis of global trade, modernisation and an increasing dependency on technology. In some ways, it seemed that Ireland continued to exist within the shadows of the Ireland/Britain binary.

At this point, the idea of Irishness was more contradictory than ever before. Ireland was defined by simply not being Britain. However, political upheaval on the island was driven by the conflict between being Irish and not British, for members of Unionist communities of being both Northern Irish and British but not necessarily Irish and for Britain being part of an asymmetrical relationship. At the same time, the Republic's participation in global markets, spurred on by recent modernising developments, was not intense enough to cause a radical shift in ideas of Irishness, and yet, to an extent, elements of the dominant narratives of Irishness seemed to be left behind. In the *Archaeology of Knowledge* Foucault asks us to consider the conditions that existed that enabled discourses to emerge at certain points.¹¹⁹ The paradoxical nature of Irish identity also laid the foundations for the emergence of conflicted discourses of the body and, in particular, of the AIDS body. Within the shifting contradictions of Irish identity, different discourses of the body would seem to engage with the space of the AIDS body at different times. It is the aim of this research to show how and why those discourses shifted and contracted during the emergence of the AIDS body in the Ireland in the 1980s.

119 Foucault, Michel, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* 107.

Chapter Two

Bodies, Structures and Institutions

Until the late twentieth century perceptions of Irishness and the prevailing habitus were dominated by the intricate relationship between the Catholic Church, the State and the people. This relationship was solidified by the web of relations and institutions that connected all three. Throughout the nineteenth century that web of relations and the role of institutions fostered a habitus that maintained the cultural and behavioural expectations of the emerging Catholic middle class. Compounded by what were considered the legitimating discourses of Church and State, the role of the Catholic middle class became integral to the development of an independent Catholic state in the twentieth century. Within this state particular bodies were marked as codified by legitimating discourses while others were rejected and were consigned to the sites outside of acceptability. Many of those problematic bodies were also contained within the institutions of the Church and State so that they were held both within and outside of the State. Using the 1801 Act of Union as a starting point this chapter traces the genesis of those institutions as containing mechanisms which perpetuated the rejection of problematic bodies and the inclusion of those deemed acceptable. In doing so this chapter moves through archive material in a way that establishes connections between legitimating discourses, historical moments and discursive formations that served to legitimate and reject particular bodies. It continues to draw on the theories of Michel Foucault, Judith Butler and Deleuze and Guattari in developing a theoretical model through which these formations may be discussed.

In his introduction to *The Birth of the Clinic* Foucault implies that ‘man’ is “systematised from the outset”, thus suggesting that economic, social and cultural structures that create categories of language, dominate each individual.¹²⁰ He also writes that ‘man’ is thereafter “endlessly accessible to new discourses and open to the task of transforming” them, thereby acknowledging the capacity of individuals to change discourses whilst utilising them simultaneously.¹²¹ The remark seems to be reflective of Jon Elster’s view on the nature of politics as an element of the social superstructure that may uphold, as well as transform, the system of power at work. This is a useful analytical tool through which the establishment of institutions in Ireland, their growth under the auspices of the Irish state and the role they played in supporting a perception

120 Foucault, Michel, *The Birth of the Clinic. An Archaeology of Medical Perception* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1976) XIX.

121 Foucault, *Birth* XIX.

of Irish identity may be considered. However, it is also necessary to look at what cannot be included within discourse or quite simply what cannot be accounted for with official discourse; that is the events and entities that do not leave traces within official discourses must somehow be considered because these are the events, entities, practices and bodies that break the seal of discourse that seemed to “systematise” ‘man’.

Official discourses support official structures and *vice versa* ensuring that the parameters of what is acceptable and what may be recognised within those discourses and structures are enforced through the lived practices. Official structures and their accompanying discourses underwent processes of modernisation throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They also became integrated into the discourses of an emerging nation, of a Church that became increasingly regularised and organised towards the end of the nineteenth century and into the mechanisms of the new state after 1922. Indeed the strength of democracy in Ireland during the twentieth century is, to an extent, dependent on the close links between official structures and discourses and lived practices. Despite violence and recession the Irish state remained democratic. Bill Kissane argues that democracy took hold in post independence Ireland, despite social conditions being “allegedly unpropitious for the survival of democracy”.¹²² Considering the consolidation of state institutions that existed under British colonial rule, within the Free State in 1922 the strength of this democracy is unsurprising. Moreover, it suggests the relevance of Michel Foucault’s ideas to the analysis of institutions and official structures in Ireland.

Many of the state institutions grew from the reform policies introduced into Ireland following the “constitutional yoking together” of Britain and Ireland through the Act of Union in 1801.¹²³ Some of these policies developed in line with social change in the century prior to 1922. The motivations for these reforms differ from policy to policy. For instance, as noted by Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh, during the nineteenth century the British government became more involved in providing for the welfare of the nation in times of

122 Kissane, Bill, “The Not-So-Amazing Case of Irish Democracy” in *Irish Political Studies Reader: Key Contributions* Ed by Conor McGrath and Eoin O Malley (London: Routledge, 2002).

123 Ó Tuathaigh, Gearóid, *Ireland Before the Famine 1798 -1848* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2007) 71.

“acute distress” through the provision of employment on construction projects, thus initiating a role for the state that would emerge in 1922.¹²⁴ Partial famines and food shortages, as well as the financial crisis of the 1820s, required the state to intervene with increasing frequency. Although Cormac Ó Gráda observes that there is evidence “to suggest that the pre-Famine Irish intake of protein and different vitamins was enough to guarantee an adequate diet”,¹²⁵ in 1799 and 1800, poor harvests coupled with “wartime demand and high inflation”, led to “near famine conditions for the labouring classes”.¹²⁶ The financial boom created by demands for Irish exports during the Napoleonic wars came to an end in 1815 and was followed by a sharp fall in prices, a “severe depression in Britain in 1819” and monetary deflation in 1820.¹²⁷ Ireland experienced another crisis in 1825-26 when Britain once again went into recession, although, as Cullen notes, Irish agricultural exports continued to rise throughout the 1820s and 1830s.¹²⁸ Furthermore, Ó Gráda writes, there was about a one tenth decline in birth rates during the same period.¹²⁹ He also argues that the records of the Rotunda Maternity Hospital in Dublin suggests a rise in the average marrying age of Dublin working class women from about 21 years in the early 1810s to 23 years in the 1840s.¹³⁰ Ireland’s economic problems, it seems, were the result of its dependency on the fluctuating British export markets and the failure of British governments to put modernizing economic policies in place to enable Irish agriculture and industry to remain competitive. The consequence of this was felt more acutely in some regions than others and more severely by the laboring classes than by anyone else. Furthermore, it had a long term impact on modernisation in Ireland.

124 Ó Tuathaigh, Gearóid, *Ireland Before the Famine 1798 -1848* 86.

125 Ó Gráda, Cormac, *Ireland: A New Economic History 1780 – 1939* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994) 85.

126 Cullen, L.M., *A New Economic History of Ireland since 1660* 2nd Edition (London: B.T. Batsford, 1987) 101.

127 Cullen, L.M., *A New Economic History* 101.

128 Cullen, L.M., *A New Economic History* 109.

129 Ó Gráda, Cormac, *Ireland: A New Economic History* 70.

130 Ó Gráda, Cormac, *Ireland: A New Economic History* 73.

Fluctuation in the economy and export market contributed to the partial modernisation of Ireland. It was however, also experiencing other elements of modernisation or more specifically it was undergoing a certain amount of growth in institutionalisation and categorisation that is largely associated with the modern state. While many of the institutions and services that were put in place in the nineteenth century were a response to the hardships experienced by the suffering laboring classes, some of this intervention may have been the result of a growing awareness by the British state of its obligation to Ireland under the Act of Union. The Whigs dominated government between 1830 and 1852, apart from a few months in 1835, and for 5 years between 1841 and 1846 when the Tories were in power. While some of their policies of centralisation in Ireland may have been the consequence of a utilitarian approach towards government in general, it is also likely that they were aware that popular support was, as Crossman argues, dependent “on the practical expression of a willingness to treat the Irish as full and equal citizens of a united kingdom.”¹³¹ Indeed, Whig hostility towards Irish landlords may also have contributed to Whig insistence on the centralisation of the services and governing bodies in Ireland. Whigs considered landlord management of domestic affairs in Ireland to have failed and consequently favoured centralisation. Centralisation was seen as a way to remove some of the burden of control from the hands of landlords. In any case, many of Ireland’s services were normalised through the establishment of a Board of Works in 1831, a process that would be built upon throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Health care also came to the attention of the British government during the first decades of the nineteenth century. Local administrations were unable to provide funding for hospitals and staff necessary to care for a rising population. Consequently, the State intervened and initiated a construction programme. Ó Tuathaigh notes that by 1835 this programme was complete and by the middle of the nineteenth century a health care system had been established in Ireland that was “reasonably comprehensive”, unlike in Britain at that time.¹³² This tendency towards regularisation under the Whig government

131 Crossman, Virginia, *Politics, Law and order in Nineteenth Century Ireland* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1996) 50.

132 Ó Tuathaigh, Gearóid, *Ireland Before the Famine 1798 -1848* 84.

can also be identified in other areas, to the point that it seems once centralised power was introduced in Ireland, services naturally began to gather in a systematic way around it. Of course, it is also possible that once services began to be systemised it became necessary to discuss the needs of the society through the language of institutionalisation and centralisation. Foucault observed that “Discourses and systems produce each other” and to some extent this may have been what happened in Ireland.¹³³ The need of the people began to be appeased through the provision of tangible services visible both within the society and on the landscape. Provision could thus be labelled and recognised, and served to perpetuate both the political system and the discursive formations. However, once established, this gathering of systems did not always run smoothly. One such example is that of the running of the National Board of Education supporting Foucault’s claim that once exposed to discourse, societies develop the skills to change and develop them from within. This echoes Elster’s remark that in Marxist terms, politics as an element of the superstructures has the potential to both maintain the *status quo* or, indeed, to impact upon the formations of the superstructure that will eventually in turn impact upon the structure of the base.¹³⁴ Structures, it seems, perpetuate structures and have the capacity to change lived practices across society.

An analysis of the processes through which the National Board of Education went through in order to provide a national school system illustrates how the emergence of one set of structures or institutions prompts further growth in institutionalisation. In the case of the National Board of Education much of this growth stemmed from resistance. The offshoots of that resistance gave rise to a growth in the number of schools controlled by different religious organisations in a way that contributed to the modernisation of the Catholic Church as well as to the conditions that would eventually facilitate development of ties between the emergent nation-state and the Church in the twentieth century. The National Board of Education, also established in 1831, was a secular centralised attempt at providing primary school education in Ireland.¹³⁵ In the early nineteenth century there were approximately 11,000 schools in operation in Ireland, many of which were being run by voluntary religious organisations. The Penal

133 Foucault, Michel, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* 76.

134 Elster, Jon, *An Introduction to Karl Marx* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) 141.

135 Education system here means primary school education.

Laws, established in the late seventeenth century, were gradually dis-established in the eighteenth century and were finally repealed in the nineteenth century. In the meantime, however, the law that prohibited the education of Catholic children by Catholics prevented the foundation of Catholic schools and forbade Catholics from travelling abroad for a Catholic education giving rise to the growth of Hedge schools. Catholic students attended these illegal schools in order to achieve a basic education in reading, writing and arithmetic, usually through Gaelic, while the children of wealthier Catholics tended to escape to the Continent to access a Catholic education. Many of these emigrants trained in monasteries and seminaries as Catholic priests, consequently reinforcing the cultural link between the oppressed Irish and Catholicism. By the time the Catholic Emancipation Act came into law in 1829 a number of complementary and contradictory processes were at work within Irish society. A link between Catholics and poverty had been established as had one between wealthier Catholics and the Church. Previously wealthier Catholics were educated abroad however as the Catholic Church became a more organised and regularised in the second half of the nineteenth century wealthier Catholic began to be educated in Ireland thus contributing to a growing connection between the emergent Catholic middle class, Catholicism and ideas of respectability within official discourses.

The growth in religion seems to contradict the increasing visibility of the state in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. However, like the state, the Church was also going through a process of modernisation, regularisation and organisation that was contributing to its growing visibility. The repeal of the Penal laws saw a flurry of activity in the education sector with many religious orders establishing schools. John Coolahan notes that many Protestant organisations such as the London Hibernian Society, The Association for Discountenancing Vice, the Baptist Society for Promoting the Gospel in Ireland and the Sunday School Society for Ireland also provided access to education during this period.¹³⁶ Such organisations were viewed sceptically by Catholics as offering education in exchange for conversion to Protestantism. Indeed, the non-denominational schools established through the 1831 Board of Education were also viewed with suspicion of proselytising. On the contrary, as Ó Tuathaigh argues, these schools were to be run on a secular basis with a view to eliminating the bitterness that

¹³⁶ Coolahan, John, *Irish Education: History and Structure* (Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, 1981) 9.

had grown up around the state's funding of missionary education. Indeed, his remark that a secular State-run education system might "by reaching the minds of the peasantry at a formative stage" gradually "effect a cessation of disaffection",¹³⁷ is supported by Coolahan's observation that in the climate of post Union politics, the government "felt that the schools could serve politicising and socialising goals".¹³⁸ Fears of proselytisation by the State seem to be ill-founded as the goals of the education reform policies were more focused on introducing a secular education system that would help to erase cultural differences between the two countries and thus further the Union. However, the Union was perceived in Ireland to be associated with religious affiliations just as much as it was aligned with a specific politics thus contributing to the sceptical position many Catholics held towards the state. This scepticism was to develop further as the emergence of an Irish nation and the ideals associated with that nationhood developed in the later stages of the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

A further concern was the perception of Ireland as a type of social laboratory for new social policies. Catholic suspicion of Protestant and secular schools continued and motivated the Catholic Church to withdraw its support from the 1831 system. Nevertheless, the schools set up by Protestants under the auspices of the Kildare Place Society had been widely supported for some time, even by such high profile public figures as the Catholic politician Daniel O'Connell and Lord Cloncurry. The Kildare Place Society proposed to educate without promoting any particular doctrine. As Coolahan notes however, in 1820 Catholics became critical of schools associated with the Kildare Place Society because of the dominance of their boards by Protestants.¹³⁹ Catholic emancipation was to be granted in 1829 and prior to this, tensions grew around the role or lack of roles Catholics held in government and social administrations. Despite his earlier support of the society, it was Daniel O'Connell, amongst others, who championed opposition to the society. Issues of religion and control were attracting an increasing level of attention in Ireland and as a result political, social and cultural positions were becoming more involved with official discourses. Following Catholic

137 Ó Tuathaigh, Gearóid, *Ireland Before the Famine 1798 -1848* 89.

138 Coolahan, John, *Irish Education: History and Structure* 4.

139 Coolahan, John, *Irish Education: History and Structure* 11.

Emancipation further demands were made on the national school system and its non-denominational status had, as Diarmaid Ferriter writes, “quickly become a denominational system”,¹⁴⁰ thereby suggesting that the increasing leverage of religious questions in relation to established policies. Their capacity to fracture those policies and steer them in line with the ethos of a “collective identity” based on Catholicism, had been growing since the repeal of the Penal Laws, and would go on to characterise Ireland well into the late twentieth century.¹⁴¹ Later, life in the Republic would become dominated by a discursive construct embedded in Catholicity and the Church to the point that non-denominational and/or secular stances were considered through a Catholic lens making it difficult to adopt positions outside official discourse.

Education played a pivotal role within the Catholic Church, and as Ferriter writes, by 1900 the Catholic Church ran almost 9,000 national schools and had contributed significantly to the reduction of illiteracy to 12% of the population.¹⁴² However, there was more to the question of education than Ferriter’s brief observation suggests; it was not simply a battleground for ideologies, faith and social control. Support for the secular schools established by the 1831 Board of Education had been withdrawn by both Protestant and Catholic organisations quite quickly and, as Foster writes, Protestantism came to be associated with discourses of Unionism and survival of the Union just as Catholicism came to be associated with discourses of independence.¹⁴³ Consequently, the continuing control of Protestant education for Protestants was vital for the survival of the culture of Protestantism and, in turn, the Union and, for the survival of cultural markers of differentiation. Protestant schools became an alternative to both a secular education as well as a Catholic education. In 1839 the Established Church set up the Church Education Society that aimed to “maintain an independent system of schools” whose ethos were to be based on the “principles and under the auspicious of the

140 Ferriter, Diarmaid, *The Transformation of Ireland 1900-2000* (London: Profile Books, 2005) 88.

141 Dillon, Michael, “Catholicism, Politics and Culture in the Republic of Ireland” in *Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective: The One, the Few and the Many* Eds. Ted Gerard Selen and Clyde Wilcox 48-49.

142 Ferriter, Diarmaid, *The Transformation of Ireland 1900-2000* 88.

143 Foster, R.F., *Modern Ireland 1600-1972* 304.

Established Church.”¹⁴⁴ By 1850 there were 1,800 schools associated with the Church Education Society suggesting that efforts towards centralised secularisation were inhibited by the entrenchment of politics in religious and cultural difference as well as questions of rightful ownership of territory. Ironically, efforts to centralise education in order to erase cultural difference may in fact have forced a greater cleavage between the faiths and their Churches, as Catholic education for Catholics also became the preferred choice for Catholics, rather than a secular or Protestant education. Processes of modernisation which the Catholic Church was going through meant that another fold was being created in the series of institutionalisation taking place across society.

State controlled schools also meant that Protestant and Catholic alike had to compete for both school funding and posts within those schools, thus undermining the interests of the educated Protestant middle class who had been in control of education and its supports until then. Despite the 1801 Act of Union, the reforms that came with it must have seemed to be continuing the dismantling of Protestant power in Ireland by the British government that had begun with the dissolution of the Penal Laws. By the end of the 18th century the “Catholic establishment” was, O Tuathaigh writes, “growing in assurance”.¹⁴⁵ Indeed, Foster notes that the position of the “*petit bourgeois* urban Protestant”, as well as the “landed Ascendancy”, was threatened by the emerging Catholic middle class.¹⁴⁶ Local government, previously the domain of the landed Protestant class, was hotly contested, perhaps, explaining why local government remained a defining feature of the new Irish state, despite efforts made by successive De Valera governments from 1932 onwards to centralise power. Nevertheless, the reforms introduced after the Act of Union, such as the 1870 Education Act, established the institutional skeleton upon which the new state would stabilise itself in 1922. The centralising of administration characteristic of modern power and the beginnings of state intervention in national welfare were also introduced. The institutions of the state, inherited from colonial rule, had also evolved to absorb the concerns of popular politics that gave rise to a seemingly stable identity that had been evolving for some time before

144 Ó Tuathaigh, Gearóid, *Ireland Before the Famine* 91.

145 Ó Tuathaigh, Gearóid, *Ireland Before the Famine* 88.

146 Foster, R.F., *Modern Ireland 1600-1972* 304.

1922. For the most part the welfare system established in the nineteenth century emerged from the Irish Poor Law introduced in 1838, making the Poor Laws, as claimed by Helen Burke, “one of the strongest roots of Irish social policy” thereafter.¹⁴⁷

The Irish Poor Law of 1838 finds its roots in the Poor Relief Act of 1601 introduced in England by Queen Elizabeth I and reflects moves to increase the organisation of the population. O’ Connor writes that the 1601 Act emerged from the Common Law practice implemented by each parish in England to ensure the extension of relief to those in need.¹⁴⁸ It regularised the provision of this relief within the parish and introduced a tax rate that ensured the monies required to sustain the provision of such relief was generated by the parish itself. The long term effects of the act were twofold: it suppressed begging and provided for the poor, while it also instituted a distinction between the deserving poor and pauperism. Paupers, as defined by Virginia Crossman, were those deemed to be experiencing poverty as a result of their “choices” and “who represented a threat to society by disrupting social and economic relationships based on the disruption of the free operation of the labour market”. Crossman argues that social attitudes towards poverty suggested that it “required relief” while “pauperism required deterrence”.¹⁴⁹ Poor Relief was part of the response provided by authorities concerned with the perceived effects of pauperism and it provided an opportunity to systematize the solutions of what were increasingly seen as social problems. Categorisation of people and populations was becoming increasingly visible as attempts were made to order society into manageable sectors compatible with governmentality. In 1858 John Mitchel described the dominance of a Poor House on the landscape in foreboding terms:

Rearing its accursed gables and pinnacles of Tudor barbarism, and staring boldly with its detestable mullioned windows, as if to mock those wretches who still cling to liberty and mud cabins – seeming to them, in their perennial half

147 Burke, Helen, *The People and the Poor Law in Nineteenth Century Ireland* (West Sussex: The Women’s Education Bureau, 1987) 1.

148 O’Connor, John, *The Workhouse of Ireland: The Fate of Ireland’s Poor* (Dublin: Anvil Books, 1995) 26.

149 Crossman, Virginia, *Politics, Pauperism and Power in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006) 7.

starvation, like a Temple erected to the Fates, or like the fortress of Giant Despair, wherein to he draws them one by one, and devours them there: - the Poor House.¹⁵⁰

The physical presence of the Poor House marks the landscape and stigmatizes the very path that leads to it. Those who travel that path in a decrepit state are drawn by poverty further along it until they must pass through its doors into a place from which it is unlikely they will ever return. Even if they do return from the Poor House, those desperate people will have been changed by their experience in that institution of despair. The Poor House acts as a visible reference point on the landscape that points to the indelible mark left on Irish collective memory by the negative brutalities of forced institutionalisation and the desperate experience of being caught between processes of modernization and helplessness. Like Foucault's description of medicalisation and the birth of the clinic, the Poor House is part of the "common structure that carves up and articulates what is seen and what is said."¹⁵¹

The establishment of the first workhouse in Ireland channeled the needy into a regulated space in Irish society. This regularisation of the needed, the rejected and the impoverished was to become an important feature of the institutions inherited by the new state in 1922. Such institutions were of particular importance to the maintenance of the moral order of the new State, and the role some of them played in society has come to public attention in the 2010 Ryan Report that detailed the physical, sexual and psychological abuses carried out in institutions run by both the religious orders and the state. The construction of workhouses was a result of the introduction of the 1610 Penal Act into Ireland in 1634-5. Catherine Cox writes that the Act obliged each county to provide a place of correction for "rogues, vagabonds [and] sturdy beggars".¹⁵² Many of those confined were eventually transported to America. After the American War of

150 Mitchell, John, *The Last Conquest Of Ireland (Perhaps)* (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, 1858) 116.

151 Foucault, Michel, *The Birth of the Clinic* xviii.

152 Cox, Catherine, "institutionalisation in Irish history and society" in *Irish history* Ed. Mary McAuliffe, Katherine O' Donnell & Leeann Lane (Hampshire: Palgrave Publications, 2009) 17.

Independence, transportation was no longer possible and, while between 1787 and 1853 many prisoners were transported to Australia, an increasing number of houses of correction were being constructed. The end of transportation to Australia brought about a further upsurge in the construction of prisons, the most notable of which was the establishment of Little Green prison in the 1780s and Mountjoy prison in 1850. In the intervening period, legislation in 1810 ordered the refurbishment of existing prison buildings, indicating that Ireland was also experiencing a similar type of ordering, confinement and organisation of space and population as the rest of Europe at that time. Spatial markers of disorder were gradually coming to bear on the Irish landscapes, as offenders were detained in these newly established institutions. Offenders were drawn from divergent sectors of society and were not always guilty of criminal offence. Many of the residents of these prisons were the poor and, as Cox remarks, the emergence of local prisons and the confinement of the poor were directly linked to one another.¹⁵³ Since the Poor Law was not introduced in Ireland until 1838, criminals and those seeking refuge from poverty were committed to the same institutions.

Prior to the introduction of the Poor Law, Ireland experienced a surge in the number of workhouses constructed in the 1700s.¹⁵⁴ Further workhouses were built in Belfast in 1744 and in Cork city in 1747. The process of ordering and organisation continued in Ireland with the introduction of the aforementioned Poor Law in 1838. The legislation was seen as another element of Whigism and its tendency to centralize power but also, as Virginia Crossman argues, as a law that further “loosened the landlord’s grip on county administration.”¹⁵⁵ Under the remit of this law Ireland was divided into 130 Poor Law Unions, each of which was responsible for the construction of its own workhouse. This infrastructure collapsed under the increased burden of the famine years, which brought about further amendments to the Poor Law in 1847. These amendments initiated another wave of construction. As noted by O’Connor, Crossman also observes that under the pressure of famine conditions “the rigid and inflexible nature of the

153 Cox “institutionalisation in irish history and society” 172.

154 The workhouse mentioned by Foucault as having been established in Dublin in 1703 is noted by Cox to have been converted in 1728 into a “repository for foundling children”. Cox, Catherine “insitutionalisation in irish history and society” in *irish history* Eds. Mary McAullife, Katherine O’ Donnell and Leann Lane (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009) 172.

155 Crossman, *Politics, Law and Order in Nineteenth Century Ireland* 70.

workhouse system was starkly exposed”, forcing the introduction of outdoor relief through the Poor Relief Extension in 1847.¹⁵⁶

The drawing up of the Irish Poor Law Act was influenced by criticisms of the pre-existing English Poor Law indicating that not only do discourse and structure perpetuate each other but this perpetuation can be a reflective process that leads to changes within discourse as language of expression and discourse as practice. English governments had been unwilling to introduce workhouses in Ireland because it was felt that workhouses did not improve states of impoverishment.¹⁵⁷ Indeed, one commentator, thought probably to be Mortimer O’Sullivan, remarked in the *Dublin University Magazine* that while “a wish is generally expressed that something may be done for the poor”,¹⁵⁸ Poor Houses “ought to be kept as much as possible as a last resort”.¹⁵⁹ The following year in the *Dublin Review*, a journal that reflected the concerns of the Catholic population, the Poor Laws were seen as a “privilege” that had not been extended to Ireland as they had been to the poor in England, suggesting that, in some ways, an atmosphere of expectation existed around the constitutional Union and the definition it outlined for the citizens of that Union.¹⁶⁰ Eventually, the English Poor Law Commissioner, George Nicholls, recommended the adaptation of the workhouse system to suit Irish circumstances and his recommendation was accepted. However, this recommendation has come to be viewed as grossly inappropriate. Helen Burke critiques Nicholls’ concept of a Poor Law for Ireland as “a very restricted one”, based on attitudes of “*laissez-faire* and utilitarianism”.¹⁶¹ Crossman notes that by this time the number of emigrants to England from Ireland was “thought to be depressing wages and lowering the standard of the British working class, whilst also threatening the health of the local population”.¹⁶² Such pressure may have been one factor in the government’s acceptance

156 Crossman *Politics, Pauperism and Power in the Late Nineteenth Century* 11 -12.

157 Crossman *Politics, Pauperism and Power in the Late Nineteenth Century* 8.

158 O’ Sullivan, Mortimer, “Poor Laws for Ireland” in *The Dublin University Magazine* VI XXXI (July 1835) 25.

159 O’ Sullivan, Mortimer, “Poor Laws for Ireland” in *The Dublin University Magazine* VI .XXXI (July 1835) 27.

160 Anonymous, “A Poor Law For Ireland” in *Dublin Review* 2.111 (Dec 1836) 54.

161 Burke, Helen, *The People and the Poor Law in Nineteenth Century Ireland* 43.

162 Crossman, Virginia, *Politics, Pauperism and Power in the Late Nineteenth Century* 8.

of a recommendation to implement a system that had already failed in England and Wales. This reform enabled the provision of outdoor relief in Ireland, which had already occurred on a haphazard and charitable basis under the Peel government's strategy to suppress the growing famine conditions of the 1840s. While this points to an active at reflexive process at work within discourse, the amendment regularised an existing practice rather than introducing a new one.

A further amendment in 1862 indicates the increasing level of institutionalisation used to attempt to stabilise a ravaged sector of the population or "the starving classes" as the *Dublin University Magazine* referred to them in 1836.¹⁶³ This remark suggests the rise of a panoptical gaze conditioned by the structures of social stratification. That gaze defines those without, in a similar vein as when Foucault outlines the definition of madness "to be *nothing*" in *Madness and Civilization*.¹⁶⁴ In the discourse of Irishness, starvation was just one of the factors that contributed to the cultural differentiation of the colonisers from the colonised. Gradually such factors would comingle, become narratised to create referential images of Irishness as an impoverished, starving nation that belonged to the pre-modern rather than being part of an Empire undergoing an industrial revolution. Discourse and the production of knowledge were to become organised and structured into what became an apparent collective identity. Such organisation carries the capacity to endow identity with what Foucault terms the "visible presence of the truth", that is identity seems to be a truthful expression rather than a construct.¹⁶⁵

The introduction of the Poor Laws into Ireland marks a significant move towards naming and categorisation within the parameters of official discourse. With each amendment to the Poor Law came the increasing categorisation of people. The earlier distinction made between the deserving poor and those deemed to be paupers became more complex as people were organised into sub segments. For example, widows with one child and deserted wives were not deemed to be deserving of outdoor relief. As a

163 Anonymous, "The State of the Irish Poor" in *The Dublin University Magazine* VII .XL (1836) 349.

164 Foucault, Michel, *Madness and Civilization* 109.

165 Foucault, Michel, *Madness and Civilization* 1(London: Routledge Classics, 2001) 28.

result women who normally would have fallen into the category of the deserving poor were forced to present themselves and their families at the workhouse. Since the stigmatisation of the workhouse implied all the negative nuances of pauperism, they were largely considered to have been “condemned” to the institution. Outdoor relief itself was a complex phenomenon. In some areas it was controlled by a board of landlords who deemed it to be more economical than providing workhouse relief, while in areas where boards were controlled by tenants there was a resistance to the provision of outdoor relief. This resistance was a result of the understanding of the position of the tenant boards within the Union. It was felt that outdoor relief should not be provided by tenant boards until Ireland as a nation controlled its own affairs and until the burden of responsibility lay with both the British government and landlords alike. The stigmatization that the workhouse brought with it meant that the system was open to an abuse of power and some may have been sent to the workhouse in reaction to political upheaval. Indeed, Crossman writes that the provision of outdoor relief in Ireland enabled guardians to discriminate “more effectually for relief” and is an indication, therefore, of the extent to which relief practices and the organisation of its categories was “the product of social, political and ideological developments.”¹⁶⁶

In a similar vein to the Hôpital Général, discussed by Foucault in *Madness and Civilization*, the public workhouses encouraged the principle of welfare exchange, whereby residents were engaged in productive labour in return for the provision of services. Foucault remarks that in the house of confinement “labour and poverty were located in a simple opposition, in inverse proportion to each other.”¹⁶⁷ The regulation of charity and the organisation of welfare in exchange for productivity set the impoverished inmates of these houses of confinement in direct opposition to notions of economic progress, as well as to the value an individual contributes to a society. Poverty came to be associated with idleness, while labour “assumed its ethical meaning” of being socially and financially advantageous for both the community and the individual.¹⁶⁸ Thus, the body of the destitute and the impoverished came to be seen as an unproductive one that undermined the smooth running of an ordered society,

¹⁶⁶ Crossman *Politics, Pauperism and Power in the Late Nineteenth Century* 15.

¹⁶⁷ Foucault, Michel, *Madness and Civilization* 51.

¹⁶⁸ Foucault, *Madness and Civilization* 53.

which was experiencing an upsurge in industrialisation and the concentration of labour in growing urban spaces. As these urban spaces became more congested and bodies came to be increasingly associated with productive labour, there was growing pressure on councils to govern and regulate these spaces. Within this regulated environment the non-productive body was not only a nuisance, but was perceived as a body which could easily fall prey to the temptation to engage in criminal and/or immoral activity. Consequently, labour came to be perceived as an inhibitor preventing the body, weakened by its circumstances, from indulging in activities which were potentially damaging to its spiritual life. Thus, one of the actions taken by the Poor Law was to initiate the apprenticeship of children in order to deter them from pauperism and the spiritual depravation that would imply. Overall the introduction of labour in exchange for food and shelter in workhouses in Ireland created a similar oppositional relationship between the starving labourers and cottiers in Ireland and the Union boards that administered the Poor Laws. By extension, a relationship of dependency was being perpetuated between Ireland, as part of the Union, and the British government.

Foucault also outlines the role of the Hôpital Général in what he terms the ‘Great Confinement’, as a new type of space into which the mad and the socially undesired could be deposited. Such a siphoning ensured that those people were no longer visible in a society which pursued a policy of reining in those who disrupted or resisted its new structures. This formed part of the shift from ‘sovereignty’ to ‘governmentality’. The workhouse and the Hôpital Général, however, are symptoms of the re-organisation of society in Ireland and should not be considered a source of that organisation. The workhouse, rather, reflects aspects of the “Spectacle of the Scaffold”, as discussed by Foucault in *Discipline and Punish*.¹⁶⁹ It is a visible marker on the landscape that stigmatises the body condemned to death or, in this case, to residency of the workhouse. It also suggests the contradictory relationship Ireland was to have with modernisation throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Society was becoming increasingly fragmented as a result of poverty and emigration, and certain classes were experiencing the breaking up of the traditional family unit in order to take up occupancy in a Poor House. Moreover, there was an increasing categorisation and labelling of individuals

¹⁶⁹ Foucault, Michel, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* Translated by Alan Sheridan (London: Penguin Books, 1977) 32-73.

and thus a movement away from collective communal identity. Society was experiencing a growing centralisation of power and required a new type of language to express what Margaret Kelleher has described as “overwhelming sights” of poverty and death, and the grief such loss brought upon the population.¹⁷⁰ Luke Gibbons has referred to the impact of such discordant events on Ireland as the “shock of modernity...experience(d)... before its time.”¹⁷¹ In industrial terms, Ireland undeveloped in economic and technological terms, did not begin to recover until the second half of the twentieth century was well underway. In the interim period the Catholic élite became an increasingly powerful group in Irish society.

This Catholic elite had been partly shaped by the processes of institutionalisation that had been taking place through the policy and legislative reform that the British government had been introducing into Ireland since the Act of Union in 1801. Bill Kissane claims that the Union took the “institutions of government out of the hands of the Anglo-Irish aristocracy” and placed it in the hands of the increasingly stratified middle classes.¹⁷² However, Brian Girvin argues that this institutionalisation occurred on a “formal level” only and in many respects served to compound the cultural differences between Britain and Ireland.¹⁷³ Writing in *The Dublin University Magazine* in 1834, an anonymous reviewer of Henry David Inglis’ *Journey in Ireland* remarked that “An Irish cabin is, in many instances, a concentration of all that is filthy and inconvenient” and that it “may in fact, be not inaptly defined, a seminary for the education of pigs”. The reviewer continues to observe that the perceived level of filth is a result of the Irish peasants’ “notions” and unless this state is altered then the “distinction between the two countries” cannot be erased.¹⁷⁴ While state institutions may have been taken out of the hands of the aristocracy, clear evidence of the cultural difference between the aristocracy, and the peasantry remained. Indeed, Kissane acknowledges that while government positions opened up to Catholics, it was really only in the last decades

170 Kelleher, Margaret, *The Feminization of Famine. Expressions of the Inexpressible* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1997) 17.

171 Gibbons, Luke, *Transformations in Irish Culture* 6.

172 Kissane, Bill, *Explaining Irish Democracy* 60.

173 Girvin, Brian, *Between Two Worlds. Politics and Economy in Independent Ireland* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1989) 3.

174 Anonymous, “Ireland in 1834” in *The Dublin University Magazine: A Literary and Political Journal* V .XXV) 1835. 2

before Independence that the employment of Catholics in government became “an unmistakable trend”, and may have been a contributing factor in the growth of a buffer zone between middle and working class Protestants and Catholics.¹⁷⁵ Having said this, discriminating remarks made towards the peasantry are not aimed at the Irish alone. An article published in May 1834 in *The Dublin University Magazine*, critiquing the introduction of Poor Laws in Ireland criticises those on the “poor lists” in England as being populated by the “idle and the profligate”, suggesting that this buffer zone was as much about class and power as nationality and religion.¹⁷⁶

Born out of struggle, the 1922 state must have seemed to many to be the rightful synthesis or amalgamation of a people, their ethos, their perceived identity and the institutions that had been founded upon their territory. The continuation of such a perceived identity was dependent on the construction of the idea of the singularity of national experience and vision for its survival. In other words, rather than a mosaic of identities contributing to form a national cultural experience, it seemed that the Irish experience was one dimensional. The authenticity of this identity, however, is, as Colin Graham writes, a fluid entity that exists as “cultural denial of dominance”. Graham goes on to argue that the confluence of Irishness with Catholicism to form the notion of a true or real Irish identity creates a gap of difference between the new Irish state and former Protestant colonisers. The seemingly collective acceptance of the Irish Catholic as “the obvious, the natural” Irish identity is a result of the framing of difference, rather than being the true nature of people on this island.¹⁷⁷ Factors that influenced people’s daily lives may also have contributed to what appeared to be a broad collective participation in Catholicism as a religion and a definer of identity. Being Catholic became the dominating discourse of Irish society after 1922, since being Catholic was, as Tom Inglis writes, “central to obtaining good positions in many Catholic and semi-Catholic organisations” that were linked to state bureaucracy, and to many agencies that generated and accumulated wealth. Indeed, while Inglis remarks that the history of the “Irish Catholic social élite” has yet to be written, its role in the fields of economic,

175 Kissane, Bill, *Explaining Irish Democracy* (Dublin: UCD Press, 2002) 60.

176 Anonymous, “The Scottish System of Poor Laws” in *The Dublin University Magazine* III .XVII (1834) 509.

177 Graham, Colin, *Deconstructing Ireland: Identity, Theory, Culture* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2001) 133.

government, the civil service, the professions and semi-state bodies is widely recognised.¹⁷⁸

Although systems of health and education were established by this time, cultural amalgamation was impeded by the failure of policies to enhance the economic status of the country in the 1800s, as well as by resistance to colonisation. While Girvin terms this the consequence of “benign neglect”, there may be more appropriate and more precise ways to interpret the division between Britain and Ireland that became increasingly blatant as the 1800s progressed.¹⁷⁹ One possible interpretation is to view the growing economic and cultural gap as a direct consequence of the rise of regionalism. Joe Cleary argues that the context of the Industrial revolution in Britain gave rise to the conditions that saw food shortages and Famine occur in Ireland; he describes these events as “two divergent vectors of the same capitalist modernization process.”¹⁸⁰ While Britain underwent a process of technological modernization, its government failed to extend economic or developmental policies to Ireland that would have encouraged a similar type of modernization. However, one criticism of the Poor Laws put forward in Britain, in *The Dublin University Magazine*, was that “the earnings of her industrious citizens” were being used to “pamper indolence and profligacy” in Poor Houses. This was the cause of “bitter and incessant complaints”, suggesting that the Irish poor were not the only impoverished group to suffer as a result of modernization and of policies increasingly motivated by the economic results of growing capitalism and a particular type of modernisation.¹⁸¹ The difference remains, however, that Ireland as a whole was continuously neglected in economic terms while industrialisation in Britain created centers of employment. In developmental terms, Ireland moved further and further from the centre and increasingly became an isolated region of the Union. In economic terms

178 Inglis, Tom, “The Religious Field in Contemporary Ireland: Identity, Being Religious and Symbolic Domination” in *Ireland Beyond Boundaries: Mapping Irish Studies in the Twenty-first Century* Ed. Liam Harte and Yvonne Whelan (Dublin: Pluto Press, 2007) 119.

179 Girvin, Brian, *Between Two Worlds. Politics and Economy in Independent Ireland* 4.

180 Cleary, Joe, “Capital and Culture in Twentieth Century Ireland: Changing Configurations” in *Outrageous Fortunes: Capital and Culture in Modern Ireland* (Dublin: Field Day Publications, 2006) 60.

181 Anonymous, “The Scottish System of Poor Laws” in *The Dublin University Magazine* III .XVII (1834) 508.

this neglect had a debilitating effect on Ireland that was to last well after the Free State had been established. However, it also gave rise to a unique type of modernisation that saw some parts of Irish cultural, political, social and economic practices engage with processes of modernisations while other aspects of these elements failed to adhere to patterns of modernisation witnessed in other countries.

However, Irish society did not collapse into a stratification of neglected farmers, labourers and the aristocracy. Rather, Catholic Emancipation facilitated the rise of the Catholic middle class that was to form the backbone of the Catholic élite in the Free State and later the Republic. In fact, this middle class had been garnering wealth and power since Catholic emancipation and with increasing success since the implementation of the 1870 Land Act. Jim MacLaughlin writes that the 1870 Land Act, as well as the 1869 Church of Ireland Act, “struck at the heart of British conceptions of the state” that recognised the incompatibility of landlordism with the processes of nation building at work in Europe.¹⁸² History could no longer legitimate the presence of landlords, planted in Ireland by colonisation, in a “modern nation building society” or, indeed, in a Europe where nationalism and ideas of the nation state were on the rise. If the Act of Union, as Bill Kissane claims, was “emblematic of a change in the conception of Empire that would occur in the nineteenth century”, then the Land and Church of Ireland Acts were a natural extension of this change.¹⁸³ The Land Act made way for the growth of the farming class that was predominantly Catholic, aligning narratives of nationalism and the rightful ownership of land, and further cementing the cleavage between Protestants - as Unionists - and Catholics - as those predominantly associated with an independent Ireland. At the same time, southern Protestants, as Garvin writes in *Judging Lemass*, participated in Free State politics. The compounding of an apparent sense of Irishness by “control” of the institutional and intellectual life of the state by the Catholic Church, however, must have had an impact on this southern minority. Indeed, Patrick Mitchel argues that evangelicalism had a defining impact on

182 Maclaughlin, Jim, *Reimagining Ireland: The Contested Terrains of Nation Building* (Dublin: Pluto Press, 2000) 166.

183 Kissane, Bill, *Explaining Irish Democracy* 59.

the southern Protestant minority and that “even up to the 1980s, operated in a context of negative opposition to Irish Catholic identity”.¹⁸⁴

Agrarian reform was not the only means through which this Catholic elite was to emerge. The formal elements of institutionalisation, such as education, formed stabilising structures that carved out a space for a Catholic élite. They also established what Garvin describes a type of “partnership” between the Catholic Church and the British State. While this partnership may have been unspoken, it was one that gained influence as the nineteenth century progressed. Gradually this silent “partnership” granted “religious organisations the tasks of educating the young, running much of the health system” and controlling much “of the civil life of society.”¹⁸⁵ However, the emergence of the “Irish Catholic” as the prevailing discourse in and about Ireland is multifaceted, and should not simply be reduced to matters of religious or financial independence. Considering the difficult birth that the Free State experienced, which was compounded by emigration and acute poverty within certain sectors of society, the painful memories of famine and colonisation, and the disruption and personal grief caused by both the war of Independence and the Civil war, the apparent binding of the Irish nation together through an homogenised identity is, to an extent, understandable. However, the upholding of democracy in the Free State was as much a result of the binding offered the state by pre-existing institutions, by the creation of a “large class of independent farmers”¹⁸⁶ and the siphoning off of generations with an interest in the landed economy through emigration, as the homogeneity offered by an ideal Gaelic identity.¹⁸⁷ In short, growth in education, gradual land reform in the nineteenth century, the establishment of institutions and constant emigration provided the stability, or perhaps the sedation, necessary to maintain a certain status quo that facilitated the successful establishment of democracy in the Free State. Granted, this democracy was on shaky ground and, in some ways, survived as a result of what Garvin describes as,

184 Mitchel, Patrick, “Evangelicals and Irish Identity in Independent Ireland” in *Irish Protestant Identities* Eds. Mervyn Busted, Frank Neal and Jonathan Tonge (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008) 161.

185 Garvin, Tom, *Preventing the Future: Why was Ireland so Poor for so long?* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 2004) 2.

186 Kissane, Bill, *Explaining Irish Democracy* 76.

187 Kissane, Bill, *Explaining Irish Democracy* 55.

the “stultifying of Irish democratic politics” in the first generation after the Irish revolution.¹⁸⁸ The institutions established in Ireland by the British government in the nineteenth century meant they left a “good physical infrastructure, a well run and recently overhauled civil service machine and a fair standard of elementary education.”¹⁸⁹ Garvin notes elsewhere that there was a clear acceptance of the British administration after the War of Independence. For instance, during the Civil War the Post Office continued to operate and administer welfare, demonstrating the robust nature of the civil service machine that remained in operation after the withdrawal of the British from Ireland.¹⁹⁰

The new state was divided by civil war and between those who wished to work within the constitutional limits of the Free State and those who wished to resist those limits. Establishing an administration that could satisfy the needs and desires of both the people and their politicians was a precarious exercise. The parallel growth of the state, the middle class that emerged with Catholic Emancipation and the Catholic Church, facilitated the merging of their infrastructures. Following the establishment of the Free State, the use of buildings and personnel strengthened those ties. This facilitated the re-creation of systems of education and medicine in a country devastated by war, and one that continued to be worried by the prospect of unrest caused by existing divisions. However, this facilitation also meant that the Irish political machine worked in close co-operation with the Catholic Church. This deepening fusion between religion and politics may have distracted from the political fractures and divisions within the state, but it also lent itself to the construction of an identity and to the perception of a homogenised state that was encouraged as both a reality and as an ideal to work towards. Ireland as a Catholic state was culturally different to that of Britain, its neighbour and former colonial ruler. In addition to this, in the wake of the gradual attenuation of the Irish language, cultural demarcation was of great significance. Being an Irish Catholic State was not simply the result of convenience but was the result of the convergence of economic and cultural conditions.

188 Garvin, Tom, *Preventing the Future: Why was Ireland so Poor for so long?* 2.

189 Garvin, Tom, *Preventing the Future: Why was Ireland so Poor for so long?* 2.

190 Garvin, Tom, 1922 *The Birth of Irish Democracy* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1996) 123.

Despite the rise in living standards in the 1960s, it seems that the Irish experience continued to be dominated by class structures, that resisted modernisation, and by strict moral standards set by the Catholic Church. Joe Cleary writes that the “modernizing programme that was consolidated in the 1960s and 1970s... reshaped Irish society over the last half century”, suggesting that its long term effects are more explicit than its immediate effects.¹⁹¹ Moreover, in light of the report released by the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, the OECD, on Ireland in the 1960s, Tom Garvin argues that “the culture” had “not fully recovered the ground lost between 1915 and 1965 because of the outcome of the Irish revolution.”¹⁹² In other words, while democracy had been established, the state waited until the 1960s to depart from the resistance to modernization that had stunted the economy. While Cleary approaches the question from a Marxist point of view, he notes that a period of time usually follows a revolution which is defined by stagnation rather than development; a “period of post-revolutionary stagnation or retardation” would seem to be an anticipated risk suggesting that, in Marxist analysis, a levelling-off of social and economic change in the new state was not only acceptable but also unsurprising.¹⁹³ For such a levelling off to continue for almost 50 years, as Garvin suggests, is reminiscent of the “benign neglect” Garvin refers to, in relation to the failure of British policies of modernization to extend to Ireland. It would seem that the divide between the ruling élites and the population left the discussion on modernization “hopelessly” entrenched in inflexible ideological systems of thought that associated a constructed ideal of Ireland and Irishness.¹⁹⁴ Both of these phenomena prevented deviation from the norms of the status quo. However, demographic changes and movement in labour practices were to have a severe impact on the Irish economy in the 1970s. To add to this, the staunch structures that had induced national, political, cultural and social stability would be one of the obstacles preventing the success and upward mobility of Ireland’s new young population. Rural Ireland and agriculture, that had provided the backdrop for Irish identity since the

191 Cleary, Joe, “Distress Signals: Sean O’ Faolain and the Fate of Twentieth Century Irish Literature” in *Field Day Review* Ed. Seamus Deane, Brendan Mac Suibhne & Ciarán Deane (2009) 49.

192 Garvin, Tom *Preventing the Future: Why was Ireland so Poor for so Long?* 167.

193 Cleary, Joe, “Distress Signals: Sean O’ Faolain and the Fate of Twentieth Century Irish Literature” 72.

194 Garvin, Tom *Preventing the Future: Why was Ireland so Poor for so Long?* 170.

foundation of the state, underwent a pronounced transformation. By the time Ireland joined the EEC, fifty-two percent of the population was living in urban areas and the number of people whose livelihoods were derived from agriculture alone was dropping rapidly.¹⁹⁵ In addition, the onset of recession in the 1970s exposed the weakness in the Republic's structure and the consequences of a collision between a young, largely unemployed and newly qualified workforce, and the class structures of old Ireland were soon to become apparent. Conflict with the staunch ideas that the seemingly one-dimensional Irish identity had developed since the foundation of the state occurred frequently during the 1980s.

While the ostensibly stagnant economic trough endured, unemployment and emigration rose at an accelerated pace and the number of people experiencing poverty remained unequalled elsewhere in the EEC. In 1980 the level of social inequality in Ireland was higher than in all other European countries, and 800,000 people were dependent on some form of, or on a combination of social welfare payments.¹⁹⁶ In 1982, 160,000 people were unemployed and by December 1984 that number had risen to 208,000.¹⁹⁷ Indeed, despite Ireland's entry ten years earlier into what was then the EEC, this era was to become distinguished as "decades of underdevelopment and stagnation" that saw very little economic growth, positive social change or innovation.¹⁹⁸ Despite this, the 1980s are also remarkable for the challenges posed to the political and social structures, and to the cultural and institutional establishments.

In what Christopher Morash deems to be one of the "paradoxes of Ireland in the 1980s", the media industry itself expanded while the economy contracted.¹⁹⁹ New publications had begun to emerge in the late 1970s, such as *In Dublin* in 1976, and *Hot Press* and

195 Foster *Modern Ireland* 594.

196 Foster, R.F., *Luck and the Irish: A Brief History of Change 1970 – 2000* (London: Penguin Books, 2007) 12.

197 Brown, *Ireland* 316.

198 Ferriter, Diarmaid, *The Transformation of Ireland: 1900 – 2000* 662.

199 Morash, Christopher, *A History of the Media in Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) 194.

Magill in 1978, and this trend continued in the 1980s with the launch of *The Phoenix* in 1983. In addition, the Irish Film Board was established in 1980, and, as Morash describes it, became an important instigator of the contemporary Irish film industry.²⁰⁰ The outwardly robust identity of the Irish nation as a people whose social mores and expectations were anchored in the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church was to be challenged by a number of significant events that occurred in Ireland prior to the appearance of AIDS. Social unease, worker protests and altering cultural expectations highlighted what may have been considered weaknesses in the Republic.

More significantly, these challenges point to the flexing of a democratic voice. Gerard Radnitzky argues that a rise in the number of interest groups during this period indicates an increasing level of participation in a democratic nation. However, he also writes that while “collective choice” is of “instrumental value to freedom. It is not a necessary condition for a free society.”²⁰¹ Indeed, it may be the case that Ireland in the 1980s was experiencing a type of democratic freedom whereby the number of interest groups participating in constitutional politics was becoming more vocal and visible within the media, suggesting that, not only were interest groups taking advantage of the media’s expansion, but that Ireland was becoming a more democratic democracy. If so, this may indicate that the social control previously administered by the alliance of church and state was gradually unravelling, and that Irish society was teetering on the edge of liberalisation that was characteristic of the western world in the latter stages of the twentieth century. This liberalisation, however, if it may be termed that at all, was of an uneven kind, just as Ireland’s relationship with modernity has been uneven. It seems to have been concentrated in certain pockets of society and is more explicit in certain government policies than others.

Economic modernisation was deemed acceptable but this did not necessarily mean the complete relaxation of Church influence on society particularly in regard to what were deemed moral issues. The contradiction of Irish democracy in the 1980s lies in the

200 Morash, Christopher, *A History of the Media in Ireland* 195.

201 Radnitzky, Gerard, “Social contract, Democracy and Freedom” in *Transitions to Modernity* Ed John A. Hall (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992) 308-309.

increased challenges to constitutional politics through constitutional means and the simultaneous, continued acceptance of discourses of morality that preceded these challenges. Indeed, as we shall see in subsequent chapters, media discussion of events such as the abortion and divorce referenda; the challenge that David Norris brought to the constitutional illegality of homosexuality; the response to the death of a young woman during childbirth, Ann Lovett, what became known as “The Kerry Babies Case”, as well as to worker protests, indicate the intellectualisation of ideas of freedom. Chrystel Hug outlines that this intellectualisation points to a continued connection with established discourses of morality.²⁰² For now, the significance of these events lie in their disruption of what was portrayed, and perceived, as an homogenised society and a national identity that hinged on the synchronised workings and sympathetic understandings between the Church, the state and the nation itself. The discourses and structures of official Ireland that had been developing since the Act of 1801 were to experience successive episodes of disruption during the 1980s which coupled with accelerated modernisation were to unsettle official Ireland and leave the interconnecting sympathies of Church, state and nation open to being undermined if not unpicked.

²⁰²Hug, Chrystel, *The Politics of Sexuality Morality in Ireland* Ed. Jo Campling (Hampshire: Palgrave, 1999) 11-75.

Chapter Three

Disruptive Bodies: Infanticide and the Tubercular Body

Institutions and the codes of behaviour and language that supported them were integral elements of life in Ireland between the 1801 Act of Union and the late twentieth century. By tracing the establishment, development and normalisation of institutions in the last chapter, this thesis points to their entrenched nature in Irish society, and the extent to which they demarcated the contours of official bodies. In order to maintain their position and the power associated with their interconnecting web of relations, institutions and thus official Ireland perpetuated discourse of inclusion and exclusion that ensured problematic bodies were consigned to a site beyond recognition. Despite this perpetuation, combinations of events sporadically resulted in slippage within official structures allowing transgressive bodies to vex codified behaviours and cultural expectations. This chapter considers how official structures maintain a dualistic relationship with problematic bodies. That is, in creating the conditions that give rise to rejected and problematic bodies, institutions and official Ireland were also exposed to the potentially undermining impact such transgressive bodies could have on official structures. By tracing the presence of the tubercular body and infanticide as instances of the vexatious this chapter examines the potential of problematic bodies to disrupt normative codes of behaviour, language and cultural expectation. Outbursts of the vexatious are also considered productive instances that temporally destabilise the dualistic dependency between official and unofficial structures thereby facilitating the possibility of changes in official discursive formations.

“Infanticide”, “Supposed Infanticide”, “Infanticide at Monkstown”; these are just a few of the headlines bearing testimony to the frequency with which acts of infanticide were carried out in nineteenth century Dublin.²⁰³ Several other articles populate the pages of *The Irish Times* during the mid-century decades sampled for this research. One article published in 1861 places the number of acts of infanticide within “the guilt and misery” of Dublin city at five while others published during the 1850s and 1860s provide details of infants drowned, infants in a sewer, in rivers and streams, in a manure pit and in a flax hole as well as in a chamber pot.²⁰⁴ While many children died as a result of

203 Anon, “Infanticide” in *The Irish Times* 27 August 1859, 4; Anon, “Supposed Infanticide” in *The Irish Times* 8 May 1866, 3; Anon, “Infanticide at Monkstown” in *The Irish Times* 27 Aug 1859, 4.

204 Anon, “County Wicklow Assizes” in *The Irish Times* 19 July, 1865, 4; Anon, “Infanticide near Cashel” in *The Irish Times* 17 July 1873,2; Anon, “Infanticide at Coleraine” in *The Irish Times* 1 November 1864, 2; Anon, “Infanticide” in *The Irish Times* 5 December 1859, 3; Anon, “Infanticide at Monkstown” in *The Irish Times* 27 Aug 1859, 4.

abandonment and exposure to the cold, drowning seems to have been the most common way of committing infanticide during the nineteenth century. It suggests not only attempts to end the child's life, but also, in a move that opposes that principles of baptism and marking a child's birth, drowning points to an attempt to wash the body away or to erase evidence of its existence. Drowning in sewers, rivers and in the sea provided the person committing the crime with channels of water that could possibly carry the infant's corpse away from the place of drowning thus cutting any potential ties that may be made between a place and a particular person. Where water used in baptismal rites is used to mark birth, blessing and an entry into an organised church, water in the context of infanticide represents the end of a problematic body and its identity.

Infanticide had become, as Diarmaid Ferriter writes, one "solution to the problem of illegitimate children" commonly practiced in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.²⁰⁵ Mothers found guilty of the crime were treated with compassion as the act was seen as one of desperation generally motivated by poverty, poor mental health or a combination of both. Travel bans incurred during World War Two prevented many women from crossing the Irish Sea to Britain where abortion services, although still illegal, were easier to avail of or, if women chose to, they could live and raise their child there in relative anonymity. Ferriter has recorded that between 1940 and 1946, when travel bans were in operation, 46 cases of infanticide were brought before the courts while only 20 cases were brought to trial between 1925 and 1940.²⁰⁶ Pressures placed on mothers by poverty were accentuated by the stigmatism attached to being a single mother and to illegitimacy across society. While these pressures had been somewhat alleviated in the second half of the twentieth century they continued to press on single women who became pregnant. Consequently, when the body of an infant was found on a beach at Caherciveen in County Kerry in 1984 the authorities assumed, despite the horrific injuries incurred by the infant, that the person who had committed this particular act of infanticide was a woman. Arguably, the corpse of the infant was thrown into the expanse of the ocean in an effort to hide it, to erase it in an act of forgetting.

205 Ferriter, Diarmaid, *Occasions of Sin: Sex and Society in Modern Ireland* (London: Profile Books, 2009) 57-58.

206 Ferriter, Diarmaid, *The Transformation of Ireland 1900 – 2000* (London: Profile Books, 2005) 423.

The infant's brutally murdered corpse posed a number of challenges to the official structures of the State. It could not be ignored or buried discreetly as usually happened with cases of infanticide. In addition, the identity of both the baby and the person who had committed this act proved impossible for the authorities to discern adding further stress to official structures. Furthermore, the infant's body emerged at a time when those structures were already being pressurised by tensions building between the liberal and conservative sectors of society on issues of abortion and divorce. The Hunger Strikes in Northern Ireland had also pitched the body into the forefront of official discourses. Indeed, the body seemed to provide both a physical and abstract focal point upon which much of those grinding tensions concentrated. Many of those tensions also radiated outwards from the space of the official body as its official discourses attempted to reconcile itself to the ongoing call for change in Irish society. Social and cultural change had been gathering momentum in the preceding decades and appeared to be pushing through the parameters of tradition set out by official structures. While much of the change that occurred in the 1980s does not indicate a radical move from the structures of official Ireland, it forced adjustments to occur within the parameters of official discourses in a way that facilitated the partial acknowledgement of that which had previously been ignored. The body of the murdered infant that seemed to come from nowhere, had been stabbed and pierced and was decomposing, brought chaos to the established order. In this liminal beach space that separated the land from the sea the infant's body resurfaced, became wedged between two rocks and, upon discovery, forced official Ireland to acknowledge its existence.

Discovery of the infant's body and ensuing events generated disturbing and disordering challenges for Irish society's conception of itself. Social expectation, the apparatus of church and state, modernity and the corpse of the infant who fell victim to what seemed a pre-modern violent act of forgetting, clashed unwittingly with the uncontrollable forces of nature as the tide patterns deposited it on the ever-changing liminal beach scape. This corpse that had emerged from the nowhere-ness of the ocean resisted all efforts the authorities made to locate it within the apparent order of society. It resisted classification and became an unnamable memory that had to be recognised and yet could not be found to belong to anyone. The disorder indicated by this memory

jeopardised the centralised ideas of the state, of medicine and indeed of the collective notion of the people. This chapter will consider the body of the murdered infant as one of the focal points around which social, political and religious tensions gathered. The materiality of the body, its unforeseen re-arrival into Irish society, its very thingness, forced official Ireland to confront a practice that was part of its daily life throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century but which had become less visible in the second half of the twentieth century. In forcing official Ireland to confront itself the infant's corpse brought anxieties that had gathered between the structures of the state, that which it had ignored and the pressure of impending change. The murder of an infant presented Ireland with an horrific image that projected questions onto the State, its culture, habitus and shared ethos that had provided Irish society with a coherency and binding for almost two centuries.

In order to consider the probelmatisations presented by the surfacing of the infant's corpse, this chapter will continue to apply Foucault's genealogical approach. The emergence of centralized ideas and structures of the state will be explored through the episodic contraction and expansion of discourses in an a-chronological way. It will also explore the position of entities that lay outside of this process of centralization. To describe these entities as holding a position is oxymoronic since the structures of centralization and regularization did not recognise what lay outside the remit of its ideals, rules, spoken and unspoken, and its institutions. The state, the Church and their associated regularizing institutions worked together to compile an image of Irishness. Beyond this image or canvas however, lay all that was incompatible with those ideals. The space beyond the canvas may be read as the "invisible blind spot" Foucault describes in his examination of Velasquez's "Las Meinas" in *The Order of Things*.²⁰⁷ Velasquez's painter may be framed within the scene gazing at the scene, but may not interact with the scene within the frame of the scene. The turned away canvas is the blind spot within the painting just as the infant who returned to the shores of our society is the "invisible blind spot", the spot that had been socially and culturally ignored, and may be labeled, but with whom society may not directly speak. The overall image of the state, the Church and Irishness depends on the management of these troublesome

207 Foucault, Michel, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1980) 4.

entities and practices out of the spaces where they may become visible. Official discourses of the body, consequently, were dependent on the continuous management of problematic bodies. What lies outside threatens the structured managed spaces. Examples of this may be found in relation to TB and the infant found in Kerry. The already decomposing corpse was drawn from death into the vexatious position between a biological and a cultural system. The infant's corpse troubled society at the point where the dominant ideas of a culture are met with resistance from beyond itself, where dominant ideas meet with the vexatious and a silent resistant history no longer lies in our "invisible blind spot".²⁰⁸ In the face of such a troublesome entity official discourses of the body are momentarily suspended and managed connections between the physical and the abstract collapse. In one moment of abjection the canvas has turned around to face us.

In facing this canvas we are forced to write the history of the unrecognised. Death and attempts to erase children out of existence were part of the unwritten history of Irishness. However, in the 1980s discourses of the body were being forced to expand in a way that could somehow accommodate what had been un-writable and unrecognisable for so long. In illustrating how embedded the centralised ideas of Church and state had become, and the efficiency with which they perpetuated a culture of self-regulation that ensured Ireland's "invisible blind spot" remained out of sight, it is necessary to explore the establishment of those structures and their continuation of their operation in the twentieth century. In doing so, this research will return to the beginning of the nineteenth century. Centralised ideas of the state had been developing in Ireland since the early nineteenth century. Gradually, the structures put in place in the 1800s developed into the pillars from which an identifiable Irish culture would hang; a specific culture, that seemed to represent the idea of what it meant to be Irish, would come to stretch between these pillars, thus linking the ideologies upon which institutions were built.

While institutions were already joined by government bureaucracy, culture served to create channels between physical institutions, ideology and the general population. By

²⁰⁸ Foucault, Michel, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* 4.

acting as a physical point of contact through which individuals encountered the control of the government and of religious organizations, institutions became an integral factor in the augmentation of a nexus of connections between the state, the growing idea of an Irish nation and the ethos in which both became ensconced. Indeed, the salience of institutions in Ireland in the twentieth century came about, in part, as a result of the dualistic, codependent relationship that was fostered between Irish national identity and the nation-state's institutions. While the mechanisms of the state and many of its institutions were established in Ireland between 1801 and 1922, post-1922 governments saw a further endorsement and proliferation of institutions as structures that would come to uphold the ethos of the nation-state as it emerged. Exploring vexatious disturbances necessitates considering the formation of that which it vexes – in relation to Ireland that means considering the presumed cultural expectations of a nation as set out by the official structures of identity. This research will suggest some reasons for the extent and type of charged upset the vexatious has caused in Irish society, while offering an overview of the development of cultural, political and social structures.

Irish identity in the twentieth century emerged from complex relations of power. In the twentieth century, the structures of the Irish nation-state were, as Jim MacLaughlin argues, endorsed by the intelligentsia who used language and visual codes to create a linguistic and mental image of Ireland.²⁰⁹ This mental image and its discourses contributed to the “naturalization” of the very idea of a nation-state.²¹⁰ However, the image and structures upon which this “naturalization” was built had been established through the structures of a different state. While “naturalization” involved the Irish-ing of these structures, it also involved the acceptance and independent participation in a type of modern power and its methodologies that characterized modern Europe. One element of this structuring process was the creation of a visual representation of the territory of the island facilitated by improvements in cartography. The physicality of the state and the landscape was documented in the nineteenth century by the Ordnance Survey. The survey of Ireland was, however, the result of a gradual process of mapping Ireland and the demands that agrarian economics placed on cartographers.

209 MacLaughlin, Jim, *Re-Imagining the Nation State: The Contested Terrains of Nation Building* (London: Pluto Press, 2001) 10-43.

210 MacLaughlin, Jim, *Re-Imagining the Nation State: The Contested Terrains of Nation Building* 24.

The first Ordnance Survey of Ireland(OSI), which began in the 1820s, came about as the result of successive discussions about surveying Ireland in parliament between 1814 and 1824. Local landlords and grand juries had also begun the private practice of mapping their own estates and counties. Following the completion of the bog surveys in 1814 the famous cartographer, John Ainslie, remained in Ireland and, as documented by J.H Andrews in *A Paper Landscape*, completed a survey of County Mayo for the Grand Jury of that county.²¹¹ Like the establishment of Poor Houses which regularized charitable efforts already being provided by communities, the OSI was an official recognition of the cartographic process that was already underway, albeit in a piecemeal way. To this end, an increase in private requests sprang from “practical need”, saw an increase in pressure placed on the government to begin a full survey of Ireland and, although the “centralizing tendency was slow to gather impetus”, the full scale survey was eventually intitalised.²¹² If, as Catherine Nash claims, there is an “interconnection” between modernity and “places at a variety of scales” then the six inches to a mile survey conducted in Ireland between 1824 and 1846 suggests that the link between modernity and the modern state was becoming increasingly visible in Ireland.²¹³

The production of a visual representation through modern cartographic practices implies modernization and an engagement with the taxonomic process of naming and categorizing the physical landscape was an integral element in giving a modern impression of the control of territory by the state. Contemporary instruments of cartography were, in the 1840s, balanced and used as steady viewpoints to create a mathematical expression, through pictures, of the physical domain of the state. Bernhard Klein describes the process as the “textual replacement of the rebel with the cartographer” in the “carefully constructed confrontation between two competing claims to the land.”²¹⁴ Structured and containing, modern power seeks to control through the

211 Andrews, J.H., *A Paper Landscape* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1975) 7.

212 Andrews, J.H., *A Paper Landscape* 11, 15.

213 Nash, Catherine, “Historical Geographies of Modernity” in *Modern Historical Geographies* Eds. Brian Graham & Catherine Nash (Essex: Prentice Hall, 2000) 13.

214 Klein, Bernhard, *Maps and the Writing of Space in Early Modern England and Ireland* (New York: Palgrave, 2001) 63.

extended power of language, surveillance and the development of self-policing modes of behaviour in society and the process of naming and classifying the landscape fits into a web of bureaucratic power characteristic of modern government. In this respect, modern power has been developing in Irish society since it became part of Britain in 1801. The establishment of institutions and the contemporaneous emergence of middle class respectability were key factors in the remote governing of Ireland in the nineteenth century as they acted as agents of government in a country isolated from the centre of power. These characteristics of government continued into the twentieth century. However, neither institutions, nor society's self-effacement nor its culture of self-policing could contain the vexatious appearance of the un-nameable body of an infant on White Strand beach in 1984.

Graphed and labelled through English, the picture of Munster presented in 1842 was one created through methods directly linked to early nineteenth century improvements in sciences, including cartography. Physical features of the landscape are named in the language of the ruling class thus creating an Anglicised identity for the territory of the British state. As MacLaughlin writes, earlier attempts to map Ireland in the seventeenth century were seen as part of a civilizing process that would create maps that included places such as Ireland, Scotland and Wales as regions that had more to gain as part of the United Kingdom rather than as independent nations denoted by their difference.²¹⁵ Man-made features are also named in English but in a way that adds a new textual layer in the historical perception of the state. This new textual layer, brought to visual fruition in the 1840s, builds on past historical perceptions while also anticipating the future direction, in terms of bureaucracy, of the state and creates a picture of territory as an expression of the state. This expression suggests that the state exists as a mode of discipline and perception that encapsulates a singular mode of existence and a singular order. However, this perceived singularity exists simply as perception and, beyond this assertion of order placed upon the landscape, other modes of perception and of historical existence exist contemporaneously in a state of multiple layering. In this way, the layers of history created through linguistic textures on the map, send what Deleuze and Guattari call "rhizomatic" roots backwards into the leaves of time. By this is mean, elements of linguistic textures in the present connect with elements of the past and reach

215 MacLaughlin, Jim, *Re-Imagining the Nation State: The Contested Terrains of Nation Building* 43.

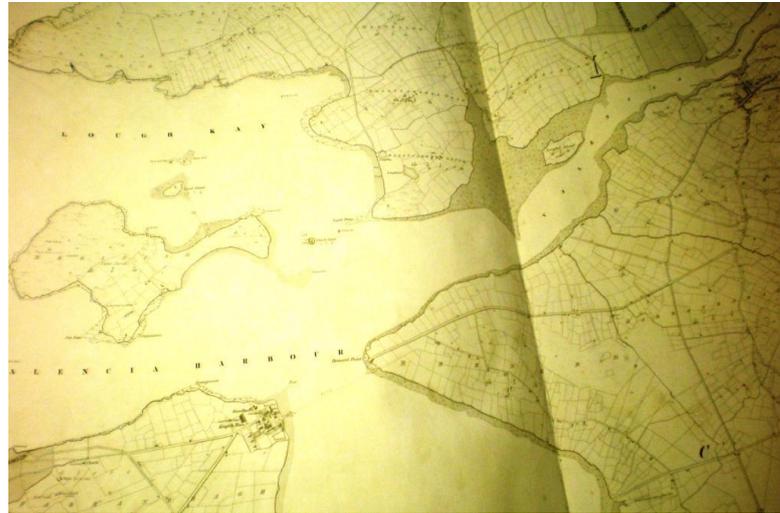
across surfaces of textual time while also existing on the surface of the contemporary moment and projecting its dimensions into the future.²¹⁶

Historical expression of the state becomes the culmination of history, the collapsible surface of a present that may be constantly revisited through the legacy of institutions and cultural memory, as well as the linguistic expression of a power relationship that will mould future social relations. One example of the flow of past, present and future may be found in “Children’s Burial Grounds” marked on the 1842 maps. Two of these may be found in close proximity to White Strand; one on the island that lies to the west of White Strand and the second lies off the south-east coast of the estuary. In the past “Children’s Burial Grounds” were used as a site where children unbaptised before their death or those who were still born were buried.²¹⁷ Suicide victims and at times the bodies of unknown people who were washed on the coast, criminals and strangers as well as adults with learning disabilities were also buried on these unconsecrated sites. In 1842 a theodolite, the surveying instrument used to map the areas, configured as a metaphor for the modernization of Ireland and marked these sites of liminality, of in-betweenness where the problematic bodies of those who could not be acknowledged within the official parameters of society were buried. In using that equipment, cartographers created a picture of a physical landscape that would, under the auspices of Irish-Ireland, be re-named and re-recognised. “Children’s Burial Grounds” appear on contemporary Ordnance Survey maps across the island under the following names; cillin, caldragh, calluragh, cealltrach, ceallúrnach, children’s burial ground, cill burial grounds, killeens, kyle burial grounds and lisín. Local knowledge of these sites would have been supplied to the nineteenth century cartographers explaining why in certain areas they may not have been marked on those first OS maps. The elements of Ireland that had existed in modes of knowledge outside of the official discourses of the British State have since been brought to bear, through an extended hybridisation of knowledge and language, into the official discourses of identity and a State that carries traces of the

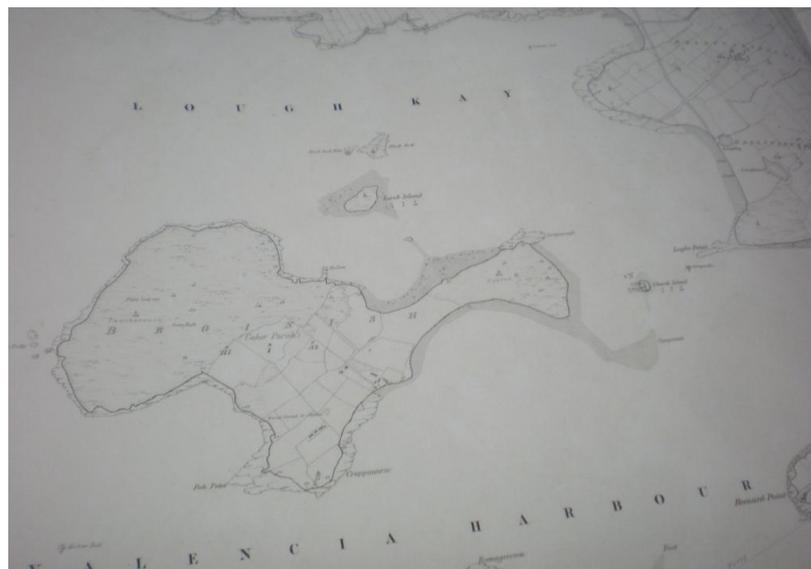
216 Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* Translated by Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987) 7.

217 Donnelly, Seamus, Colm Donnelly, Eileen Donnelly and C O Donnell, “The Forgotten Dead: The Cillíní and Disused Burial Grounds of Ballintoy, County Antrim” in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology* Third Series 58 (1999) 109 – 113.

past with it into the present and which projects those traces through language into the future.



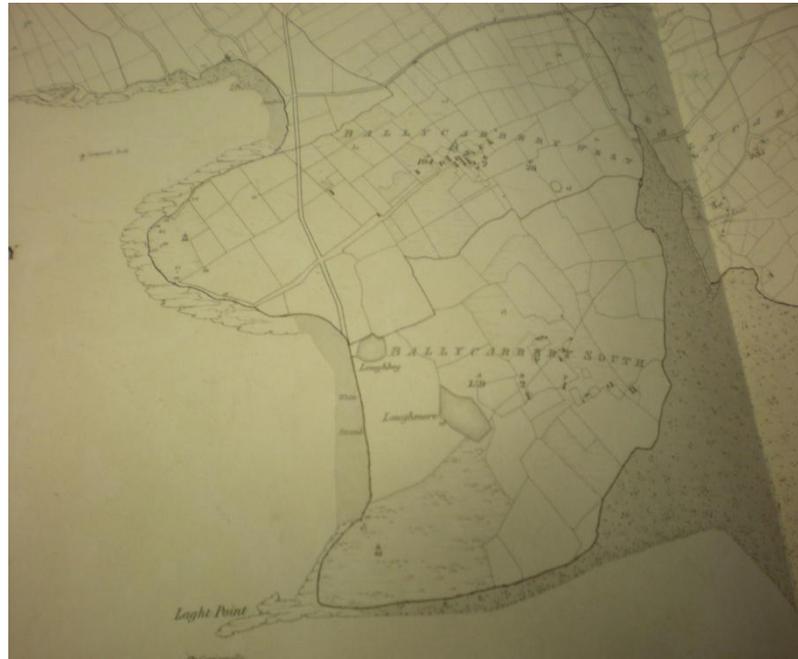
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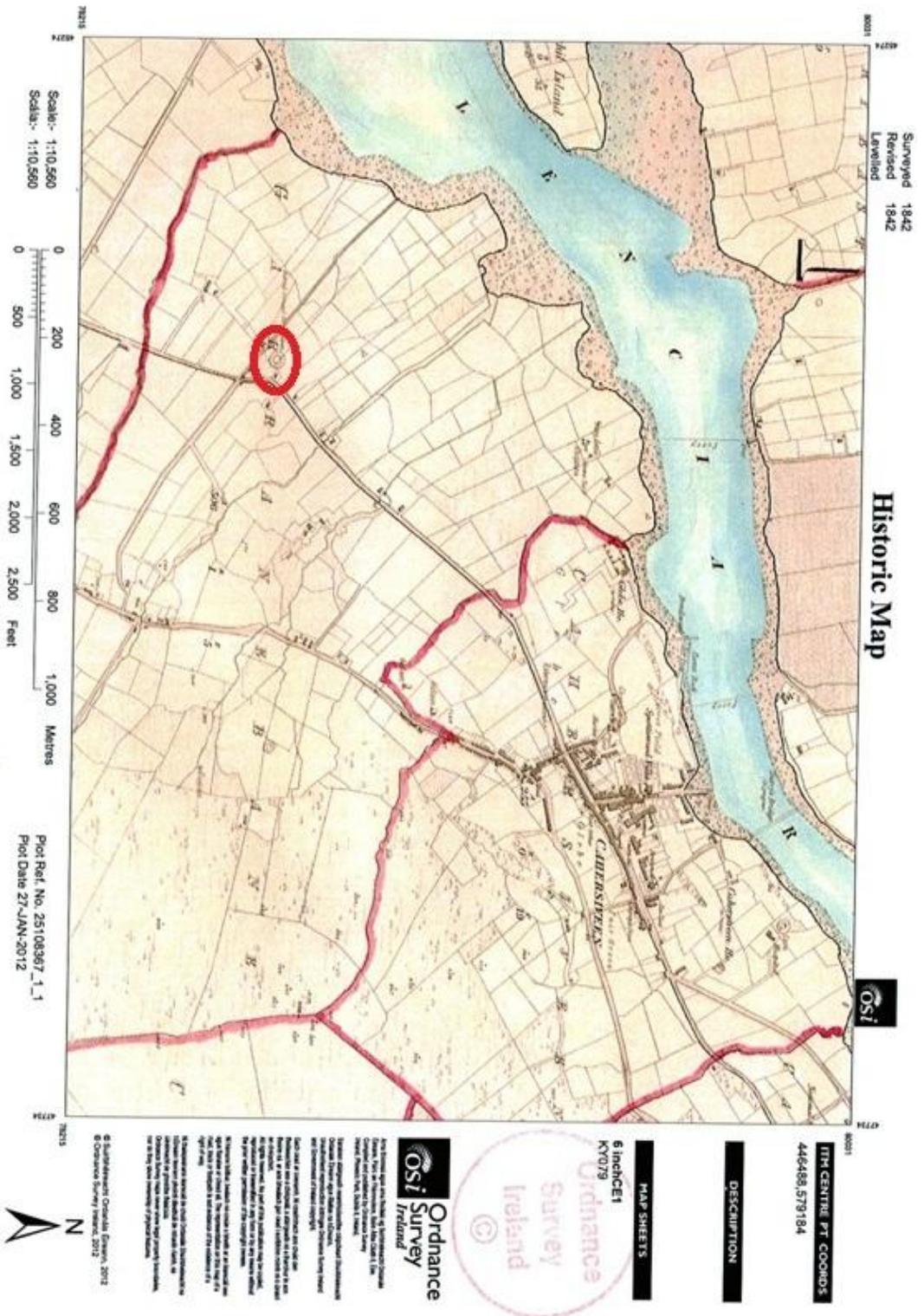
218 OSI "OS Map of Iveragh, County Kerry including Cahersiveen, White Strand and Broinish Island" *OS Maps Sheet 79*, 1842. Courtesy of the Russell Library, NUIM, Ireland.

219 OSI "OS Map of Iveragh, County Kerry including White Strand and Broinish Island" *OS Maps Sheet 79*, 1842. Courtesy of the Russell Library, NUIM, Ireland.



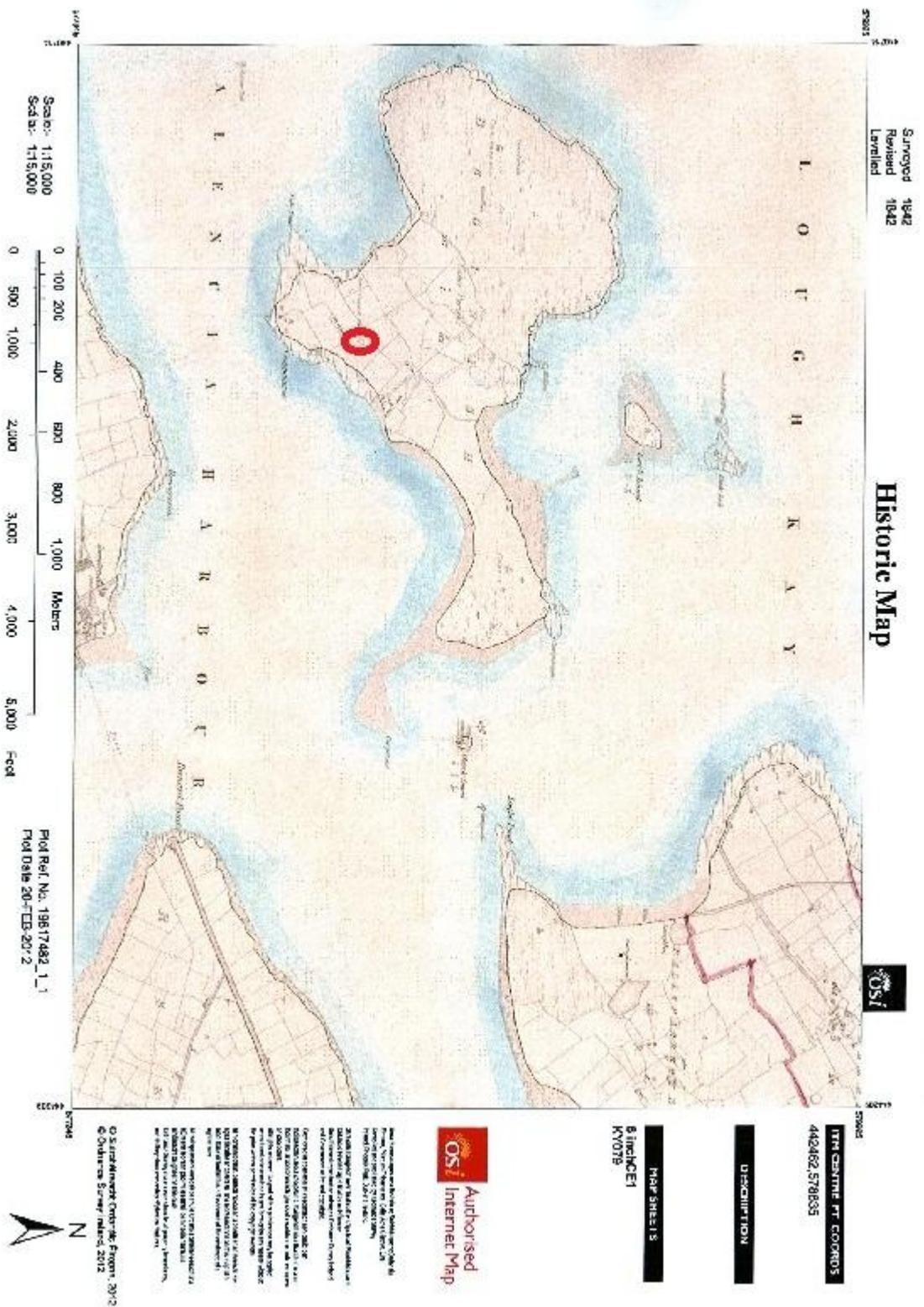
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220 OSI "OS Map of Iveragh, County Kerry including White Strand" *OS Maps Sheet 79*, 1842. Courtesy of the Russell Library, NUIM, Ireland.



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221 OSI “OS Map of Iveragh, County Kerry including Cahersiveen,” from *Ordnance Survey Ireland Historic Maps* <http://maps.osi.ie/publicviewer/#V1.448628.579933.4.7> The red oval denotes the children’s burial ground.



222

222 OSI “OS Map of Iveragh, County Kerry including White Strand and Broinish Island” from *Ordnance Survey Ireland Historic Maps* <http://maps.osi.ie/publicviewer/#V1.443571.579090.5.7> The red oval on Broinish island denotes the Children’s burial ground.

Despite this expansion of language and knowledge, the children buried in the cillíns remain outside the boundary wall and outside of living memory. Their existence is recognised only by the boundary wall of each site and their physicality becomes part of the continuous surface of the earth, of the elements of the soil that touch each other to create one endless surface and infinite collapsible identity surfaces. The physical divide of the wall mirrors the boundaries of Gaelic Ireland and Catholic Ireland and official Ireland. Emerging from the unstable and incessantly changing ocean, the body of the infant undermined the discourses through which Irish identity and the facelessness of problematic bodies had been negotiated. At a time when debate surrounded the rights of Irish women to abortion, the corpse on the beach in Kerry raised questions about the recognition of those who live outside of the official discourses of Irish-Ireland and the failure of the language of its discourse to recognise and contain such actions. The official discourses of state and culture could not contain the brutal actions that ended the baby's life. The limits of official discourse are also highlighted by the failure of official Ireland to identify the person who stabbed this infant to death. However, the actions of the perpetrator of that violence remain hidden as the flow of nature washed the corpse back onto the ever changing unmappable liminal space of the beach that is represented cartographically as a shaded textured space.

The gap between the concrete and abstract structures of the state and what lies outside of its official discourses was highlighted by the 1984 case of infanticide. Official discourse and its institutions had however, worked together throughout the twentieth century to sustain a particular perception of Irish identity. In post-1922 Ireland, institutions and government supported each other and, as a result, became extensions of each other so that a type of re-calibration between government and nation became necessary. Previously perceived as the agents of British power, institutions came to represent self-government and the management of a culture emerging from an independent nation and a partially modernized society. In that partially modern society, the independent control of the institutions offered the new state an opportunity for its organs to reflect the emergent ethos of the state. Institutions were the visual and physical representations of the state and their continued support of the nation's ethos facilitated the conjoining of the nation and state into a nation-state with a strong conservative Catholic culture. For the first time, institutions could be run in the name of the nation-state. Since the ethos propagated by and for the nation-state was a

conservative Catholic and bourgeois one, institutional endorsement of the nation-state spelled the necessity for the control of elements of society, culture and nation that were resistant to the specificity of the ethos. Indeed, as the nation-state required institutions to act as an extension of itself, they also created a site where the ideals of the nation-state could converge; that is institutions acted as a physical and abstract place of convergence and thus contributed to the systematic construction of sites of exclusion. Because institutions defined who should be included, they also defined who should be excluded from society. Institutions were both the within and the without of the state and what it excluded. Ironically, as a result, institutions themselves became a site of exclusion that worked to contain elements of society deemed enervating or a threat to the national ethos. However, these institutions evolved into sites sealed so tightly that those within them became contained in a parallel habitus from which they could never extricate themselves. Stigmatism prevented those who entered asylums, borstals, orphanages and Magdalen laundries from being accepted back into society and many of those admitted were never in fact released from the institutions.

Institutions provided a type of concretion of the ideology of the nation-state and its ethos. In twentieth century Ireland, inflexibility came to characterize institutions such as borstals, asylums, Magdalen laundries and industrial schools. Their rigidity, however, may be read as an expression of the general paralysis of the official conservative moral culture that shaped Irish society until the late twentieth century and seemed to give rise to a self-effacing society answerable to a powerful combination of church and state. As a result, the apparent authenticity of an Irish identity, hewn from a culture that emerged in the nineteenth century that coalesced into the culture and ideology of the Irish nation-state after 1922, relied on the existence of institutional structures for its verification and support. However, if institutions loaned Irish identity a structured support around which claims of authenticity could weave, then the verisimilitude of that authenticity perpetuated a need for those controlling institutions. This mechanistic codependency of structure and verisimilitude completed a process that codified the conjugation of church and state. This provided a continuum of stability that kept aberrations from the ideals of the Irish nation-state in check, but also created the vexatious entities, phenomena and individuals that would force their way through the gaps in the official discourses and structures of that same nation-state.

The undeniable force of institutions, their discourses and the discourse of the nation-state raises questions about how those discourses became so deeply entrenched in national thinking that they could work to contain and create what we might call “the vexatious” for prolonged periods of time. Here the vexatious means an entity that disrupts the expected agency in operation within the confines of a dominant identity. It is often an un-named phenomenon that exists outside of the delineated limits of official discourse. Largely the vexatious is a phenomenon that has been ignored or managed into secrecy. Despite this management, there have been occurrences when the vexatious overwhelmed its anonymity, overwhelmed itself and became greater than the power structures that assigned it to the anonymous realm outside the recognised characteristics of official national discourse. While the roots of these structures run deep into the past and act as a connection between the lived performances of the present with elapsed time, the gaps or fault lines between structures also permeate the past, the present and the future. It is from between these fault lines that the vexatious emerges. The context from which it emerges depends on the cultural significance of the moment and the “rhizomatic” roots it encounters in the present.²²³ Vexatious entities are specific to the cultural context from which they emerge and the structures that they resist in that culture to the point that they are resistant of history, the present and the future. Similar to the infant’s corpse on White Strand, AIDS was also encountered in Ireland as a vexatious entity that frustrated the deeply embedded official structures and their discourses of late twentieth century Ireland. Abortion, AIDS, divorce, homosexuality and intravenous drug use, like the infant on White Strand, emerged from an unrecognised point of silence in a way that was to force the limits of official discourse which suggests that the plasticity of official culture would yield to the construction of new parameters for the culture of talk that surrounds it these bodies and phenomena as vexatious entities.

Like other vexatious entities AIDS was present in Ireland long before official discourses began to even partially acknowledge it. AIDS did not appear in Ireland in the 1980s rather AIDS emerged from Ireland; that is, the virus that was disturbing populations worldwide is simultaneously culturally specific to the population it disturbs. A useful comparison illustrating this theory of emergence may be drawn between the emergence of AIDS in Haiti, Ireland and North America. While there are differences, the

²²³ Deleuze, Gilles and Guattari, Felix, “Introduction: Rhizome” in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* 1-25.

discourses that surround each country's experience of AIDS, also touch each other and overlap in one continuous flow of global communication and exchange. One example of this may be found in the case of Haiti. When AIDS became a noticeable problem in Haiti in the 1980s the economic structures of the island were affected rapidly. Tourism went into decline, causing high levels of unemployment until the industry experienced complete collapse later in the decade. Government reactions to the crisis reflected, as Paul Farmer argues, "the deep contradictions of the Haitian ruling class" and the narratives that built around AIDS quickly became the "classic mixture of antiracist nationalism" and the local repression of those perceived to be responsible for the spreading of the virus.²²⁴ AIDS in Haiti, or *SIDA* as it was referred to in local narratives, occupied the spaces of subjectivity already created for other maladies such as tuberculosis. Furthermore, the spread of AIDS in the Haitian city of Port-au-Prince became directly associated with the sex industry as American tourists, in particular, fell ill after returning from the Caribbean and traced their HIV infection to Haiti. As a result, anti-Haitian feeling became more discernible in the United States than it had been prior to the appearance of AIDS. The virus that had lain silent in victims' bodies became active and visible, reminding them of their time in Haiti. Traces of their past had come to clash with their present, as time gathered together in one moment that would continue into the future. However, as nature disturbed nature and the biological system began to collapse, the body, unable to accommodate such a past and present simultaneously, became consumed by this clash.

Gradually, infected bodies became overwhelmed, and unable to carry out normal biological functions, were forced to battle with the suppression of their immunity. The body's usual capabilities seemed to have become divorced from the body by an infection sourced in Haiti. Not simply time, but place and its cultural narratives also seemed to gather together in one awful synchrony. Furthermore, the body's capacities to carry out the wishes of the individual were gradually diminished by infection. Bodies became the shells that carried and managed HIV. Seen as being enslaved by a virus contracted in Haiti, the American media reflected a fear of carriers and a prejudice

224 Farmer, Paul, *Infections and Inequalities: The Modern Plagues* (London: University of California Press, 2001) 160.

towards Haiti as the source of infection simultaneously.²²⁵ In *Impure Science* Steve Epstein analyses the structures of the discourses through which we perceive AIDS. Such framing is often used retrospectively to explain behaviour.²²⁶ Anti-Haitian feeling in the USA was compounded by a story published in the *Native* in 1983 that strongly suggested there was a link between ASFV, a disease that had appeared in swine herds in the Caribbean in the late 1970s and was thought to have jumped species as a result of the human consumption of undercooked pork, and AIDS.²²⁷ Narratives of AIDS in the USA increasingly reflected racist ideas of Haiti as a source of temptation luring Americans into what was seen as immoral sexual behaviour, as well as a source of what was seen as a killer disease that was, at the time, closely aligned with animals. In the case of the Haitian and American experiences, the AIDS body slipped into the subjective spaces already in existence and narratives of AIDS incorporated ideas of nationalism, morality and value systems that sought to repress other systems. AIDS victims carried traces of other places and other times within them and thus were seen as both insiders and outsiders simultaneously. Despite this clash of past, present and future, the AIDS body slipped into the structures of discourse that were already in existence. However, it also frustrated and irritated these structures as it served as a continuous and returning reminder of that which cannot be contained by structure; the vexatious.

Of course, the processes through which the virus territorialises the body and becomes the syndrome known as AIDS are the same throughout the world but the perception of a body in the grip of AIDS is specific to the culture of each society, just as the emergence of the vexatious on White Strand was specific to the official culture into which it arrived. The AIDS body is not simply a body that encapsulates and collapses discourses

225 For a more detailed commentary on the effects of HIV sourced in Haiti see Paula Treichler's *How to Have Theory in an Epidemic*. Treichler, Paula, *How to Have Theory in an Epidemic: Cultural Chronicles of AIDS* (London: Duke and University Press Durham, 1999).

226 Epstein, Steve, *Impure Science* (London: The University of California Press, 1996) 24.

227 James Kinsella discusses the motivation of the *Native* in the publication and pursuit of this story in 1983. *The Native*, a newspaper that represented the gay community in America had played a pivotal role in raising awareness of AIDS in America. Kinsella argues that until 1983 the *Native* had adhered to the reportage of medical facts as released by the American Center for Disease Control (the CDC). After the publication of the story entitled "Is African Swine Fever Virus the Cause (of AIDS)?" the *Native*, according to Kinsella, began to publish stories on AIDS and the cause of the syndrome that were not sourced from official CDC releases. This was seen as a movement of support away from government agencies and from a Regan administration that increasingly came to be perceived as homophobic. Kinsella, James, *Covering the Plague: AIDS and the American Media* (London: Rutgers University Press, 1989) 38-41.

of sex, or gender, class, science and medicine or cultural difference; the AIDS body is one that points to all of these bodies simultaneously. However, the culture from which each AIDS body emerges privileges aspects of one of these bodies over the other. In Ireland, AIDS emerged from a culture in which ideals of nation-hood were intertwined with the ideals endorsed by the Catholic Church and nation-hood seemed to advance an ethos of moral purity and to promote an ideal of the Celtic spirit. This ethos had been honed during the nineteenth century and the decades that had passed since the foundation of the Free State had seen the compounding of these ideals under a widespread ethos of moral purity. This chapter will explore the troubling of official discourses of Irishness and the state's institutions by vexatious entities and phenomenon in the lead up to the emergence of AIDS in Ireland in the mid 1980s.

Susan Sontag identifies discourses of AIDS as discourses that invoke ideas of “pollution” and describes the syndrome's symptoms as “disabling, disfiguring and humiliating”.²²⁸ In this sense, nature and the body, as biological and cultural systems, are polluted and upset. The disturbance of nature by nature has caused unexpected turbulence within the confines of official discourses, structures and perception of identity in Ireland. One earlier example of such a disturbance may be traced through the profile of Pulmonary Tuberculosis or TB in Ireland in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The history of TB in Ireland demonstrates that the body is a contradictory entity, one that is both biological and cultural simultaneously. Described as “...this terrible scourge, the white plague”²²⁹, TB caused the Lord Mayor of Cork to relate his shock at seeing children in the Ward Union Workhouse being consumed by TB as follows:

But I have been shocked, I may say appalled, from my observation of the state of the children, and the result of my inquiries has led me to the deliberate conclusion that it would be a mercy to close the gates of the union house against them, and let them attain the mercy of death, rather than be deformed, maimed, and diseased objects, through the system of feeding them, to which I have reason

228 Sontag, Susan, *Illness as metaphors and AIDS and Its Metaphors* (London: Penguin Books, 1991) 103,107.

229 Russell, T.W., “Tuberculosis in Ireland. Deputation to the Lord Lieutenant. Address by his Excellency, The Chief Secretary, Mr. T.W. Russell” in *The Irish Times* 30 November 1907, 9.

to believe this terrible state is attributable. For want of proper nutrient and change of diet, scrofula has so affected these young creatures that there was scarcely one of them whom I examined that did not bear plain and frightful tokens that their blood had been wasted to that degree, that the current that should have borne vigour and health to their frames was only a medium to disseminate debility and disease.²³⁰

Although tuberculosis was certainly present in Ireland since the seventeenth century, if not beforehand, it reached epidemic proportions in the late nineteenth century.²³¹ Generally, infection of the body by TB becomes apparent when breathlessness and fatigue overcome the patient and eventually bloody phlegm is emitted from the lungs infecting the space around the patient. TB induces fits of violent coughing that often seize sufferers of tuberculosis, taking control of their bodies and triggering emissions. As part of a travelling exhibition that aimed to provide basic information on the disease, in 1907 the Chief Secretary explained that “The medical profession and societies mentioned have been doing their utmost for years to awaken the people of Ireland to the peril in which they are placed by the ravages of this disease” which is spread by “fluid droplets expelled in the act of coughing, sneezing etc, from the mouths of patients suffering from tuberculosis, contains virulent tubercle bacilli, and that fine spray charged with these germs may float to long distances in the air.”²³² In a macabre territorialisation, the disease consumes the body and initiates the violent effusion of itself as blood. The biological body is diffused as it disintegrates and the individual collapses into patient-hood, thus, splitting control of the self from the cultural and the biological body. TB may kill within a short period or persist for long stretches of time, even decades, while its bacteria multiplies and continues to disturb nature. Since

230 Arnott, John, Mayor of Cork, “Cork Union Workhouse” *The Irish Times* nineteenth April, 1859, 4.

231 Jones, Greta, ‘Captains of all These Men of Death’ *The History of Tuberculosis in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Ireland* (Amsterdam: Rodopi B.V, 2001) 1.

232 Russell, T.W., “Tuberculosis in Ireland. Deputation to the Lord Lieutenant. Address by his Excellency, The Chief Secretary, Mr. T.W. Russell” in *The Irish Times* 30th November 1907, 9. This speech was given as part of an exhibition designed by the Lord Lieutenant’s wife, the Countess of Aberdeen. The exhibition travelled Ireland over a two year period and aimed, as Tony Farnar writes, to “make the people understand that tuberculosis was not the result of hereditary taint or moral turpitude” and to introduce them “to what was, in effect, a whole new order of being.” Farnar, Tony, *Patients, Potions & Physicians. A Social History of Medicine in Ireland 1654 -2004* (Dublin: A&A Farnar in association with The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, 2004) 103.

tuberculosis is ingested through airborne bacteria that then proceed to attack from within, the prolonged presence of the disease and the infection of spaces around a patient are key elements in facilitating its spread. As an airborne disease TB is particularly difficult to confine and eradicate, especially during periods of increased urbanisation when, in the past, sanitary facilities did not develop at the same rate, and moreover, overcrowding perpetuated the disease.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century the population of the Irish countryside was being drained as famine, agricultural depression²³³ and violent land agitation persisted. A “reluctance to subdivide larger farms”²³⁴, widespread poverty and a growing dependence on outdoor relief also forced people into emigration and migration to cities and towns in a way that contributed to rural de-population.²³⁵ Those who moved to cities and towns in both the “north and south, were living in appalling conditions” that played a significant part in the reproduction of the disease.²³⁶ Tuberculosis is invisibly passed from person to person through bacteria forced from the body. Indeed, the unsanitary and overcrowded conditions of Ireland’s urban slums provided ideal conditions for the spread of contagious diseases, including TB. From the 1860s onwards, both Europe and America had experienced a decline in the number of cases of tuberculosis. One reason for this may have been the growth of the populations’ resistance to the bacterial strain that had dominated both landmasses in the first half of the nineteenth century.²³⁷ As well as this, the isolation of the bacteria that causes TB by Koch in Germany in 1882 helped to boost the decline of the disease. In Ireland however, TB experienced a sharp rise, peaking in 1904 to make Ireland “unique among the nations of the British Isles” as the only country to experience a rise in the rates of

233 In 1878 a depression occurred in the agricultural economy that effected all of Europe as well as Ireland.

234 Ferriter, Diarmaid, *Occasions of Sin: Sex & Society in Modern Ireland* 19.

235 D. George Boyce writes that by February 1880 there were 107,000 people dependent on outdoor relief. Boyce, D. George, *New Gill History of Ireland 5: Nineteenth Century Ireland. The Search for Stability* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2005) 176.

236 Ferriter, Diarmaid, *The Transformation of Ireland 1900-2000* (London: Profile Books, 2005) 31.

237 A study conducted by Thomas A. McKeown in the 1970s showed that the number of deaths from TB had been declining prior to the introduction of drugs and that the germ may have weakened, human resistance may have increased, changes in life style or a combination of all three may have contributed to the decline. See Duffin, Jacalyn, *History of Medicine. A Scandalously Short Introduction* (London: University of Toronto Press, 1999) 159.

mortality from TB at the turn of the last century.²³⁸ Indeed, while in comparison to outbreaks of typhus, typhoid, cholera and small pox, the spread of TB was slow, it still became necessary to register it as an infectious disease in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Ironically, in Ireland the rise in the number of mortalities from TB is paralleled by international advances made in both the isolation of the disease and in a proliferation of investigations into it.

As a result of the rise in mortality however, Ireland also experienced an increased level of investigation into TB. Between 1841 and 1871 the medical adviser to the census, William Wilde, promoted the study of TB in Ireland by compiling increasingly detailed data on the illness. The 1860s also saw an increase in the number of investigations into the environmental and geographical conditions under which TB spread on the island. Furthermore, advances made in hospitalisation and the increased utilisation of workhouses aided in the isolation of the disease. *The Minute Book of Dr. Steevens' Hospital* in Dublin notes that in 1884 agreement had been reached on the proposed amalgamation of the city center hospitals of Cork Street, the Locke hospital and Dr. Steevens' Hospital, and that the "amalgamated institutions (except as regards fever) should be in one building."²³⁹ Located in the heart of Dublin city, these hospitals would have treated many of the victims of TB from the capital's slum tenements. The insistence on the isolation of sufferers of fever indicates an awareness of the mechanics of the spread of disease and, while TB is not explicitly mentioned, such awareness was vital in any attempt to control its spread. Adding to this, an article detailing an outbreak of smallpox in Dublin in *The Irish Times* in 1894 reported that the body of a woman with smallpox was moved from the Catholic hospital to Cork Street, the location of the fever hospital, suggesting that the isolation of contagious diseases was becoming common place.²⁴⁰ One may infer from this that medical knowledge was slowly becoming an integral element of daily life and its discourses and not only that, but natural bacterial occurrences were beginning to be managed and contained in more efficient ways than ever before. The appearance of disease was becoming more

238 Jones, Greta, 'Captain of all these Men of Death' 2.

239 Anon, *The Minute Book to Dr. Steevens' Hospital* twentieth July 1884. Housed at the NLI.

240 Annon, "South Dublin Union: Smallpox Outbreak" in *The Irish Times* November 9th 1894, 6.

“apparent”.²⁴¹ Indeed, the latter half of the nineteenth century certainly saw a significant rise in investigation and control of TB and other diseases, as well as the proliferation of discourse surrounding the disease. However, such advances alone were not enough to quell the rising tide of bacterial spread that resists and divides. Maintaining nature would prove to require a more complex and consolidated approach than isolation and investigation could offer by themselves. It called for a consolidated cultural, political and scientific approach. However, the political and cultural instability of the early twentieth century meant attempts to control the spread of TB in Ireland were inhibited even further, highlighting the body as a contradictory entity that is both biological and cultural simultaneously. It is a body that occupies structured spaces of state and social discourse as well as the unstructured space that exists beyond the limits of language. Adding to this complexity of perception is the significance afforded to nature, culture and politics in shaping our view of the body and different types of bodies.

Arguably, the close ties between politics, culture and religion in Ireland have contributed significantly to the perception of a dominant cultural body, and of other types of bodies alongside it. The political division of Ireland further illustrates this point. Structural partition of Ireland in 1922 meant that no organisation existed to tend to the control and eradication of TB on the island and as Greta Jones writes, “it proved impossible” to structure one afterwards. Moreover, later all-island movements, such as the health exhibition teaching Irish people about tuberculosis, that was referred to in *The Irish Times* in 1907 by the Chief Secretary, were no longer possible under the division of the country into north and south.²⁴² The gradual compounding of the physical and imaginary cultural border demarcated north from south and, eventually, Northern Ireland from the Republic. Fractured politics perpetuated a fractured cultural body; that is, while scientific advances drew a more detailed graph of the medical body and the attentions required to maintain its optimum health, fractured politics meant that these

241 Foucault, Michel, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1976) 9.

242 Russell, T.W., “Tuberculosis in Ireland. Deputation to the Lord Lieutenant. Address by his Excellency, The Chief Secretary, Mr. T.W. Russell” in *The Irish Times* 30th November 1907, 9. In his address the Chief Secretary called for “a unification of authority” in attempting to eradicate TB. He also argues that “it occurs to me that the fighting of this disease is a national enterprise, one in which every part of Ireland is equally interested and that it might possibly tend to some solution of the question if we found it possible, as in the case of Contagious Disease to Act, a national rather than a purely country one.” Here the Chief Secretary seems to be referring a “national” approach as a approach that includes Britain and Ireland as one nation rather than simply treating Ireland as a country within the Empire.

attentions could not be carried out. Thus perceptions and expectations of the body between Northern Ireland and the south differed and impacted on the cultural body. The cultural and political body collided with the medical body and the expectations of medical discourse. That in turn continued the biological body's vulnerability to the effects of the disturbances of nature by nature as the consolidated approach required to protect the medical body could not come to fruition. From this it may be inferred that political and cultural structures impact upon and, to a degree, constrain the medical body to the point that the medical body varied between the northern and southern parts of one island. To add to this, over time, the separation between north and south became more solidified, thereby limiting the merging of discourses on the medical body between the two political entities.

Since discourse, in some ways, seeks to seal the limits of perception, the flexibility of both language and interpretation means that these limits can never be fully determined by, or through, linguistics. However, the effect of a dominant culture on the continuous invocation of a dominant perception or categorisation of the body should not be ignored. The more frequently perceptions or particular categories are referred to, the more they become an engendered element of society. In this respect, Foucault's archaeological methods which, in Rajchman's words, "de-realize" the specifics of language, also guide us through the perpetuation of language in the construction of categories and perceptions over time.²⁴³ In this respect the dominance of a cultural perception is an essential catalyst in the gradual dispersed formation of a dominant body. Cultural discourses seal this dominant body off from other bodies ensuring a space exists between it and other perceptions of the body. Just as Foucault discusses in *Madness and Civilization* how the effects of language and ritual demarcated the leper body and kept it "at a distance" the same may be said of the apparent widespread acceptance of a dominant cultural body in the south of Ireland that was fixed by the triangulation of religion, politics and cultural identity of difference.²⁴⁴ In relation to the maintenance of the space between north and south, the solidification of partition, in cultural terms, may be just as important as its existence in concrete political terms. If, as Joe Cleary argues, narrative is an elemental factor in the memorialising of partition,

243 Rajchman, John, "The Story of Foucault's History" in *Social Text* 8.Winter (1983- 1984) 12.

244 Foucault, Michel, *Madness and Civilization* 4.

then the narratives of difference that emerged between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland contributed to the solidification of that partition.²⁴⁵ One of the distinguishing structural features that came to differentiate north from south was the association of a robust Catholic Church with government in the south, and a type of government and life in the north that was in some ways “hermetically sealed from the outside world” but would, eventually, become part of the British Welfare State, while also yielding to a “more religious and political conservatism by hard-line Protestants” that was to become more apparent from the 1950s onwards.²⁴⁶ Dominant cultural narratives in the south particularised a view of the body as a space to be disciplined and while it is beyond the scope of this project to investigate the difference between this body and the dominant perception of the body in Northern Ireland, it is worth noting that the particularisation of the cultural body in the south was achieved via its demarcation as a body that performs within the parameters of a strict Catholic moral code.

There is ample documentation of this moral code, which Tom Inglis argues created a moral “régime” of inequality in Ireland that was enforced by a stagnant status quo that existed on an official and unspoken, unofficial level.²⁴⁷ Government in the south after 1922, and particularly from the 1930s until the latter stages of the twentieth century, reflected a moral ethos that emerged from a confessional culture where an Ultramontane Catholicism that incorporated influences of Jansenism was afforded cultural centrality. One of the characteristics of this mix of Ultramontane and Jansenistic Catholicism is the control of temptation and what is seen as the nature of humanity to commit sin. Catholicism in Ireland in the nineteenth and much of the twentieth century professed these ideals of maintenance. Controlling what was deemed a natural element of human nature was of central importance to this mode of Catholicism and contributed to the production of what is seen to have been a restrictive, overtly moralistic culture. While the influence of the Church on government decisions in the south is often difficult to

245 Cleary, Joe, *Literature, Partition and the Nation State: Culture and Conflict in Ireland, Israel and Palestine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) 2.

246 Kinealy, Christine, *War and Peace: Ireland Since the 1960s* (London: Reaktion Books, 2010) 11 & 31.

247 Inglis, Tom, “Origins and Legacies of Irish Prudery: Sexuality and Social Control in Modern Ireland” in *Éire-Ireland* 40.3&4 (2005) 10.

ascertain, its effect seeped into a type of governmentality that steered government decisions and bound communities through a shared understanding of unspoken cultural and behavioural expectations.

Simply, the presence of the Church and its capacity as a provider of education, hospital and other types of institutional care directed government policy in this area. The Catholic Church was, as Christine Kinealy describes it, “extremely visible in the Republic” and sought to establish itself in a position of control in relation to “educational and welfare provision” and as the “moral guardians of Ireland’s youth”.²⁴⁸ Indeed, the growth in the influence of Catholic organisations across Europe at the turn of the twentieth century is noted by Maurice Curtis. Ireland, however, differs from Europe in that moral teachings gradually became engendered in the daily lives of both the population and politicians.²⁴⁹ While the Church policed its congregations through confessions and sermons, those congregations were also, as a result of fear, self-supervising, self-critiquing and self-policing. However, such self-imposed and socially imposed restraints and regulations were threaded across the space between official structures leaving them vulnerable to collapse into those gaps. Thus vexatious occurrences and entities pressurised the apparatus of the state and the culture that conjoined it with its population. TB, as a disease that came to be perceived as culturally loaded and associated with poverty and sexuality, gradually became a vexatious entity that irritated Church and state structures. The collision and collusion of the biological TB body and the cultural TB body pressurised the structures of Irish society in a manner that indicated both the porous nature of social structures as well as their staunch composition.

The structures that TB, as a vexatious entity, would come to irritate emerged in the nineteenth century under the conditions of utilitarianism that was influenced by Catholicism. The presence of these structures and their contribution to the framing of society over such a long period of time accounts for their enduring, robust qualities that continued to grow in a similar direction well into the twentieth century, creating, what

248 Kinealy, Christine, *War and Peace: Ireland Since the 1960s* 26.

249 In his recent book *A Challenge to Democracy* Curtis details the growth of Catholic organisations across Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These organisations often pitted themselves against the perceived threat of socialism in Europe. Maurice, Curtis, *A Challenge to Democracy: Militant Catholicism in Modern Ireland* (Dublin: The History Press, 2010) Chapter 1.

Inglis terms, the long nineteenth century of Irish Catholicism.²⁵⁰ Overall, a structuring process was at work in Ireland throughout the 1800s that would have a significant impact on the shape of the state and the culture that was to emerge in the future. As part of this structuring process moral authority and state apparatus formed a cogent force that contributed to a perception of the body that seems to have dominated the last century. Rather than viewing the body as a biological entity that could be considered through the taxonomy of scientific terms, the dominant perception of the body seems to have been a view of it as a cultural form to be controlled and disciplined. While in scientific terms this did not overtly restrict the medical perception of the body, it certainly effected the popular perception of the body which had, in turn, an inhibiting effect on government policies on health and the discussion of the body in everyday terms. Evidence of the pressure this popular cultural perception placed on the medical perception of the body may be found in the history of tuberculosis in the south of Ireland, which was restricted by the cohesive links between Church and state and the influence the Church had on health policies.²⁵¹ For instance, the discussion of contraception, women's health, sexually transmitted diseases and sexuality were often conducted using moral language that was not directly instructional.

Gerardine Meaney has noted that references to childbirth were at one point censored out of Irish film. Meaney writes that "Irish censorship was extraordinarily sensitive" in removing not just images but also references to childbirth from Irish film "including", in what seems to be an extraordinary endorsement of censorship, "comic scenes of fathers pacing hospital waiting rooms".²⁵² While the influence of the Church on censorship is undeniable, the influence of conservative moral thinking in government also augmented the apparent impact Catholicism had on the cultural life of southern Ireland. For instance, Kevin Rockett details remarks made by James Montgomery to Monsignor Curran in 1936 that illustrate the support the censorship board lent to the conservation of Catholic thinking. James Montgomery, one of the first two film censors, saw his role as a censor as protector of the family unit, as the basic unit of the state,

250 Inglis, Tom, "Origins and Legacies of Irish Prudery" in *Éire-Ireland* 40.3&4 (2005) 13.

251 Jones, Greta, *'Captain of all These Men of Death'* (Amsterdam: Rodopi B.V., 2001) 13-14.

252 Meaney, Gerardine, "Virgin Mother Ireland" in *Gender, Ireland and Cultural Change: Race, Sex and Nation* (New York: Routledge, 2010) 8.

from the damage exposure to film and visual culture that did not support the Church's ideals could cause.²⁵³ This analysis will return to the role censorship played in Irish society later as it indicates the extent to which popular government had become involved with Catholic thinking. This point illustrates the perception of the body and the conflict that lay between nature and the cultural body. Here conflict highlights the hidden fractures that ran deep into conservative Irish society; fractures that would allow the re-emergence of the vexatious as an entity that could not be contained by official codes of discourse, the dominant culture of the time or indeed by the unspoken shared understandings of the nation.

Explicit expressions of conservative moral thinking became commonplace in Irish society during the early decades of the new state, suggesting that as a discourse, conservative Catholic moral thinking was becoming a self-endorsing and self-perpetuating one. The depth to which this discourse permeated social life and thinking was not a direct result of the stringency of the censorship board or indeed of the efforts made by the Church to uphold its position in society alone. Rather it was the direct result of the reiteration and growth of certain ideals over two centuries. It is important to note that the influence of the Church on directions taken in health matters was evident prior to the establishment of the State in 1922. Some of this influence may have been a result of, what Catherine Cox terms, the zeal of "Philanthropic fervour" of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that was driven by upper and middle class Protestants. The management of institutions by religious orders ensured their stringent moral ethos became part of those institutions suggesting that the "philanthropic zeal" of the eighteenth century provided a blueprint for institutions in the subsequent century. Significantly, this moral enthusiasm was not confined to the Catholic Church. Certainly, as early as the mid 1700s a number of Protestant philanthropists, who established hospitals in response to the acute levels of urban poverty, were motivated by both their generosity and by what they considered to be their religious and spiritual duty. Indeed, many of the hospitals established in the eighteenth century, which have become important features of the twentieth and twenty first century health systems, were founded by altruistic members of the Protestant upper and middle classes. As a case in

²⁵³ Rockett, Kevin, *Irish Film Censorship: A Cultural Journey from Silent Cinema to Internet Pornography* Co-Ed Emer Rockett (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004) 73.

point it is worth considering the foundations of the Rotunda hospital. The Rotunda, the first maternity or lying-in hospital in Britain and Ireland, was established in Dublin's city centre by Bartholomew Mosse in 1745. Mosse was motivated by a combination of the "emphasis placed by late seventeenth and eighteenth-century Protestantism on charity" and by the "pitiable state of Dublin's poor and abhorrence for the squalid conditions in which they lived and gave birth".²⁵⁴ This serves to suggest that the philanthropic care of the poor exhibited by the Catholic Church in the nineteenth century, in relation to health and morality, was already a well-established tradition in Ireland. It was also an expression of the ideals of the middle class as well as of the Catholic Church and the popular politics that would emerge after the establishment of the Free State.

Since 1745 the Rotunda Hospital has become a significant institutional landmark in Dublin's landscape and remains an integral part of women's health in the capital's city centre where life has continued to be delivered into life, but in an increasingly structured and medicalised space since the eighteenth century. Childbirth has, over time, undergone a similar process to the medicalisation of madness and sexuality tracked by Michel Foucault.²⁵⁵ Corresponding to the experience of other areas of health, childbirth was becoming part of the more organised aspects of life in Ireland on an official level. However, the Rotunda has since passed out of its philanthropic foundations into the management of the state. The structuring of the Rotunda Hospital, and indeed the health system, is indicative of a broader process at work in society that saw the gradual structuring of government in Ireland into a modern bureaucratic democracy balanced on the smooth workings of its institutions. The roots of this process may be found in nineteenth-century government attempts to foster civic nationalism through utilitarianism, which simultaneously promoted the integration of private hospitals into a

254 Campbell Ross, Ian, Ed., *Public Virtue, Public Love. The Early Years of the Dublin Lying-In Hospital. The Rotunda*, (Dublin: The O' Brien Press, 1986) 14-16. In *The Irish School of Medicine* Davis Coakley writes that the Rotunda Hospital "was an international attraction for students and doctors". Coakley, Davis, *The Irish School of Medicine. Outstanding Practitioners of the nineteenth Century* (Dublin: Townhouse, 1988) 115.

255 Foucault, Michel, *Madness and Civilization* & Michel, Foucault, *The Will To Knowledge: The History of Sexuality Volume 1* (London: Penguin Books, 1990).

public health system. Indeed as the state became increasingly visible so too did its institutions.²⁵⁶

The official maps, discourses and images of modern Ireland masked the deep contradictions of nineteenth century Ireland that the official discourses of the twentieth century would attempt to contain if not eradicate. The nineteenth century saw a great loss of life occur as a result of the Great Famine whose desperate scenes of poverty, death, disease and starvation recall pre-modern famines rather than being the scene of a country experiencing partial modernization through the institutions and institutional processes put in place by successive Whig governments. To add to this, the mass movement of people associated with post-famine emigration and the pull of more prosperous shores are reminiscent of the biblical movement of peoples away from plagues and pestilence. Despite these contradictory pre-modern images, Ireland was, in some respects, on the cusp of a partial modernization that would be played out slowly and incrementally over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Evidence of state improvement may be found throughout the nineteenth century and state improvement, as well as increased contact with markets beyond Irish shores, meant that in certain sectors of society a general culture of improvement and motivation towards financial prosperity established itself.

The physical visibility of the state that was established in the nineteenth century has endured in the twentieth and 21st centuries. Indeed the institutions built during the nineteenth century have passed into local and national narratives of identity. One example of this is the role played by asylums in Irish society. Until recently asylums in Ireland remained largely unchanged from their origins as nineteenth century houses of restraint and detainment. Their architecture and layout reflected attitudes towards mental health that are outmoded by two centuries of change and medical advancement. The physical capacities of place and buildings to have, what is perceived to be a transformative effect on people and their personalities have been documented. Nancy Scheper-Hughes' work, *Saints, Scholars and Schizophrenics*, is regarded as the seminal

²⁵⁶ Here the state refers to the visibility of the British state in the nineteenth century and the Irish state that inherited the institutions set up under colonial rule.

study on the connection between the production of a transformative effect and a particular space.²⁵⁷ More recently Jamie Saris has examined the intricate relationship between the space of the asylum as a transformative space that was constructed and run as a state institution and, in local terms, the cultural recognition of the space. In “Mad Kings, Proper Houses, and an Asylum in Rural Ireland” Saris provides an insight into the role of an asylum in Co. Sligo as a “local place” where the expectations that going to a state run institution for the mentally ill, or to “the mental” as it is known locally will be fulfilled.²⁵⁸ Entering “the mental” will have a negatively transformative effect that feeds into negative expectations of bureaucracy and creates a negative impression of the medicalisation of mental illness.²⁵⁹ In light of Saris’ detailed documentation of the role and narrative recognition of the asylum as a transformative institution in Ireland, it is ironic that in Sebastain Barry’s 2008 novel *The Secret Scripture* Dr. Grene, the senior psychiatrist in Roscommon Regional Mental Hospital remarks that “no sensitive person would choose to be the historian of the Irish asylums in the first part of the last century”.²⁶⁰ While Saris documents the social stigmas inferred by the connection between poor mental health or lunacy, as the nineteenth century perceived it, and pauperism, Dr. Grene cites the blunt medical procedures such as “its clitoridectomies, immersions and injections” as a reason to dread the local asylum.²⁶¹

State run institutions, such as asylums, have in Ireland, until recently, been characterised by their looming nineteenth-century architecture and their incompatibility with the structures required for the treatment of mental health using contemporary methods. Inertia within these institutions has recently been documented by a number of documentaries such as *Behind the Walls* produced and written by journalist Mary

257 Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, *Saints, Scholars and Schizophrenics: Illness in Rural Ireland* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979).

258 Saris, A. Jamie, “Mad Kings, Proper Houses, and an Asylum in Rural Ireland” in *American Anthropologist, New Series* 98.3 (1996) 539.

259 Saris, A. Jamie, “Mad Kings, Proper Houses, and an Asylum in Rural Ireland” in *American Anthropologist, New Series* 98.3 (1996) 539.

260 Barry, Sebastian, *The Secret Scripture* (London: Faber and Faber, 2008) 14.

261 Barry, Sebastian, *The Secret Scripture* 14.

Rafferty.²⁶² *Behind the Walls* gives an insight into institutions for the mentally ill in Ireland being used as “dumping grounds” for the unwanted during the middle of the twentieth century.²⁶³ Asylums have also become associated with the institutionalisation of people with intellectual disabilities as well as the confinement of those, largely women, who were perceived as transgressors of the unspoken moral order that restrained sexual activity in Ireland through much of the twentieth century. In Ireland the asylum during this period was the locus in which moral, medical and social stigmas converged. Other factors also contributed to this systemised integration. One of the most influential factors was the emergence of a close relationship between the citizen, the state and the expanding religious orders. In what Eugene O’Brien has recently described as the “conflation” of Church and state, the message of a religious organisation was accepted as the ethos of the organisation itself and as a result close ties were allowed to grow between the church and the state.²⁶⁴ This relationship became of central significance to the position the body occupied in Irish society and has continued to have an impact upon our concept of the body. The emergence and continued growth of institutions created political and cultural pillars that acted as the scaffolding of Irish society. These pillars were buttressed by an encompassing web of language that reflected and perpetuated the habitus or ethos of the population and its institutions. Positioned by language, within a space constructed by language, the body can be seen as an extension of the cultural and political institutions. This body was, to an extent shaped, by the discipline and constraint of the discourses of those institutions and while the biological body was seen to occupy the site of medicalised body, another biological body existed outside of that site. This second or “Other” body fell through the fault lines of language and the order medicalisation brought to the official body. Consequently, some reappearances of the biological body were perceived as being vexatious disturbances. Nature, as a cultural system of perception, was seen to be disturbed by vexatious bodies, or, by nature as an uncontrollable biological entity.

262 Rafferty, Mary, *Behind The Walls* (Dublin: Misha Film Productions 2011) Broadcast on RTÉ on 5 September 2011. Available on the RTÉ player here: <http://www.rte.ie/news/av/2011/0905/media-3043225.html>.

263 Historian Diarmaid Ferriter is interviewed as part of the documentary and provides this description.

264 O’Brien, Eugene, “‘The boat that moved’: The Catholic Church, Conflations and the Need for Critique” in *The Dublin/Murphy Report: A Watershed for Irish Catholicism?* Edited by John Littleton and Eamon Maher (Dublin: The Columba Press, 2010) 92.

As cultural and political institutional pillars became more deeply rooted in Irish society and state, a political system developed that augmented the official cultural and social system and *vice versa*. Perhaps the gradual collusion of the concepts of religion, state and identity is what rendered the re-surfacing of the vexatious biological body as shocking in Irish society but certainly, by the beginning of the twentieth century, the workings of state institutions and religious institutions were emerging as the close social weft and weave they were to become by the 1950s. Indeed, Tom Garvin comments that while the Free State was established in 1922, as “late as the nineteen-fifties the society itself,..., was presided over by a rather populist democracy and a popular Catholic Church”, neither of which consulted the electorate in any extensive way on their “collective future”.²⁶⁵ While the beginnings of liberalization in Ireland have been traced to the 1950s by both Ferriter and Fuller, Ferriter also recognizes the widespread unwillingness “to face up to the sad continuity in both Church, state and societal attitudes towards the vulnerable and poor in Irish society”.²⁶⁶ Social attitudes that had been perpetuated by the traditional elements of official discourses that adhered to an accepted national ethos could not be simply shaken off, even if the drive to do so had existed throughout society. Poverty and its stifling characteristics remained endemic and continued to shackle elements of the population to the past while caging it in a status quo that seemed to place the possibility of change out of the reach of both Irish society in general and many of its individuals.

The effect of the close triangulation of state, cultural identity and religion was to extend far beyond the 1950s. Perhaps the hesitancy of a new state to accept suggestions of change offered by its more intrepid politicians is understandable. Anything that would upset the ease of communication and social operation between political, cultural and institutional pillars or scaffolding of this young state must have been viewed with suspicion. However, perhaps it may also be said that the longevity and robust nature of this social scaffolding also contributed to difficulties Irish society encountered in moving towards the “undoing” of this ubiquitous status quo at a more accelerated

²⁶⁵ Garvin, Tom, *News From A New Republic: Ireland in the 1950s* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2010) 5.

²⁶⁶ Ferriter, Diarmaid, *The Transformation of Ireland 1900-2000* 465.

pace.²⁶⁷ The roots of this triangulation may be traced back into the gradual processes of systemization that were put in place, piece by piece in the previous century. For instance, during the latter half of the nineteenth century the running of a number of hospitals was taken over by the government and religious orders.²⁶⁸ In an open letter published in *The Irish Times* in 1882 the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. McCabe, acknowledged the work of the Sisters of Mercy who had recently taken over the running of the “Catholic hospital wards” of the South Dublin Union Workhouse.²⁶⁹ A report by *The Irish Times* that provided details of a movement to reject the Belfast Hospitals bill, lends this point further support. *The Belfast Hospitals Bill* proposed in the House of Commons in 1898 was rejected by one Mr. Knox, on the grounds that Belfast Corporation proposed “to give a valuable site to the Royal Victoria Hospital, which was, he held, a Protestant hospital, while the Corporation had refused to give anything to the Catholic hospital of the city”, indicating that both Catholic and Protestant hospitals were becoming increasingly involved with the bureaucracy of the state.²⁷⁰

Institutions were, in the long term, involved in an intricate social, political and cultural tangle that played a dominant role in the formation of perceptions of the body. The social, political and cultural entanglement of institutions played a dominant role in framing perceptions of the body. While categorizing bodies, as part of this perception formation, the institutions were also expected to ‘reform’ those bodies categorized as deviant. As we saw, Foucault analysed the link between labour, poverty and exchange that developed in western society in the 18th and nineteenth centuries.²⁷¹ This link also emerged in Ireland as is evidenced by the growth of workhouses where labor was exchanged in return for basic food and board, and would continue well into the twentieth century with the continued existence of industrial schools and Magdalen

267 Louise Fuller identifies the 1950s as the decade in which Catholic moral culture began to come undone in Ireland in her book *Irish Catholicism Since 1950: The Undoing of a Culture* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 2004).

268 Cox, Catherine, “institutionalisation in Irish society” in *Irish History* Eds Mary McAuliffe, Katherine O’Donnell & Leeann Lane (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009) 174.

269 McCabe, Dr., “Letter from the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin” in *The Irish Times* January 23 1882, 7.

270 Annon, “House of Commons” in *The Irish Times* April 27 1898, 5.

271 Foucault, Michel, *Madness and Civilization* 51.

laundries. Labour in the workhouses in both Britain and Ireland was seen as a disciplinary and habit forming measure that stemmed from a utilitarian view of society implemented by successive Whig governments in the first half of the nineteenth century. Indeed, an inspection of the County Sligo Gaol in 1845 carried out by local inspector Henry Fawcett and Inspector General Francis White notes that “Great regularity is preserved amongst the classes during the hours they are so employed, which consists principally in breaking stones, bruising bones and picking oakum.”²⁷² While occupying prisoners and attempting to regularise their behaviors, this work was also perceived as a mode through which resisting individuals could contribute to the very society that was punishing them.

The report goes on to note that “crime has considerably diminished in this county in the last year”, “drunkards have decreased” and “Recommittal has also decreased; the principal ones being females of loose and bad characters, and petty larcenies committed by females and boys” suggesting that the discipline prisoners were being exposed to while in prison was having a long term positive effect on their behaviour.²⁷³ Of course, the report does not acknowledge the Famine that was unfolding across the country or consider that, perhaps, the fall in crime was a result of a rise in deaths and emigration, or that women and young children may have fallen into the more vulnerable sectors of society and, consequently, were among the first people to come to the attention of the authorities, indicating that society was being categorised by degrees and that development of layers of categorisation was taking place incrementally. The internalization of discipline within the population was an arduous process that gave rise, over time, to labels that identified behaviours that were in the interests of and contrary to the general good of the population and to the individual. Gradually labels individualized and overlapped creating a web of language that seemed to contain society and communicate between the structural pillars of society’s scaffolding.

272 Fawcett, Henry and Henry White, “Report of Inspector General of Prisons, County of Sligo Gaol at Sligo Dec 30th 1845” in *The O’ Hara Papers* NLI 36,412/5 MS section.

273 Fawcett, Henry and Henry White, “Report of Inspector General of Prisons, County of Sligo Gaol at Sligo Dec 30th 1845” NLI 36,412/5 MS.

Returning to the issue of labour exchange, however, it must be noted that the expectations of charity and philanthropy added another dimension to that exchange and this dimension is particularly relevant to the resistance with which the introduction of Poor Laws were met in the nineteenth century. Charity was seen as the responsibility of local landlords and a key factor in providing for destitute tenantry, a dynamic that was upset by the Poor Laws. To an extent however, the Poor Laws were part of a broader movement in society to regulate and order what was already in existence. In this case the regulation of charity and welfare led to a proliferation of structured discourse concerning the well-being of the individual. In the 1800s the structuring of welfare in response to need increasingly drew people into structured participation in the state but also served to align the poor Catholic peasantry with the visible markers of the Poor House. Indeed efforts to deal with the “policing of the hordes of ‘idle poor’” had been ongoing since the sixteenth century and had compounded the perceived connection between poverty and a category that came to be known as the “Irish”.²⁷⁴ To add to this, charity missions, some of which were involved in the proselytising of children, continued in the nineteenth century. Their visibility in the areas most severely effected by the Great Famine served to compound the link between Catholicism, poverty, the orphaned child and the starving body. In her extensive documentation of Protestant missions in Connemara in the post-famine period, Miriam Moffett observes that many of the children who entered the buildings of the Connemara Orphan’s Nursery established in 1849 were “in an extreme state of starvation, their parents and other siblings dead from hunger and disease”.²⁷⁵ In this case, an institution associated with Protestantism was seen to be offering salvation from sub-standard living conditions. The institution itself came to be associated with a landed Protestant class and, as a result, with the ruling class, creating an impression of a direct link between poverty, Catholicism and the unmanageable or the vexatious. In many respects the same observations may also be made in relation to the lunacy law introduced in the nineteenth century. The structuring process set up the premise of the unmanageable or the vexatious as that which society would attempt to control but in failing to do so would mask its existence in layers of indirect discourse, committing it to the realm of the silent until eventually silence could no longer contain it. Diseases such as TB, loaded with

274 Gray, Peter, *The Making of the Irish Poor Laws, 1815-43* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009) 11.

275 Moffett, Miriam, *Soupers and Jumpers: The Protestant Missions in Connemara, 1848 – 1937* (Dublin: Nonsuch Publishing, 2008) 44.

cultural charge, transformed the body from a biological system into an upsetting vexatious entity that challenged established social and cultural structures, just as later, in the twentieth century, the AIDS body would upset Irish society, its modern bureaucratic structures and its, apparently, traditional attitudes. In this sense the vexatious may be considered as a body where a number of different bodies converge and collapse into each other in a way that can no longer be contained by the structured scaffolding of a society.

Ironically, in some ways the establishment and maintenance of structure in society creates vexatious entities as well as contributing to their isolation. Indeed, increasing levels of government bureaucracy in the nineteenth century seemed to establish a mode of systematisation more generally in society and within the Church as it became increasingly organised in the wake of Catholic Emancipation. Louise Fuller notes: “In the course of the agitation which led to the emancipation, for the vast bulk of Catholics, the process by which they became politically conscious was as important as the outcome. They were now more aware of their grievances”.²⁷⁶ It appears that the Catholic laity and priests became aware of the processes of constitutional politics while the Bishops became heavily involved in political lobbying, adding a layer of discourse to Irish Catholicism that had not existed prior to Catholic emancipation. Furthermore, the perception of the clergy as being morally lax became of central importance to efforts at regularisation by the Hierarchy.

While institutional religion began to erode in Europe in the twentieth century it experienced a revitalisation in Ireland. Fuller explains this anomaly as the result of the close relationship established between Church and politics during the O’Connell era in the opening decades of the nineteenth century and she describes the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829 championed by Daniel O’Connell as a “watershed” for both the Catholic hierarchy and its peoples. The rise of the farming middle class meant that from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards the Catholic Church in Ireland made a concerted and organised effort to regularise the behaviours of both its clerics and its congregation which, eventually, added to the moral weight the voice of the Catholic

²⁷⁶ Fuller, Louise, *Irish Catholicism Since 1950: The Undoing of a Culture* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 2004) XXI.

Church was to hold later in the century and into the following century. It should be noted that regularisation was already underway prior to the Famine. Indeed, Emmet Larkin contends that the period between 1800 and 1846 saw the gradual “improvement” in the “character and conduct” of the clergy. Larkin argues that by 1830 “the worst was over” as the Cardinals had, under the direction of the Vatican, achieved a distinct level of control over and organisation of their clergy.²⁷⁷ As a result of an “heroic institutional effort” to increase clergy numbers, joining the priesthood became a viable option for young men in Irish society for the next 100 years.²⁷⁸ Once the practice became recognised by Irish society, having a high number of Catholic priests quickly came to be deemed a distinguishing characteristic of Irish identity. The centrality of the Church as an institution and as a moral arbiter became an integral factor in the dominant perception of Irish identity and an elemental motivation in the masking of vexatious entities.

The rise in clergy numbers however, was not simply a result of what Larkin terms an “institutional effort”. If the laxity of the clergy damaged the Church prior to 1800, then the new found moral regularity, and the rigour with which the hierarchy enforced it, established the clergy as acceptable advisers on the political running of the country as well as on the morality of its flock. A brief snapshot of the 1859 elections gives an indication of how important Church support became after Catholic emancipation. A number of reports published in *The Irish Times* in the run up to elections in 1859 note the significance of the Church’s support of certain candidates. In Athlone the clergy lent their support to Dr. Bayley,²⁷⁹ while it was reported that in Limerick the Roman Catholic Clergy had “unanimously” voted to “sustain Counsellor Synan”. Despite this support, however, the newspaper reports that in Limerick, Colonel Dickinson “sustained as he is by the gentry and landlords of the county will defeat “Synan, indicating that the might of the landed vote retained the upper hand in election terms.²⁸⁰ Although the support of the Church did not guarantee election success, the relevance of that support suggests

277 Larkin, Emmet, “The Devotional Revolution in Ireland, 1850-1875” in *The American Historical Review* 77.3 (1972) 630.

278 Larkin, Emmet, “The Devotional Revolution in Ireland 1850 -1875” 627.

279 Annon, “Irish Electoral Intelligences” in *The Irish Times* 23rd April 1859, 3.

280 Annon, “Irish Electoral Intelligences” in *The Irish Times* 30th April 1859, 3.

that the Church's position in society was becoming more ingrained and solidified as its institutions gathered strength and social momentum. As official Church structures, Catholic culture and society became intertwined with a perceived dominant identity during the nineteenth century, the foundations of what, would eventually be seen as a Catholic Nation-State became stronger.

To a degree, regularisation of the Church also built on the relationship between the peasantry and the priest, thus reinforcing the latter's status in Irish society. The Church built on this restoration by championing the rights of the poor and using their capacity as an institution to participate in areas of daily life that had traditionally been under the remit of the landed and Protestant political class. In 1852, the Chief Secretary of Ireland noted the significance of the Church's participation in the system of national education which had been "instituted mainly for the benefit of the poor, of whom their flock have always constituted by far the largest number".²⁸¹ In 1859, the insistence by the Catholic clergy to enter and to inspect workhouses and to attend to the Catholics therein was also reported.²⁸² Workhouses, an institution of the Union Wards, were usually supervised and controlled by the local landed gentry, who by and large belonged to the wealthier Protestant classes. Demands by the Roman Catholic clergy to participate in the running and critiquing of their institutions attests to the rising confidence, power and organisation of the Church. In addition, the growth in conservative moral attitudes in society in general corresponded with the rising tide of systemisation that solidified the Catholic Church as an organisation that was deemed to occupy a guiding role in society. Continuing solidification of the Church as a structured organisation meant that by the end of the nineteenth century the effect of Victorian sensibilities and the hierarchy's conservative moral attitudes were having an impact upon the running of institutions, education and healthcare in Ireland. As a result of this impact, it seems that fragments of the Church's moral discourse were drawn together to bring a sacred, moral body to fruition that appealed to middle class Irish Catholicism. What had not existed before slowly became compounded into coherency; a moral body, demarcated by bourgeois respectability and composed of religious attitudes, became increasingly visible but yet not entirely dominant. Fragments of the un-narrated elements of the body that stood

281 Caldwell, Edward, "National Education (Ireland)" in *The Irish Times* 2nd February 1860, 4.

282 Anon, "Roman Catholic Chaplains in Workhouses and Prisons" in *The Irish Times* 25 July 1859, 1.

outside official discourse remained largely invisible. Their random return often upset the structures of official discourse indicating that the structures that evolved in the nineteenth century could not fully contain the vexatious. Having said this, Irish culture is often remembered or reviewed as being a culture that contained and restricted in its entirety, and the official structures of the Church are held largely responsible for this.

Peadar Kirby argues that post-Famine Ireland was reflected in the post-Famine Church to the point that a “stagnant, sexually repressive and conservative society created a stagnant, sexually repressive and conservative Church to give it some meaning.”²⁸³ While to an extent, elements of this statement may be true, to suggest that society was solely responsible for the type of Church that emerged in post-Famine Ireland does not account for the position of power that the landed and educated Catholic middle classes came to occupy in the closing decades of the nineteenth century. While, Kirby does not acknowledge the levels of intimacy that existed, it seems that a sexually repressed rather than stagnant climate did emerge. Here repressed means a climate that masked open discussion of sexuality and the growth of narratives that masked sexual behavior that lay outside of official discourse. This is not to say that on some level such behavior did not occur; rather it was shrouded in language that did not acknowledge it and moreover, indirectly discouraged it. In this sense to call the Church stagnant is an overarching statement. The Church maintained an active role in Irish society and continuously contributed to the growth of these masking discourses as well as other types of discourses some of which benefitted society. Indeed, the expansion of its institutions alone is enough to suggest that the Church was an involved and constantly evolving organisation. Kirby overlooks this role and argues that the moral conservatism of the Church is representative of an overall stagnancy. Considering the Church in more specific terms suggests a conservative organisation that was organised in hierarchical structures but, which, in the nineteenth century, also housed sectors that reflected the more progressive elements of modern power and attitudes towards the rights of the individual to an education and hospital care.

The nineteenth century Church borrowed some of the characteristics of modern power whilst simultaneously reflecting its residual roots in medieval power structures. This

283 Kirby, Peadar, *Is Irish Catholicism Dying? Make Up Your Mind Series* (Dublin: Mercier Press, 1984) 17.

contradiction may be traced in the attitudes towards the body. Indeed, such was the impact of its new-found coherency and visibility, that by 1897 requests that nuns should be “exempted from the duty of assisting at operations” were being made by the Catholic hierarchy serving to suggest the propagation of a morally stringent perspective of the body. It would seem that despite advances made in the scientific analysis of the body and its function during this time, within certain sectors, it was increasingly being viewed as a site of the sacred, the sexualised and the tempting.²⁸⁴ There is also a suggestion in such requests that nuns, as women of God, could only view the body from a moral perspective rather than considering it as a biological entity. Increasingly the body became viewed as a site imbued with the capacity to seduce a viewer and owner into a state of sinfulness that contradicted the ideal of Irishness as a noble “Celtic spirit” of pure blood, untainted by corrupt thought or ancestry.²⁸⁵ The body itself was becoming a site to be contained, but being a biological entity, it continuously verged on the chaotic, threatening to undermine the perception of it as controllable through discipline. In some respects the body itself became a vexatious entity continuously hinting at its capacity to burst out of itself and destabilise cultural perceptions of it. When infected by a contagious disease, the body, perpetuated this threat and acted as a growing shadow of a biological body that was being repressed by narratives of morality. However, what may be termed the natural functions of the body, the biological, constantly attempts to be reunited with the self.

Despite these constant attempts at the re-unification of the self with the biological, the body has, since the nineteenth century, become increasingly politicised. In the 1920s the space the body occupied within the hospital system became subject to political discourses and was caught between the clash of narratives of power. The control of voluntary hospitals came under pressure to integrate into the state run health system. However, this system was underdeveloped and did not seem an appealing option for hospitals that were under the sole supervision of religious orders. The politicisation of the body was not confined to discourses of morality. The ill and diseased body was and

284 Dowling, J., “Work Hospitals” in *The New Ireland Review* VII. 1897, 28. In this article Dowling refers to a letter written by an unnamed Bishop requesting the withdrawal of nuns from surgery. Dowling however, supports the continued presence of nuns at surgery and notes that “There are certain operations at which a medical officer would not desire their presence, and certain cases he would not ask them to attend, but I have myself seen nuns assisting at operations with courage and intelligence, and doing all that resident pupils are expected to do in the large hospitals.”

285 Synge, J.M. “Playboy of the Western World” in *The Complete Plays of John M. Synge* (New York: Vintage Books, 1960)

is a space to be controlled. One consequence of the politicisation of the space of the body is that different groups attempt to defend their control of that space through language. In Ireland, by the 1920s, the medical body was largely the remit of religious orders and doctors and as a result, attempts made by the state to intervene in the care of the medical body and to establish a more open state run health system were, as Ferriter argues, met with “the determination of the Church and the medical profession to maintain their autonomy”.²⁸⁶ Following from the clash of state intervention and the “determination”, to which Ferriter refers, was the creation of another layer of political discourse through which the body could be discussed and, in political terms, served to charge the space of the body even more.

Later the biological body, disturbed by the bacterial infection of TB, became, in Ireland during the 1940s and 1950s, an even more highly charged political entity to the point that the biological body was overwhelmed by the political implications of the medical body. The disturbance of nature as a biological system by nature from invisible bacteria emanating from the body became an issue of shame associated with acute poverty that induced the marginalisation of its sufferers. Sontag describes TB elsewhere as a disease characterised by what was considered “febrile activity” that involved “passionate resignations” which was thought to “produce spells of euphoria, increased appetite” and “exacerbated sexual desire”.²⁸⁷ However, as the rate of TB mortality in the Irish State was higher in 1947 than it had been in 1939 the disease became increasingly associated with social neglect and as Greta Jones writes in Ireland it “became a symbol of the failure of successive governments to tackle social deprivation and injustices” as it took on an “iconic significance in the push for social reform.”²⁸⁸ In Ireland it became associated with a particular set of social conditions which served to stigmatise its victims in ways that did not occur to the same extent elsewhere. TB seemed not only to emerge from poverty-stricken areas but also perpetuated poverty. Frustrated with waiting lists for sanatoria and rising levels of mortality a group of individuals established the Anti-Tuberculosis League at the Royal College of Physicians in 1942.

286 Ferriter, Diarmaid, *The Transformation of Ireland 1900-2000* 320.

287 Sontag, Susan, *Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and Its Metaphors* 12, 13.

288 Jones, Greta, ‘*Captain of all These Men of Death*’ 187-188.

The League aimed, with government assistance, to intervene and disrupt the cycle of overcrowding, poverty and rising deaths from TB. Fearing increased intervention by the state into family life, Archbishop Charles McQuaid of Dublin insisted that the aims of the League be carried out by the Red Cross Society and that the infrastructure required to increase the number of sanatoria be provided by the Catholic Church. Reluctance to challenge the Church on this issue, or a reluctance to become burdened with the hefty financial implications of the League's proposals, may have prompted the government to agree that the Red Cross Society should carry out the work thus positioning the disease within a wider web of political, cultural and social relations.

In the early 1900s TB was seen as a sanitary issue and the population of Ireland was approached with a pedagogical attitude by philanthropists such as the Lady of Aberdeen who had organised a travelling didactic exhibition on TB and sanitation at the start of the twentieth century. By the 1940s it had come to be perceived as a vexatious disturbance emerging from within nature, as an uncontrolled system, to disturb the body thus placing pressure on the institutional structures, religious organisations and the identity of the state and nation in the 1940s and 1950s.²⁸⁹ In an open criticism of the health system and its services in 1940 a Dr. Collis condemned Pigeon House TB hospital as an “indictment upon the conscience of every Dublin man, though they had been governing themselves for the past nineteen years.”²⁹⁰ In looking through the TB body and attempts to control it, we can trace the continued management of the official body and the vexatious in Irish society by a theocratised State. In considering the discourses and institutions through which TB was controlled, this thesis mines the history of official discourses in Ireland. In doing so, the expansion and management of official discourses becomes clear and how the reorganisation of the Church contributed to the growth of official discourses which managed the vexatious out of existence. However, the theocritisation of the State created a need for the perpetuation of discourses that would suppress elements, entities or people who would upset the political, cultural and social *status quo*. In other words, the management of the State

289 TB often demarcated Irish identity amongst those emigrating to Britain. Tony Farnar writes that “Paddy-houses”, depilated barns and hovels in which migrant harvest workers slept, were pin pointed as a source of TB infection. Farnar, Tony, *Patients, Potions & Physicians. A Social History of Medicine in Ireland 1654-2004* (Dublin: A&A Farnar in Association with the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, 2004) 103.

290 Annon, “The Health Services: Dr. W. F. Collis’s Criticisms. Neglect of Infants and the Old” in *The Irish Times* 11 January 1940, 8.

created the vexatious which then had to be managed continuously. The legitimacy of the State and its relationship with the Church consigned what could disturb official discourse to a parallel unrecognised existence. Despite, what seemed to be the monolithic influence of the Church however, the constant recourse to constitutional and legal change suggest that official discourses, were in fact, open to being undermined. The expansion of legal discourse upheld the central tenets of official Ireland but as we will see in the following analysis of the Dance Halls Act 1935 and the later Intoxicating Liquor Act of 1960, the disturbing, vexatious continued to lurk and threaten official discourses. This prehistory establishes the contradictory and complex emergence of AIDS in the 1980s.

While Irish identity, as much as any other construct of identity, is susceptible to subversion, it is also deeply embedded in the social, economic and cultural institutions of our society with the steadfast resolution of a habitus that has evolved over several historical epochs imbuing the ideals of Irish identity with the appearance of stability and authenticity. Like all identities however, Irish identity is in a constant state of flux. The long term construction of Irish identity has been shaped by the cohesive relations between church and state. For generations those relations were enforced by the stability provided by institutions as well as by an imagined stability created through discourse. In a newly-established state that was recovering from the impact of famine, emigration, a rebellion, the War of Independence and the Civil War, such stability seemed to offer the tranquillity, consistency and solidity required for democracy to take root. The structure that first emerged in the nineteenth century remained in operation until the end of the twentieth century, long after stability had been established in the Irish Republic. While it must be noted that Northern Ireland remained unstable, and the pervious nature of the border meant that the overspill of violence into the Republic was a realistic threat throughout the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s, the dominant physical and cultural structures of the Republic were as much about the demarcation of national parameters as they were about stability. In one respect, this combination fulfilled its role as the imprint of a Catholic nation on the edge of Europe contrasted with the identity of its closest neighbour and former colonial ruler. However, the relationship that gave rise to this combination also founded and perpetuated what Jim Smith has termed the “nation’s

architecture of containment”.²⁹¹ Smith’s notion of the “nation’s architecture” outlines the role of church-state institutions and in particular the role of the Magdalen Laundries in containment and repression of women whose behaviour was seen as counteractive to the nation’s Catholic-bourgeois ethos of respectability.

Smith analyses the role of ten Catholic Magdalen Laundries that existed in Ireland between 1922 and 1996. In his documentation he traces the change in these laundries from refuges for the vulnerable to institutions that retained “fallen” women on a long term basis and usually against their wishes. Smith’s study de-privileges historical loyalties to show the “sinuous relationship between church and state” and exposes “the collusion between these hegemonic partners in social control”.²⁹² The repression of women was not the only consequence of this relationship. Conor Reidy has also documented the existence of a borstal system in Ireland. Dubbed a “moral hospital”, the impenetrable walls of the borstal institutions maintained a silent separation between male children deemed to have breached the immature ethos of conservative respectability and the rest of society.²⁹³ The borstal system was established in Ireland in 1858. However, as Reidy points out, by the 1880s there were still over “a thousand children incarcerated in Irish prisons.”²⁹⁴ The process, through which the borstal system became incorporated into Irish society, involved a change in attitude towards young offenders. Rather than seeing all offenders through the same prism, the placement of children in borstals necessitated a shift in the consideration of children from being ‘offenders’ to ‘juvenile-offenders’. Gradually, a new category of offender was created that was managed by the structures of the state into a specific physical and semantic space of containment deemed more suitable for children. In a review of Reidy’s work Willa Murphy describes the borstal system as a benign one aimed at reform that went into decline after 1922. Murphy writes that “political upheaval, a lack of funding and of vision took the borstal system down a route far from its original vision of

291 Smith, Jim, *Ireland’s Magdalen Laundries and the Nation’s Architecture of Containment* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007).

292 Smith, Jim, *Ireland’s Magdalen Laundries 2*.

293 Reidy, Conor, *Ireland’s ‘Moral Hospital’ The Irish Borstal System 1906-1956* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2009).

294 Reidy, Conor, *Ireland’s ‘Moral Hospital’ The Irish Borstal System 1*.

rehabilitation.”²⁹⁵ Like the adult prison system and other institutions of containment in Ireland, the borstal buildings remained as they were in the nineteenth century and continued to reflect nineteenth century attitudes towards reform as a condition that could be achieved simply through a combination of confinement, punishment and stringent discipline.

While religious orders were not involved in the borstal system, that system fell into the same rhythms of operation and oppressive patterns that characterised other state run institutions as well as those maintained by religious orders. These patterns were symptomatic of the broader architecture and culture discussed by Smith, one that induced an unspoken code of silence and a feigned ignorance of the abuses and neglects perpetuated within the walls of schools, industrial schools and other houses of correction. In 2010 political commentator Fintan O’ Toole wrote in *The Irish Times*, “With its hatred of the poor (but not poverty), of the deviant, the dissenting, of the disturbing, Irish society developed extraordinarily powerful mechanisms for filtering out unwanted people. One of them was emigration. The other was institutionalisation. We locked up vast numbers of people in industrial schools, Magdalene homes and mental hospitals.”²⁹⁶ In addition, Maria Luddy’s analysis of the history of prostitution in Ireland also details the punitive role of Church-state institutions in concealing and correcting those whose behaviour was considered an affront to official discourses of respectability and as such to national identity.²⁹⁷ These studies are investigations into a series of interconnected institutions that operated within Irish society since before the foundation of the state until recently. These diverse institutions and their interaction with society as punitive centers of containment, were symptomatic of a broader culture

295 Murphy, Willa, “Timely History of How Borstal Boy Ended up Getting ‘Letterfrack Treatment’” in *The Irish Times* 18 December 2009, 15.

296 O’ Toole, Fintan, “State Still in Denial over Magdalen Scandal” in *The Irish Times* 15 June 2010, 13. Interestingly in a letter printed in *The Irish Times* four days later in response to this article, the writer told how the release of the Ryan report showed him the extreme social conditions under which his mother had abandoned him. His newly acquired perception of these conditions allowed him to forgive his mother and he applauded her for “escaping from the clutches of the nuns who ran the Magdalene laundries.” Pallas, Peter, “State Denial over Magdelenes” in *The Irish Times* 17 June 2010, 17. In a similar vein, the 1996 documentary *Dear Daughter* which details the experience of a number of women who lived in The Goldenbridge laundry begins with Christine Buckley, a former resident of Goldenbridge, stating “I wanted to find my parents and kill them for leaving me there.” Lentin, Louis, *Dear Daughter* (Donegal: Crescendo Concepts, 1996). Broadcast on RTÉ in February 1996. Available at the Irish Film archive.

297 Luddy, Maria, *Prostitution and Irish Society 1800-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

of restraint hostile to the potential agency of individual action and its capacity to instigate the accumulate subversion of official discourse. Despite the existence of these institutions, however, the agency of individual action continued to exist outside of the confines of the expectations of social behaviour. It also continued to engender resistance. Some of these expectations were a result of unwritten shared cultural understandings that had existed prior to Independence. Others were the outcome of prescribed behaviour enshrined in the Free State and the “moral superiority” that was “key” to the identity of an Gaelic-Catholic nation.²⁹⁸ Later these prescriptions were cemented in the Irish constitution of 1937.

The adoption of the Irish constitution in 1937 can be seen as a pivotal moment in Irish history when the conservative moral thinking that had been gathering force since Catholic Emancipation in 1829, the perceived Irishness of the island, and the primacy of Catholicism in Ireland was solidified in official discourse. If, as Declan Kiberd argues, “the struggle for self-definition is conducted within language”, then the 1937 Constitution may be seen as the point in the linguistic development of a specific Irish identity that collapses the past, present and future into a specific ethos that, on the surface, seemed to endure for most of the rest of the twentieth century.²⁹⁹ It seems that until the second half of the twentieth century was well under way, the prescribed behavior of the Irish constitution enforced and engendered the social expectations that maintained a status quo in Irish society. Rules of behaviour outlined in the precise language of state contributed to the definition of the Irish citizen and of the state itself and pointed to a national ethos that could only be conceived of within the paradigm that eventually led to the conflation of church and state. The role of women in Irish society, the privileged place of the Catholic Church, access to education, the significance of marriage and the traditional family unit were all described in exacting forms in the constitution. Inglis’ claim that “domestic bliss was central not just to one’s happiness but also the well-being of society” stemmed from a type of Victorian prudery that

298 Valiulis Gialanella, Maryann, “Virtuous Mothers and Dutiful Wives: The Politics of the Irish Free State” in *Gender and Power in the Irish Free State* Ed Maryann Gialanella Valiulis (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2009) 101.

299 Kiberd, Declan, *Inventing Ireland. The Literature of the Modern Nation* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1995) 11. Kiberd makes this statement in reference to the construction of an Irish identity through the use of the English language by the “lords of the language”, the colonial power.

viewed the family unit as being central to the “civilizing” of society and is recognized in more official terms as a motivating and cohering factor in society.³⁰⁰

In her discussion of ethos, in which she draws on the work of Theodore Adorno, Judith Butler outlines ethos as an entity that “refuses to become past, and violence is the way in which it imposes itself upon the present. Indeed, it not only imposes itself upon the present, but also seeks to eclipse the present – and this is precisely one of its violent effects”.³⁰¹ In this vein, the state’s ethos reflected a traditionalist approach that was heavily influenced by Catholic thinking which restrained the development of the individual and a secular state in Ireland, and moreover, enforced the stringent social scaffolding that had been developing since 1801. Although it was not prescribed in such exacting terms and was open to a more organic type of development, the nation’s ethos reflected similar ideals. Following from this, the attitude of the state ensured that subtle challenges to the definition of the state’s ethos were muted, and more robust challenges were quashed. Consequently, the ethos of the state became the ethos of the nation and *vice versa*, in line with Butler’s suggestion that there is a “tension between ethos and morality, such that a waning of the former is the condition for the waxing of the latter.”³⁰²

In Ireland, however, morality upheld the ethos of the state so that the conservative Catholic ethos of the past century became the ethos of the Irish nation-state. Rather than the contrasting forces of “waxing” and “waning”, it was the inextricable linking of both that maintained the “appearance of its collectivity”.³⁰³ During the 1950s there was a suggestion of secularisation, as early as the 1950s as well as “widespread anticipation of an imminent coming of great change in Irish society”.³⁰⁴ However, the cultural codes

300 Inglis, Tom, “Origins and Legacies of Irish Prudery: Sexuality and Social Control in Ireland”14.

301 Butler, Judith, *Giving an Account of Oneself* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005) 5.

302 Butler, Judith, *Giving an Account of Oneself* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005) 4. Here Butler refers to the discussion of ethos by Adorno in *Problems of Moral Philosophy* Adorno, Theodor, *Problems of Moral Philosophy* Translated. Rodney Livngstone (Stanford: Stanford University press, 2001).

303 Butler, Judith, *Giving an Account of Oneself* 4.

304 Garvin, Tom, *News From a New Republic* 31.

that linked the institutional pillars and scaffolding of Irish-Ireland were still enshrined in the state and nation's ethos and provided what Tom Garvin describes as a "sense of continuing stasis".³⁰⁵ Censorship was one of those cultural codes that protected that ethos and the appearance of "collectivity". In Ireland stringent censorship, implemented under the 1929 Censorship Act, the policing, on moral grounds, of the opening hours of public houses through the Intoxicating Liquor Act of 1924, and the introduction of the Dance Halls Act in 1935, are just a few examples of attempts made by the state, with the support of, and sometimes at the instigation of the Catholic Church, to suppress what were seen as cultural and behavioral challenges to the social and constitutional ethos of Ireland. The well-documented suppression of the Mother and Child scheme, proposed by Minister Noel Browne in 1950 under the 1947 Health Act, bears testament to the public quashing of more robust challenges to that same ethos.³⁰⁶ The act was also opposed by doctors in pursuit of their own class interests. Public quashing of challenges called for co-operation between the state, public consensus and the Church in maintaining and perpetuating the links between the state ethos and Church morality.

The publication of the 1937 Constitution may be seen as a watershed in the state's expression of its support of the church and its moral ideals. However, evidence of the influence of church morality was evident prior to 1937. Indeed, as early as 1926, three years before the passing of the Censorship Act in 1929, writer Signe Toksvig remarked in her diaries on the extent of "church control and its deadening infiltration in rural life".³⁰⁷ Later, in 1937, Toksvig's novel *Eve's Doctor* was banned by the censorship board in response to what was seen as a criticism of both Catholic dogma and the effect that dogma had on the national Irish character.³⁰⁸ One review published in 1939 remarks

305 Garvin, Tom, *News From a New Republic* 31.

306 Louise Fuller remarks that "The proposed health scheme was also a particularly sensitive issue for the bishops because it had implications for motherhood and sexuality, on which the Church had very definite thinking." Fuller, Louise, *Irish Catholicism since 1950. The Undoing of a Culture* 75.

307 Pihl, Lis, "'A Muzzle Made in Ireland': Irish Censorship and Signe Toksvig" in *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 88(352). Winter 1999. 450.

308 Toksvig, Signe, *Eve's Doctor* (London: Faber and Faber, 1937).

that while the novel is not written in “Yeatsian”³⁰⁹ style, it portrays the “finest and the basest qualities of Irish character.”³¹⁰ While the novel seems to have been received as a balanced piece of writing abroad, the same cannot be said of its reception by the Irish Censorship Board. Secular behaviour, it seems, was unwelcome in the confines of the people’s democratically elected parliament, within the confines of expression and within the church. Indeed, the precise and prescribed Church-state morality seemed to act muscle-like in Irish society. It appears that suggestions of, or, indeed, the suggested potential that the choices made by individuals involved in secular activities, could undermine the position of the church and prompted the swift flexing of that moral muscle in the curtailment of behaviour. One of the long-term consequences of this curtailment was, in broad terms, the apparent stifling of individual agency and individual potential, which may have been a significant factor in the stagnation of economic and cultural growth between the 1930s and 1960s.

It may be argued that on an official level the sense of agency experienced by individuals was inhibited, not simply by prescribed behaviour and social expectation, but also by the effects of cultural isolation and economic stagnation. Certainly, as the 1935 Dance Halls Act illustrates, resisting or rebelling against the social and political ethos of the state became increasingly more difficult in public space. The fusion of the relationship between cultural/leisure, moral and economic activity meant that secular behaviour, such as dancing, was drawn into the remit of the non-secular; in the policing of public morality the church went so far as to supervise and control social events. While the Dance Halls Act, as Dermot Keogh argues, commercialised entertainment, it also offered the clergy the opportunity to supervise those attending dances in large halls.³¹¹ Maria Luddy argues that this supervision was seen as a way to protect the innocence of those who lived in rural areas from the “predatory stranger” travelling from urban areas to dance halls in the countryside.³¹² At the centre of such a perception lay the presumed naïvety of young country girls and the distrust of men living in urban, more modernised

309 “Yeatsian” as referred to in the review refers to the expression of a Celtic identity as constructed in Yeats’ poetry.

310 Moore, M, “Eve’s Doctor” in *The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disorder* 89.1(1939) 113.

311 Keogh, Dermot, *Twentieth Century Ireland. Nation and State. New Gill History of Ireland 6* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1994) 73.

312 Luddy, Maria, *Prostitution and Irish Society, 1800-1949* 199.

towns. Furthermore, the commercialisation of the Dance Halls led to the building of Parish Halls across Ireland. The ownership of Parish Halls by the clergy meant that social events held within their walls would be under the direct control of the parish clergy.

Indeed, writing in *The Furrow* in 1953, Michael Mooney recognises the impact of the Dance Halls Act on traditional entertainment in rural areas where dances held in private houses became the victim of stringent parish supervision. The attraction of large events being held in commercialised dance halls also put events held more locally under strain. In comparison to the entertainment provided by show bands, the opportunities to meet with a broader range of people in larger dance halls and to come in contact with more contemporary dance music being listened to abroad, local dances seem archaic and bland. Dance halls were packed with young people, some of whom had already experienced emigration and who found excitement in their new, more liberating surroundings. Larger dance halls offered an insight into a new more modern way of life that clashed directly with the ideals of the church and with the traditional perception of Ireland. Mooney goes on to comment on the program that instigated the building of Parish Halls, remarking that they were built “primarily to combat the danger that was felt to be inherent in “commercial” halls”.³¹³ Legal action propagated further action, and as sexuality and individual behaviour became increasingly subject to direct and indirect supervision, bureaucratic levels of regulation increased.

The publication of the Carrigan Committee in 1931 is seen as a defining point in the regulation of sexuality in Ireland. The Carrigan Committee was established in June 1930 under the direction of William Carrigan with a brief to investigate juvenile prostitution. On the whole, the first decades of the state were characterised by the prevailing perception of Irish culture as rural and asexualized. This was a perception that clashed with the existence of commercial centres that signified a type of modernisation directly associated with moral deterioration. The role of the state was significant in supporting this perception. As a result of the support and propagation of this perception, narratives of sexuality in Ireland seem to have become characterised by

313 Mooney, Michael L., “The Parish Hall” in *The Furrow* 4(1) 1953. 4.

discourses of morality to the extent that cultural memory has ignored the existence of sexual activity or at least intimacy in the past. Diarmaid Ferriter has pointed to Susan Riordan's claims that Irish historians have focused on the denial of sex at the cost of documenting the experience of sex in Ireland.³¹⁴ Ferriter also argues that the Carrigan report indicates that "there was a whole class of women who were not getting married but who were sexually active".³¹⁵ In other words, the myth of sexual purity was just that, but it is a myth that has become further complicated by cultural memory. The myth has informed memory to the point that retrospectives of sexuality and sexual activity in Ireland have largely documented transgressive sex associated with the corrupt operation of state and church-run institutions.

Of course, the terms sex and sexuality imply the burden of their uses in contemporary culture and media. Looking back, sex and sexuality in Ireland have been perceived with suspicion and there has been no documentation of positive experiences of intimacy. Happy, healthy experiences of sexuality in Ireland in the past have been overshadowed by the silence that surrounded intimacy and by the constructed cultural memory of the past that suggests such experiences and approaches did not exist. Media codes have dominated the recent critique and narration of that unhappy past. Many sufferers of abuse found the media and legal discourses provided a channel through which they could voice their stories, which in turn enabled them to contest the might of Church and state. The culture of containment that Smith refers to may have been challenged, and to a great degree undone, but the expression of what constituted sexuality in the past remains locked within the containment of legal and media discourses. It also offered the growing state the opportunity to compound and express itself through minor interventions amongst communities.

During the first half of the twentieth century culture in Ireland was overwhelmingly regarded as a noble expression of the "Gaelic spirit" rather than as being a malleable entity, the plasticity of which contributed to the unique lived experience of those living on this island. Culture was structural rather than experiential. That is, what was

314 Ferriter, Diarmaid, *The Transformation of Ireland 1900-2000* 322.

315 Ferriter, Diarmaid, *The Transformation of Ireland* 322.

considered the dominant culture of the time hung on the stringent control of the established structures of the state. Increasingly, public morality shaped the public activities of communities and individuals. Indeed, legal instruments, such as the Dance Halls Act, and the stringency with which the church pursued the supervision of morality on a collective and individual basis, suggests a patronising mistrust of individuality and its agency. Consequently, the interior lives of individuals became controlled by the internalised ethos of the state, not completely, but to the extent that many of the freedoms of individual agency were considered off limits. National censorship induced self-censorship and the constant monitoring of action. Progressively, the prevailing culture of the Church became increasingly ingrained in the dominant social ethos of the nation. Resistant behaviours were eclipsed in a manner that instilled violent fear and self-censorship which in turn ensured that the cultural, political and institutional structures of Irish society continued to be upheld.

In light of the pressures a long history of colonisation and more recent wars had placed on life on the island, the state's desire to "protect the fledgling nation from its citizens' discontent and from the derision of foreigners, in particular the former colonial power", is understandable.³¹⁶ The state may also have taken advantage of the opportunities presented by reforms such as the Dance Halls Act. In his essay "Dancing on the Hobs of Hell" Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin argues that the stifling of private dances in family homes quashed the opportunities they offered to raise funds for the Irish Republican Army (IRA), for American Wakes and for destitute families.³¹⁷ Indeed, the raiding of these events offered the newly established police force, the Garda Síochana, the opportunity to consolidate and demonstrate its place in Irish society. Mark Finnane has observed that the "police had come to play a prominent part" in the years after 1922 in restoring peace to the state.³¹⁸ Through such purpose-driven utilisation of power and ethos, church and state became intertwined. Unfortunately, stagnation in policy and the muting of

316 Keating, Anthony, "Church, State and Sexual Crime in Ireland after 1922" in *Radharc* 5/7(2004-2006) 156.

317 Ó hAllmhuráin, Gearóid, "Dancing on the Hobs of Hell: Rural Communities in Clare and the Dance Halls Act of 1935" in *New Hibernia Review* 9(4) Winter 2005. 10-12.

318 Finnane, Mark, "The Carrigan Committee of 1930-31 and the 'Moral Condition of the Saorstát'" in *Irish Historical Studies* 32 (128). November 2001. 520.

dissenting voices facilitated the furthering of a constraining ethos in the name of what would become the nation-state.

Here the definition of nation-state is taken from Richard Kearney's *Postnationalist Ireland: Politics, Culture, Philosophy*, where Kearney describes the nation-state as a "legal entity" that "usually endorses what might be called 'civic' nationalism: the claim that the nation is composed of all those – regardless of colour, language, creed or race – who subscribe to the nation's principles or constitution."³¹⁹ After 1922 the nation that had sought its definition in the language of the mass politics of the nineteenth century, of the cultural revival and of the military rebellion of the early twentieth century, merged with the considered and precise language of the state. The type of civic nationalism that had been widespread across the United Kingdom in the nineteenth century became a central characteristic of the new Irish state, through decades of hegemonic negotiation, cultural nationalism and civic nationalism mapped onto each other. Certainly, significant aspects of territorial nationalism in Ireland remained contested, and operated outside of the legal jurisdiction of the state. In other areas of Irish life the cultural and religious ethos of the nation merged with the legally supported ethos of the state, thus giving rise to the Irish nation-state.

In terms of the stringent adherence to conservative Catholic morality, the opening decades of the state's existence set the precedent for what was to follow. However, as noted earlier, the Church alone did not set these precedents. Furthermore the cultural analysis of the past, of the effects and the causes of the Censorship Act, have been reviewed. The "mythology" that is seen to have grown around the Censorship Act of 1929 has been demystified by certain critics of late.³²⁰ Certain members of the clergy, and lay members of a conservative disposition, campaigned to establish the Committee on Evil Literature that led to the Censorship Act in 1929, but the influence of the clergy is now considered to have been one factor amongst others that combined to propagate an anti-intellectual attitude in Irish social, political and cultural life. Appointed by Minister for Justice Kevin O Higgins, a conservative politician and former military

319 Kearney, Richard, *Postnationalist Ireland: Politics, Culture, Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 1997) 2.

320 Fallon, Brian, *An Age of Innocence: Irish Culture 1930-1960* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1999) 205.

rebel, the Committee on Evil Literature reflected the overzealous attitudes of a conservative religious sector of Irish society in the 1920s. However, the Committee and Censorship Act did not pass through parliament without resistance. Well known figures such as W.B. Yeats, then a Senator, George Bernard Shaw and AE (George Russell) voiced their dissent and condemned censorship. Such dissent on its own was insufficient to prevent the passing of the bill. By themselves, however, the bill and its enactment are now seen as incapable of propagating the “continued hostility to innovation” and anti-intellectualism that became characteristic of Irish society.³²¹ In 1952, Sean O’ Faoláin described censorship in Ireland as a result of the “blending of the moral and the patriotic” and the “desire to protect from corruption this infant nation born out of such hardship.”³²² Like the Dance Halls Act of 1935, the Censorship Act of 1929 was a piece of legislation that reflected the new state’s desire for a new start, marked by a period of “intense cultural activity” during which Independence became acquainted with “everything untainted” that reflected a desire for cultural singularity that simply was not that of the former ruling colonial power.³²³

What seems to have been more damaging than the execution of the Censorship Act was the presumed incompetency of the Irish public to make individual critical decisions in relation to art and information. Indeed in 1942, P.J. Gannon mourned the breaking away of art from its original cradle of Christianity. Gannon describes what he terms as “problem” texts, as “cancerous growths” and compares the need for censorship to the need for sanitation in order to prevent a return to the conditions that engendered the Black Death.³²⁴ Gannon makes a distinction between everyday man and the “literati” who strive to corrupt through art. This distinction presumes that the Irish readership was an unsophisticated one incapable of making sophisticated critical decisions on art and high culture, a presumption that was compounded by the neglect of an education system that did little to provide access to anyone other than the élite or to develop analytical thought in its curriculum. Considering that “Literary, political and intellectual

321 Keogh, Dermot, *Twentieth Century Ireland. Nation and State . New Gill History of Ireland* 6 32.

322 O’ Faoláin, Seán, “Ireland After Yeats” in *World Literature Today* 63.2.250th issue (Spring 1989) 241 -245.

323 Kennedy, Brian P., “The Failure of the Cultural Republic: Ireland 1922-39” in *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 81(321). Spring 1992, 14-15.

324 Gannon, P.J., “Art, Morality and Censorship” in *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 31(124). December 1942, 411-412.

controversy was constant” the public would have been aware of intellectual debates³²⁵ it seems, as Ferriter argues, that the exclusionary nature of education was a more likely reason for the stunting of the “nation’s intellectual development” than the “dourness of Irish cultural life” induced by censorship.³²⁶ In constitutional, institutional and cultural terms, the state acted as an exponent of the national ethos and to an extent also became entangled in the violent oppression of the nation through fear and control that maintained a veil of silence around issues of sex and sexuality.

However, the intricate connections established between Church, state and the nation’s ethos were never fully reconciled with the agency of individuality. Ethos as an underpinning set of principles is reinforced by agency. When faced with resistance ethos may be enforced aggressively through language or through violence. In this sense it can resist changes occurring in the present and attempt to continue its dominance. Ethos can, as Judith Butler argues, attempt to elide the present and the resistance that occurs within the present.³²⁷ However, it cannot contain individual thought or action in absolute terms. Thus, its efforts to exert absolute control over individual action can never fully succeed, suggesting that the present is always present, waiting to emerge out of the shadow of the past. At any moment, the constraints of ethos could be transgressed by the action of an individual or a community and the present could re-emerge and come to occupy a position in the foreground of society thus forcing renegotiation of the codes of a society. However, this foregrounding and re-negotiation is dependent on public awareness of its occurrence.

When re-negotiation does occur, it may merely accommodate conciliation at the very limits of hegemony that, in the face of transgression, prevents the complete collapse of aspects of an ethos. To complicate this a little further, the possibility always exists that the failure of an ethos to eclipse the present may never become known in the public domain if transgressing behaviour is stifled, suffocated or silenced. In this case, extreme

325 Fallon, Brian, *An Age of Innocence: Irish Culture 1930-1960* 205.

326 Ferriter, Diarmaid, *The Transformation of Ireland 1900-2000* (London: Profile Books, 2005) 341.

327 Butler, Judith, *Giving an Account of Oneself* 5.

action may prevent the knowledge of ethos infringement from being released into the public domain. However, when consequences of the actions of an individual or a community that breach ethos come to light, so too does the existence of the vexatious. At such a point, the vexatious can no longer be contained. Like the present, it slips out from the shadow of the eclipse and overwhelms the past. Since neither the state nor society can ever fully contain individual action, and the agency of certain individual actions will always arise to irritate any ethos purported to represent the nation at large; so too, vexatious entities will always exist.

The contours of selfhood prescribed by nation and state are, as Declan Kiberd writes, sought in and defined through language. While language is a system we constantly draw upon to construct identities, it is also a system vulnerable to contravention; contravention that undermines those constructs. The precise language of law, the moral language of the church, the spoken and indeed the unspoken codes of social expectation must continuously attempt to contain and reconcile itself with the vexatious in order to maintain the status quo. Despite the constant process of hegemonic reconciliation, the latter stages of the twentieth century saw the beginning of the gradual undoing of the previously dominant ethos of Irish social, political and cultural life that was directly associated with the constructed ideals of nation-hood, state and identity. Outpaced by social change, the appearance of hegemonic reconciliation was simply not enough to sustain the ethos of the nation that had prevailed for so long. Social forces, such as feminism, changes in gay and lesbian rights, increased levels of education, emigration, technological advances in the media and a demand for human rights, combined at a particular point and disrupted the present.

To suggest that this undoing occurred as a result of a momentary eclipse of the nation's ethos would be naïve. The hegemonic processes that contained the nation-state's "architecture of containment" were already being pressurised by social and cultural change and by the structural changes the population was undergoing. Adding to this pressure, the vexatious constantly threatened, reminding us of all that was contained in attempting to suppress the potentially undermining acts of individual agency. Sporadically, cases of the vexatious, such as the death of Ann Lovett and "The Kerry Babies Case", came to light and confronted behaviours presumed integral to Irish

culture and identity. These cases neither debilitated official discourses nor instigated a complete social support for notions of Irish identity, yet each case challenged the ethos that fostered a presumed Irish identity. The Church-state relationship was challenged, and as a consequence, the structures upon which the national ethos hung were undermined. More specifically, these cases challenged the dependency of the Church-state relationship upon the incessant suppression of desires and actions that threatened the imposed and expected social conduct of a people living in a nation-state that was defined, through language and the policing of behaviour, by a particularly strict ethos of Catholic and bourgeois respectability.

To add to these vexatious challenges, “the multiplicity of media” available in Ireland in the 1970s and 1980s rendered the “authority of information” in the public realm more open to questioning thus increasing the impact of such challenges.³²⁸ Increased media coverage of these cases in the late 1970s and in the 1980s suggests that to an extent, the institutions of democracy were being challenged via the mass media. Indeed the mobilisation of certain groups in support of the perceived victims of these cases in the 1980s also serves to suggest that social movements in Ireland were becoming increasingly media savvy. Desultory, random events were quickly reported by some as admonitions of the nation’s official cultural discourses and by others as warnings against the perils of behaviour perceived, as not simply immoral, but also as incompatible with the nation’s ethos. The challenges to Irish identity and the perceived authority of the culture from which it emerged lay at an axis in communications, where incidents became media events, spectacles and sites of conflict. Here, the competing narratives of incidents point to power struggles being mediated more openly than ever before thus imply an increased participation in and impact on democracy. Increasingly, it seemed that the ethos that once eclipsed the present was being renegotiated to the point that the present was beckoned to the foreground of Irish society and the possibility of cultural and democratic change became expressed more explicitly than ever before.

Expression of possibility however does not necessarily mean that the possibility for change was acted upon within an immediate time frame. Neither does the expression of

³²⁸ Morash, Christopher, *A History of the Media in Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) 182.

or the demand for change mean that the disappearance of the vexatious will necessarily follow. Rather, the opposite could occur. The present, no longer eclipsed either violently or silently by an undermined national ethos, becomes a site of intense negotiation. Indeed, in the face of such negotiation, moral attitudes, liberal and conservative, may experience a bolstering of their positions. Following from this, is the possible galvanising of the vexatious as just that, a vexatious entity that cannot pierce the impervious borders of hardened moral positions. The appearance of AIDS in Ireland in the 1980s impacted on Irish society just as TB had caused social disruption in the past. Both diseases entered into the public domain as irritating reminders of the vulnerability of the national ethos. In order to consider some of the reasons for the charged upset that AIDS, a contemporary vexatious entity causes, it is necessary to consider the depth to which the contours of Irish state and nationhood penetrated Irish culture and consequently shaped the daily lived experience or habitus of the people on this island. The processes through which HIV territorialises the body and becomes the syndrome known as AIDS are universally the same. However, the perception of a body in the grip of AIDS is specific to the culture of each society. This chapter points to the context from which AIDS emerged in Ireland; it emerged from a culture in which ideas of state and nation-hood were intertwined with the ideals endorsed by the Catholic Church and nation-hood seemed to advance an ethos of moral purity and to promote an ideal of the Celtic spirit. This ethos had been honed throughout the nineteenth century and the decades that had passed since the foundation of the Free State in 1922 had seen the compounding of these ideals under this ethos of moral and racial purity. The following chapter will consider these ideals through the inconsistent teleology of modernisation Ireland experienced during the nineteenth and much of the twentieth-centuries.

Chapter Four

Bodies, Ireland and Modernisation

Having traced the development of official structures in Ireland as well as of bodies that threaten to destabilise those structures, this chapter will now consider the contradictory role modernisation played in the dualistic relationship between the official and unofficial. The role of modernisation is considered in conjunction with critiques of modernisation. In doing so this chapter points to the constraining nature of some critiques which saw modernisation in economic terms alone. Examined alongside theories of secularisation, this chapter establishes modernisation as part of a combination of factors which saw modernisation occur at the bureaucratic level of institutions and in relation to the movement of people and, hence, ideas in and out of Ireland. The impact of the Women's Movement is read as part of a phase of modernisation that instigated a loosening of the ties between codified behaviours and sites of the excluded.

This chapter will continue to apply a genealogical method of exploration to historical material to consider how, and the extent to which, the dominant modes of perception outlined in the preceding chapters came to be engrained in discourses of the body in Irish society. Furthermore, it will use this approach to move through texts to show that the dominant modes of perception not only instigate a process of "Othering", but that they also consign elements of our social and mental life to a zone beyond recognition or acknowledgement. Consequently, structure of this chapter is achronological. The analysis presented moves up and down through historical time to emphasise how discourses expand and contract to place particular emphasis on certain framing positions. In considering issues of uneven modernisations, the body will continue to be located within the contractions and expansions of official discourses.

As part of the investigation of pre-existing conditions, this chapter will also reflect on the framing of conservative moral discourses of the body in the popular media in the late 1970s. This analysis will consider how certain discourses were presented atavistic discourses reminiscent of a sense of Irishness that draw on perceptions of the past for their verification. With this in mind, the framing of these seemingly atavistic discourses will be explored as part of the rubric under which the management of conservative and liberal discourses took place. That framing will also be considered as having been part

of the mediation of the clash between conservative and liberal discourses in the 1970s and 1980s in the Irish media. In this respect what was presented as atavistic in the popular, liberal media may also have been regarded as symptomatic of the close and enduring conservative moral ties that had ensured community cohesion in Ireland over almost two centuries. The portrayal of certain voices as atavistic in the Irish media during the 1970s and 1980s may be seen as the culmination of a clash of discourses with the intensity of the representation of spots of historical time at a point when society was being forced to confront its “invisible blind spot”.³²⁹ Here the intensity of the representation of historical spots of time points to the construction and framing of images in the present which seem to belong to the past. While the endurance of concrete and abstract structures of society, as well as the knowledges through which they were constructed provided social cohesion, in some sectors of media the images and discourses through which they were discussed presented those structures as atavistic entities. The effect of those cohesive knowledges was to create the parameters of recognition, as well as the silent forces beyond recognition, which are always in tension with each other. However, at times, the tension between silence and cohering knowledges breaks through the structures of the dominant, containing discourses and destabilising the language through which we experience the knowable world and consequently, the knowledges, the ethos and conceptual frameworks through which we access that world.

In the construction of conceptual frameworks and a national ethos, knowledges constantly subtend each other, verify and support each other. In doing so, they create discourses and framing positions through which the body may be discussed and perceived. In its most privileged form, a specific knowledge may overwhelm others and create a dominant frame through which the body may be perceived. In a sense, the prevalence of a particular mode of perception normalises both that perception and the frame that positions the body within a particular mode of discourse. Other perceptions, knowledges and discourses become submerged by this normalisation and enter into a process of “Othering” whereby their voices are muffled if not completely stifled and are consigned to a place beyond the zone where recognition may occur. Between the Act of Union in 1801 and the latter part of the twentieth century discourses of the body in Ireland were dominated by discourses of morality and class respectability that often

³²⁹Foucault, Michel, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1980) 4.

combined to create an oppressive privileging of perception that was reinforced by the concrete structures of social, political and cultural life. Furthermore, the metaphorical lens through which the body was perceived put the abstract policies of society's concrete institutional structures into practice. While gradual shifts in knowledge may be detected over almost two centuries, those shifts were never so pronounced that a new metaphorical lens, through which the body could be perceived and discussed, could emerge.

That any new metaphorical lens failed to materialise meant that the prevailing language of the discourses of morality and respectability seemed to remain relatively unchallenged. Furthermore, the dominance of all framing positions created by prevailing discourses was, and remains always, dependent on language's failure to acknowledge what are considered illegitimate experiences, entities and events, practices, people and objects. Discourse commits that which it does not acknowledge to a place beyond the focus of perception permissible through dominant framing positions. That zone is our "invisible blind spot".³³⁰ Once a dominant framing position emerges from the prevailing discourses of a society, an "invisible blind spot" is created.

Our "invisible blind spot" lies somewhere between recognition and resistance. It is here that society's unacknowledged and forbidden events, objects or people may lie silently beyond the limits of both our perception and the parameters of dominant discourses. Once these phenomena come into our line of vision however, they vex the stability of our perception and they begin to become what this thesis terms the vexatious. These vexing entities demand that we notice them making it clear that, momentarily, neither multiple layers of dominant discourse nor categorisation can maintain their former state of suppression. The structural strength of discourse becomes undone and the vexatious induces confusion that defies categorisation. The turned canvas discussed in the previous chapter diffuses our vision forcing us to re-access where the vexatious fits into the prevailing structures of our society. Momentarily, the dominant frames of perception become undone as the vexatious presents the dominant forms of language with challenges that they cannot sustain.

330 Foucault, Michel, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1980) 4.

Following from this, the temporal suspension of structure promises the potential renegotiation of the tacit rules through which our relationships are lived and the dominant framing positions of our discourse are formed. However, eventually the structures that have endured previous challenges absorb the vexatious, suppress it once again and resume their dominance. Over time the repetition of this process means that the vexatious may eventually become absorbed into the dominant discourse of a society through hegemonic negotiation. In a sense, a very slow creative process is constantly at work through which attitudes, behaviours and language become attuned to each other and create alterations in the metaphorical lenses of perception. This turning ensures the dominance and flexibility of discourses that overwhelm others. While that creative process is slow, it is also a buoyant hegemonic one that moves recognition, resistance, our “invisible blind spot” and the vexatious in smooth gambits that largely go unnoticed.

Sporadically however, the fluidity of those negotiated interactions is interrupted by outbursts of the vexatious. Over time, the vexatious adapts itself to its host society just as much as that society may adapt to the vexatious so that both may continue to apply pressure on each other to maintain their positions: one so that it may remain dominant and the other so that it may continue to go unnoticed until it adapts itself to the sphere of dominance and becomes part of that sphere. However, not all vexatious entities will become compatible with their host society and often many remain too vexing, too isolated and too far outside a society’s parameters of recognition to ever become included in its ethos. Nonetheless, pressure that emanates from the vexatious combined with a change in social attitudes towards isolated entities forces the parameters of dominant discourse to accommodate the vexatious. Other entities remain vexing until either new combinations of accommodating factors arise or alternatively they continue to exist in a silent, unrecognised parallel, un-impinged upon by communication. A semantic shift within the prescriptive discourses of the dominant facilitates the terms of reference required for recognition to occur, thus enabling the dominant discourses to become more inclusive.

Vexatious entities may force the parameters of discourse to undergo a semantic shift in order to include and recognise them as being compatible rather than vexing entities, which contribute to the reframing of dominant rubrics or frames of perception. Continuous, disruptive pressure may interrupt the everyday habitus of a society to the point that dominant discourses come to recognise vexatious entities in order to prevent further challenges occurring. While dominant structures rely on prevailing discourses to uphold them, those discourses are not inflexible. In fact, the flexibility of dominant discourses eventually allows them to shape the vexatious into a state of malleability that will allow it to be accommodated within dominant structures. However, it must be noted that this is a gradual process in which the habitus is shaped by the vexatious as much as the vexatious is shaped by the dominant habitus. The vexatious is not undermined; rather, it garners power within official structures and is sutured into the prevailing discourses of society signalling degrees of adaptation and accommodation. Consequently, the vexatious operates as a significant ongoing contributor to the shape of the dominant structures of our society and to the process of re-signification.

On their own, vexatious entities rarely force such a seismic shift in knowledge that the lens through which we perceive the world is radically altered. One reason for this is that the structures and codes of society that also forbid its existence create the vexatious. The extent to which these codes and structures are engrained in society is what renders the vexatious so potentially upsetting. This is also the very reason why the official structures of society attend to the silencing of the vexatious as much as possible. Tension builds around this process however, forcing the weaknesses in official structures to become more vulnerable to the pressure applied by the vexatious. Consequently, radical shifts in perception and the discourses through which we express that altered perception usually come about through a combination of factors that culminate in outbursts of the vexatious. Furthermore, it often seems that the vexatious rises and disappears back into its earlier state of prohibition before it achieves an empowered and recognised status. Following from this, the act of prohibition creates a sense that the forbidden is eradicated when it may simply be suppressed. Since suppression pivots on a point between the threat of a return and of absolute silence, it is a precarious and fragile form of control. Indeed, suppression works as an agent of control that is often merely a veil or a temporary dam that silences actions, people, discourses, entities and cultural practices but does not end them. Over time the faux

shields or Chinese walls of suppression are pressurised by the continuance of the very thing they are intended to eradicate. However, both official discourses and the vexatious continue to co-exist in a delicate balance that maintains the dominance of the prevailing frames of perception.

It is worth noting that a constant state of simultaneity exists in society, and that while the balanced simultaneity of official and unofficial discourses usually prevails and maintains the status quo, the ongoing tension between them may eventually culminate in a clash of discourses whereby the permissible and the forbidden collide, allowing the forbidden to erupt out of its frame of containment and become the vexatious. The very process of becoming the vexatious and moving out of the space of the forbidden sends tremors through official discourses. During such clashes, a channel through which voices of extreme dissent may be expressed may also open. In Ireland during the representation, or the narration, of this clash in the media during the late 1970s and the 1980s, these voices were framed as conservative to the point of appearing atavistic. Representations of conservatism as being traditional to an extreme may have contributed to a sense of moral panic in society. Eventually an eruption of the vexatious forces the divide between official and unofficial structures to yield and blurs the boundaries between what were purported to be representations of the contemporary habitus and seemingly oppositional atavistic representations constructed in the present. Momentarily, both domains combine to create one “field of ... operations”, albeit an unordered one.³³¹

Judith Butler defines a “field of ... operations” as the space in which actors move. That “field” is preset by the norms of our social worlds which also afford us recognition. A dominant field is the one in which the recognised and accepted actors move. In its chaotic state this “field” is not subjected to the same categorisation as official structures because discourse is overwhelmed by the momentary collapse of division and differentiation. It is during this unordered, suspended moment that the potential for a radical shift in perception becomes possible. Even before such an eruption occurs, however, the practices involved in maintaining the forbidden generate further pressure

³³¹ Butler, Judith, *Undoing Gender* (London: Routledge, 2004) 32.

on the official structures of society ensuring that those opportunities for radical changes in the metaphorical lenses of perception are rare but always possible.

The forbidden hides in its place of silence, while the structures and discourses required to contain that silence perpetuate themselves. There many examples of this in Ireland. These include: the disguising of pregnancies and the hiding of children conceived outside of marriage; infanticide and illegal back street abortions; the concealment of marital breakdown and domestic abuse; society's failure in the 1980s to recognise the consequences of intravenous drug use. When such events rose to the fore in the public domain, they challenged the semantics of official discourses and in some cases forced the prescriptive language of official domains to expand in order to accommodate the vexatious. In Ireland, as the final chapter will show, the failure of official discourses to recognise heterosexuality outside the domain of accepted discourses of moralistic and class respectability, and homosexual sexual practices at all, led to the isolation of HIV carriers and those suffering from AIDS. Failure to recognise and respond adequately to a rising heroin epidemic also contributed to the effects of HIV in Ireland during the early to mid 1980s. In these cases, and particularly in relation to IV drug users, AIDS and the illegality of homosexuality in Ireland, the structures that rendered practices legally and culturally forbidden are the very structures that compounded the difficulties experienced by the individual who transgressed the implicit and explicit codes of society. During the late 1970s and the 1980s the modes of discourse and the frames through which the vexatious was discussed in some media outlets may have contributed to an emphasis on the vexatious in the public realm. That emphasis induced semantic shifts in the official discourses of Irish society. One of the results of this semantic shift is the accommodation of medicalised and scientific discourse within official discourses in an attempt to contain AIDS as a vexatious entity and to re-order the "field of ... operations" in which discourses of the body existed. However, one of the major obstacles to the acceptance of medical and scientific discourse was the implicit and explicit codes of stigmatisation that were engrained in the frames of perception that positioned the body within official discourses.

Stigmatisation plays a significant part in preventing people from engaging in transgressive acts that breach the divide between the vexatious and the permissible.

Even when people do engage in the breaching practices, official structures often invoke and generate stigmatising discourses that discourage the public acknowledgement of practices or their consequences. While such practices are deemed forbidden they continue to be performed silently, thus augmenting the development of the containing discourse through which official structures express their power. Ironically, the stigmatisation attached to resistance perpetuates the need for resistance to be concealed. Furthermore, the social stigmatisation attached to transgressive behaviour often forces people to conceal the breaching of cultural, political and social rules. That is, when rules are transgressed the breach remains unacknowledged publicly until eventually that repetitious breach applies pressure to official structures of society, thus forcing their acknowledgement. Suddenly, the breach threatens the stability of the prevailing discourses forcing those discourses to recognise their own fault lines. Furthermore, the space of the vexatious itself breaches the structures that attempted to contain it. Simultaneously however, the cultural and social isolation of vexatious entities are often further enforced by the concrete and abstract structures that exist to deal with the consequences of the silent continuance of the vexatious. Social stigmatisation is one of those abstract structures. It plays a complex role in discourse enforcement as it crosses over between cultural, social and political boundaries and works through the metaphors of perception that legitimate the isolation of minority people, practices and entities. Indeed, stigmatising language, its representations and explicit metaphors, may even serve as the binding code between cultural, political and social spheres that cements them in the language of the dominant discourses that reinforce the interests of the most powerful in society and/or the interests of the majority. This chapter will consider the pretext for the emergence of AIDS as a vexatious entity in Ireland that added to the challenges that the prevailing discourse were already experiencing in the 1970s and 1980s.

But first it is necessary to consider the participant role played by stigmatisation in the creation of dominant discourses and spaces occupied by the body. Social stigmatisation forms an important factor in the cultural support of the concrete structures that create spaces of isolation where the unwanted or rejected elements of our society are deposited. In its treatment of people with TB, of those who were mentally ill, of people with disabilities and/or learning difficulties, unmarried mothers, orphans and abandoned children, as well as children deemed delinquents, stigmatising language has

demonstrated the isolation of vexatious people, entities and practices in Irish society until recently. Often confined in isolating institutions and by cultural and social attitudes that were coded institutions in themselves, these rejected people, objects and practices were subjected to the binding inhibitors of the concrete structures of the state as well as to official social and cultural practices. AIDS, the result of the disturbance of the natural body by nature, challenged and reinforced the structures of isolation and stigmatisation in Ireland in the 1980s. However, this was not the first incident of a virus/condition/syndrome causing such upset.

During both the nineteenth and twentieth-centuries tuberculosis had erupted from an invisible place, spilled into the space of the vexatious and spread silently through the population, upsetting social categorisations and knowledges of the body as it went. In a sense, it also reinforced certain stigmatisations that had grown out of what appeared to be the sober inflexibility of the dominant social structures. TB enforced categorisations that consigned it to the space of the vexatious. It unhinged social and cultural discourse, while those discourses simultaneously attempted to contain TB, or at least the perception of it. However, TB left a lasting stigmatism on its victim that was to contribute to the perception of it as a vexing virus that disturbed nature and brought chaos to what was considered the natural order of discourse and events. Sarah Marsh details the effect proposed sanatoria “would have on” the image of local areas, indicating that it was not simply individuals who suffered from the stigmatisms that TB brought.³³² The memory of that stigmatisation and the precision with which dominant structures divided Irish society in the first half of the twentieth century continued to send reverberations throughout the following decades and persistently shaped the dominant framing positions in the narration of official, unofficial, unacknowledged and clashing discourses.

However, the ingrained discourses were challenged by a process of protracted modernisation that eventually instigated the clash of conservative and liberal discourses in the 1970s and 1980s. Despite the stratagems adopted by both conservative and liberal positions in the vocalisation of their ideas, the fibres of history were to continue to link

³³² Marsh, Sarah, “‘Consumption was it?’: The Tuberculosis Epidemic and Joyce’s “The Dead”” in *New Hibernia Review* 15.1 (2011) 107.

the past with the present and, while altered, those fibres were also to continue to project forward. For Irish society, however, this adaptation would prove to be a painful one. In a sense, the memory of stigmatisation or the structures of feeling created by stigmatisation went largely unchallenged in Irish society until the closing half of the twentieth century. To add to this, that process of adaptation facilitated the culmination of a build up of tension between the conservative right and the growing liberal left in the 1970s and 1980s. The tightly bound social, cultural and political structures placed upon people at individual, community and national level in the middle of the century had been gathering strength since the beginning of the nineteenth century. The linking fibres of those structures were closely woven and compounded by the history of their repetition. Tearing those tightly tangled fibres away from the ingrained structures of society in order to accommodate modernisation and the change in attitude and knowledge it induced, would prove very difficult in cultural and social spheres. Indeed, not all of the moral, social and cultural fibres that wrapped themselves around the concrete structures of the Irish nation-state in the past were to ever fully break or become completely uncoiled. Elasticity defined those remaining fibres enabling them to stretch back through time and to link the present with the past in a way that renders the traditional part of the present. A polarisation occurred in Irish society between hardening conservative positions and a partial social swing towards liberalism in the 1970s and 1980s. The conflict that arose between the two stances points to the endurance of these fibres and to the capacity of the compounded performance of the past to act as a haunting sentinel policing the processes of recognition that are always at work in our relationships at an individual, community and national level.

Each of the vexatious clashes of the 1980s emphasises the tensions that were building between official discourses of the body and the emergence of what was previously unrecognised. The emergence of AIDS in Ireland occurred during this collision of positions. Following from the analysis of this collision, discourses of AIDS may be described as a type of discourse that indicates the extent of the temporary chaos that the eruption of the vexatious into structured and managed silences can induce. In the case of AIDS, the vexatious body forced the social and moral structures that policed sexuality to confront that which had been consigned to the unspoken realm beyond the parameters

of recognition and into society's "invisible blind spot".³³³ Those structures were supported by the weight of history and the repetition of tradition, making the appearance of AIDS and the disturbance of what was perceived as a natural body by a virus or by nature so shocking. Although attitudes surrounding sexuality in Ireland had already been challenged, AIDS seemed to challenge the conservative moral ethos that had grown around sexuality even further. HIV also appeared to resemble a pre-modern virus, carrying a seemingly uncontrollable threat that required the mobilisation of not only modern medicine but also the type of attitude modern medicine seemed to adopt towards the body. Such an attitude is one that considers it both a biological machine and a social body that must work in conjunction with each other in order to protect it and maintain its health as a single entity.

Sexuality and discussion of the biological workings of the body that seemed to refer to sexuality had become shrouded in multiple descriptive discourses of morality that avoided direct scientific or medical categorisation. Consequently, in the public domain discussion and representation of the body was limited to very specific modes of language that divorced certain illnesses, behaviours, drives and emotions from the body. In other words, the multiplicities of the body, of sexualities as well as their relationship to the individual and communities became part of the inexpressible. Consigned to society's "invisible blind spot" those multiplicities were deposited in the site of the inexpressible and continued to remain there until they spilled over into dominant discourses. The chaos that the vexatious AIDS body induced had been suggested by TB's lengthy infection of Irish society, by the social aggravation that the corpse of the murdered infant that was washed up in Kerry ignited and, as we shall see, by the representation of a nude body and a rebellious social body in the RTÉ drama *The Spike* in 1978. In the media, some discussion of the body in *The Spike*, the infants in "The Kerry Babies Case", and the liberal social bodies in the divorce and abortion referenda, demanded a change in language that would force their inclusion in the dominant discourses of society as part of the new knowledges that modernisation had been producing. Gradually, the dominant frames of perception and the metaphorical prisms of language through which that perception was expressed were being re-negotiated.

333 Foucault, Michel, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* 4.

Before moving on to the analytical section of this chapter, issues of modernisation in Ireland will be addressed. In order to gain an insight into the clash between old and new knowledges, between tradition and agents of modernisation in Irish society, an overview of the dominant modes of perception that seemed to inhibit the recognition of modernisation is necessary. In presenting such an overview, a review of the critiques of modernisation in Irish cultural theory is also essential. Critiques of modernisation, Modernism and modernity in Ireland are comprised of much contested terrain that has yielded prolific debate. Where critical analysis had previously stressed the emergence of symbolic systems of identity representation within post-colonial Ireland, the recent critical turn has increased its emphasis on the position of Irish identity within a broader system of material relations. As a result of that turn, the ideas prioritised by early post-colonial analysis in Ireland have yielded to a lens that considers the materiality of Irish identity in relation to European and global movements more than it had previously done. While early postcolonial criticism viewed Irish identity as a construct that emerged from a peripheral region's interaction with its former colonial centre, some recent criticism places the construction of Irish identity within a global framework of culture, politics and economics. In this respect, Irish culture is seen as the independent orchestrator of its identity and as a culture that contributes to global relations and multiple centers of power, as well as being a center of power in itself.³³⁴ Consequently, the concepts of modernisation, Modernism and modernity have, of late, been considered from a position that views Irish culture as part of, and a contributor to, a network of cultural, political and economic relations.³³⁵

The significance of this critical position for this research lies in its recognition of that web of relations as a network that facilitates the absorption of ideas from outside the island's geographical and state boundaries and the position of official discourses and structures within that web of relations. The impact of modernisation on discourses of

334 In this respect the influence of thinkers such as Raymond Williams, Edward Said and Homi K. Bhabha on critical thinking on and about Ireland is of great significance.

335 Cleary, Joe, "Irish Studies, Colonial Questions. Locating Ireland in the Colonial World" in *Outrageous Fortunes: Culture and Capital in Modern Ireland* (Dublin: Field Day Publications, 2006); Cleary, Joe, "Capital and Culture in Twentieth Century Ireland: Changing Configurations" in *Outrageous Fortunes: Culture and Capital in Modern Ireland* (Dublin: Field Day Publications, 2006) Cleary, Joe, "Amongst Empires: A Short History of Ireland and Empire Studies in International Context" in *Éire-Ireland: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Irish Studies* 42.1&2 (Spring/Summer 2007) 11-58; Kenny, Kevin, "Diaspora and Comparison: The Global Irish as a Case Study" in *The Journal of American History* 90.1 (2003) 134 – 62; Canny, Nicholas, "Writing Early Modern history: Ireland, Britain and the Wider World" in *The Historical Journal* 46.3 (Sep 2003) 723 – 747.

the body and the institutions with which dominant discourses are associated is also worth noting. However, in acknowledging that impact, modernisation in Ireland should also be acknowledged as a contradictory element of the nation state's political and cultural social structure, making modernisation's impact on discourses of the body difficult to define and pinpoint. An idealised perception of identity prevented the general recognition of elements of modernisation that had occurred and simultaneously placed modernisation on a symbolic pedestal, liberating it from the past and thus linking the very concept of modernisation and modernity with a sense of delayed desire. Shrouded in a sense of delayed desire, concepts of modernisation became obscured to the point that some representations of Ireland prompted questions about the nature of modernity and whether modernisation had taken place in Ireland at all. After an initial post-World War Two recovery period, Europe experienced a long period of growth. However, it was, as Tom Garvin writes, a prosperity in which Ireland "did not share and gradually became increasingly desperate to achieve."³³⁶ The positioning of Irish cultural identity within a broader web of relations admits to the interaction of the Irish nation-state as a modern nation in communication with other states and constructs of power. This positioning also seeks to recognise the elements of modernisation that took place in Ireland during the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries. The framing of modernisation as a national and would-be liberating desire had an impact upon the dominant discourses through which Irish identity and cultural history were discussed and constructed.

Narratives of Irishness failed to recognise the modernisation that had occurred in official discourses. Consequently, up until the late 1950s the Irish nation-state seemed to be suffering from a structural and cultural inertia that inhibited the development of the Irish economy and was accompanied by a stalemate in the dominant moral discourse. In relation to discourses of the body, this stalemate compounded the exclusion of the body's multiplicities from dominant discourses and reinforced a body constructed through a moral lens. Modernisation came to be seen as what Joe Cleary describes as a "quasi-religious redemption from an inchoate primeval darkness" that would bring economic, social and cultural liberation.³³⁷ Following from, this it appeared

³³⁶ Garvin, Tom, *News From A New Republic: Ireland in the 1950s* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2010) 37.

³³⁷ Cleary, Joe, "Modernization and Aesthetic Ideology" in *Outrageous Fortunes* 158.

that the liberating effect of modernisation would free the body from its caged position within the frame of dominant discourses. The obfuscating lens through which modernity was perceived meant that the partial modernisation that had occurred was ignored by the structures of recognition laid out by the dominant ethos of Irish society, culture and politics. The denial of modernisation bestowed the burden of desire on what were seen as its positive aspects while aspects of modernisation that were perceived as negative became consigned to the silence of taboo that repressed their recognition even further. Consequently, the perceived negative aspects of modernisation and by association, modernity, were rendered incompatible with the habitus of a population that was largely considered to be constituted by a rural, conservative Catholic morality.

Social problems, increased urbanisation, and sexual liberation were amongst the taboo issues consigned to a site that lay outside the “field of ... operations” that facilitated recognition in official Ireland.³³⁸ Consequently, for the most part those problems were excluded and unrecognised. Exclusion from the “field of ... operation” through which a nation state’s ethos, or any ethos, is defined means that the agency of excluded groups, individuals or bodies is limited if not completely restricted. Being excluded from the “field of ... operations” that is defined by a cultural and structural inertia on the official level contributes to the creation of category-less zones of exclusion that prevent recognition occurring and makes, what Judith Butler, calls the “unliveable life” a reality.³³⁹ However, during the 1970s and 1980s, mediated representation of some of those taboos incorporated them into a liberal narrative of the future possibilities for the habitus of the nation. Simultaneously, some elements of the cultural, political and social life of the nation were presented as outmoded traditionalism to the point that some social and political positions were treated as atavistic. It is worth noting, however, that these attitudes and positions may not have been as atavistic as the frames of the liberal and popular media of the 1970s and 1980s suggested. In Ireland cultural and structural inertia contributed to the continuation of restrictive categories that limited the agency of some groups, individuals and entities. Consequently, the habitus and attitudes that seemed atavistic were very much a part of the habitus of certain groups and individuals in Irish society at that time.

338 Butler, Judith, *Undoing Gender* 32.

339 Butler, Judith, *Undoing Gender* 8.

Additionally, inertia ensured that others remained confined within inactive, category-less zones of society. This group included those who were completely cut off from the possibility of their own agency or from acting with agency within the dominant discourses. As a result of being consigned to category-less zones, they existed as silent entities where their potential for agency was both stunted and unacknowledged. Restriction of their participation in dominant discourses meant that they remained in those endless spaces of anonymity conducting a silent “unliveable reality”. Those who lay outside the zones of official discourse were limited by society’s failure to name them. Significantly, within that failure to name them there also existed a purposeful failure to recognise them. While the inflexibility of certain categories sprang from the precision of repressive discourses of morality and nationality, that same inflexibility also prevented any fluidity of contact between the domains of official discourse and unofficial discourse. Exclusivity sealed the domain of official discourse making it a preclusive one that worked to uphold itself and to seal of the domains of recognition.

Added to the incessant enforcement of preclusive discourses was the impossibility of recognition for those who lay beyond the reach of the labels of official categories. The mythologizing of the idea of the Irish nation and an ideal Irish identity meant that problems such as rural poverty became bound up with sentimentalised narrative of Irishness. On the other hand, the incommensurability of the social problems associated with urban life meant that those problems were excluded from that same narrative. Often, problems became part of the unspoken narrative of exclusion rather than recognition. One example of this was the problematising status of unmarried mothers in Irish society. In official discourse, women who became pregnant outside of marriage occupied a complex category whereby what was considered their transgressive sexual and immoral behaviour, rather than their role as a mother, was recognised. Single mothers occupied a space that transgressed the grammatical construct of a dual sex model that defined the centrality of the family as a construct in Irish society. Official discourses recognised their children as “illegitimate” linking the individuality of the child to the mother in a grammatical construct that prevented the cord of biological and immoral connection from ever being broken. The isolation an unmarried mother experienced was one that not only excluded her from the Church and local community

but it was an isolation that extended to her child who also became stigmatised as illegitimate. To be illegitimate was to occupy a legal category of invisibility and a blatant category of immorality. Becoming part of the official domain of recognition or “field of operation” was impossible for the occupants of categories that did not exist and, within cultural and structural inertia of the past, could not exist. Illegitimacy was framed by invisibility and the people deemed illegitimate were consigned to society’s “invisible blind spot” thus ensuring that the consequences of the breaching of society’s tacit rules could be hidden and would not have to be confronted.

It is only by becoming part of the “field of ... operations” that one of these excluded entities may initiate change in dominant discourses through their own agency. Thus, the systematic and mechanistic exclusion of entities, groups or individuals from the dominant structures of a society means that they may often only manage to forge recognition by exceeding the parameters of cultural rules and limits. They must force their way into the “field of ... operations” and hence into the system of symbolic representation. At times the social, political and cultural structures that had developed in Irish society could no longer repress problems and challenges that lay outside of the parameters of recognition, which led them to burst through the idealised perception of Irish society and Irishness and to spill over into the structures of “containment”, thus forcing their recognition, albeit temporarily.³⁴⁰ Vexatious entities erupt and spill from their confined zones outside of official discourse in a way that challenges the traditional structures of society. They force their recognition and, through the challenges to tradition that they present, vexatious entities have also forced the temporary recognition of both modernisation and modernity in Ireland. The parameters of the “field of operation” in which recognition occurs are temporarily adjusted by the eruption of the vexations to allow modernisation and modernity to exist and be recognised within the ethos of the nation-state. For a moment, the chaos that gathers around the eruption of the vexatious challenges the engrained social, political and cultural structures to create a realm of semantic possibility and significant change before the paradigms of tradition restore organised control once again.

³⁴⁰ Smith, James, *Ireland’s Magdalen Laundries and the Nation’s Architecture of Containment* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007).

The predominant perception of AIDS as a disease contracted through sexual contact challenged the moral ethos, structures and lingering inertia of the nation state. The representation of the syndrome during its controversial emergence built on the successive challenges to the structural inertia of political, cultural and social life that had occurred in Ireland since the 1950s. Adding to this, recent developments in the analysis of modernisation, modernity and Modernism in Ireland challenge the perceived dominance of conservative structures of a society to show that those structures interacted with global movements. Furthermore, that analysis shows that some of the social elements that corroded the traditional structures of Irish society were produced through emigration and interaction with the global economy. Along with other vexatious occurrences, the emergence of the AIDS body also points to the instability of the dominant structures of Irish society and the effects of interactions between idealised and tabooed bodies as well the physical interaction of bodies with a virus associated with other countries. Furthermore, the AIDS body occupies a fluid space that defies boundaries where nature may easily disturb nature. Containing the fluidity of that space required that health promotion campaigns adopt a scientific and medical approach, which clashed with the traditional perception of the body in Irish society in naturalistic and moralistic terms. Just as the emergence and control of TB in Ireland challenged the discussion of the body in descriptive terms and forced those terms to yield to medical and statistical analysis, so too the emergence of AIDS challenged the dominant descriptive terms through which sexuality and the body had been discussed. However, simultaneously, the emergence of AIDS was defined by the subjectivity of constructed social, cultural and political boundaries. Just as TB was subjected to pre-existing narratives surrounding poverty, an associated lack of cleanliness and immoral sexuality, AIDS was also defined by pre-existing narratives of immorality, promiscuity and a derogatory view of intravenous drug users. While AIDS challenged established narratives and eroded them from within, it would also become an ordered medicalised body shaped by those established narratives.

In addition, the emergence of the AIDS body points to the repeated occurrence of vexatious entities which pressurised cultural narratives that had previously neglected to fully acknowledge the existence of a habitus outside of the idealised representation of Irish social and cultural life and of Irishness itself. That idealised representation had restricted the general view of modernisation to a narrow platform that tied culture and

the fluidity of the population's habitus to the symbolism of the past. Vexatious occurrences had been pressing on the tightly woven structures of Irish society since their very inception, and the tighter the weft and weave of those structures grew, the more narrow the interpretation of modernisation and modernity became. Consequently, the conceptual framework within which modernisation was recognised as having occurred and as occurring became more focused, which meant that forces which could not be fully contained within that framework became potentially more disruptive. Ruptures in structural mechanisms that had adapted to partial modernisation indicated the force with which the vexatious pushed itself into the public domain in a way that undermined the narrow framework of modernisation and modernity. A framework that shrouded the vexatious in a veil of taboo, and which repeatedly attempted to contain social and cultural change, was forced by AIDS and other entities to yield momentarily to the pressure of the vexatious. Where recognition of the vexatious had previously seemed impossible, its disruption of narratives of idealised identity made recognition necessary.

AIDS and its emergence challenged the established social, cultural and political structures. However, the disruption it caused built on the effects of successive vexatious occurrences which had been undermining idealised structures and narratives of Irishness since the 1950s, if not before. For instance, the production of Tennessee Williams' *The Rose Tattoo* by the Pike Theatre Company during the Dublin Theatre festival in 1957, which involved the "implied dropping of a condom onstage", led to the arrest of the director Alan Simpson.³⁴¹ The condom that was not there vexed the tacit cultural rules of Irish society to the point that it took a year to vindicate the Pike theatre and director Alan Simpson of the charge of obscenity, indicating the degree to which, as Christopher Morash writes, "Catholic social teaching" was "engrained in Irish law".³⁴² While the theatre company and its director were eventually vindicated, the Pike theatre company, damaged by the negative attention and by criticism from Archbishop Charles McQuaid, was forced to close as a result of crippling legal costs. Rather than annulling the vexatious event however, the closure indicates the constancy with which the official structures of society had to work to maintain the systematic control of Irish identity and

³⁴¹ Dean, Tanya, "Battles Lost and Won" in *Irish Theatre Magazine* 7.33 (2007) 42.

³⁴² Morash, Christopher, *A History of Irish Theatre 1601-2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) 219.

the habitus of the population. The significance of this episode for this research has less to do with the history of the performance than with the effect which it had far beyond the theatre-going public. Despite the constant attention paid by official structures to maintaining the status quo of official discourses, some state structures and institutions became more involved in the process of modernisation than others. In some respects, the national broadcaster played a significant role in introducing gradual changes to the official discourses of the national ethos and in turn to the dominant frameworks of perception through which the body was perceived.

Almost 30 years later an episode of *The Late Late Show* broadcast on RTÉ, in which presenter Gay Byrne demonstrated how to use a condom in order to help prevent the spread of HIV, was to upset Irish society once again. This time the vexatious condom that *was* there contributed to a paradigmatic shift in discourses of the body. This discursive shift marked the emergence of a framework that merged scientific findings with more traditional concepts in a new way. Within this frame, the body was increasingly positioned within the organising principles of science. Once again the vexatious was pushing the official frameworks of official discourse in a way that would make space for the recognition of modernisation and its agenda. In the next chapter, the overlap between biological and medicalised discourse as modernising discourses will be considered in relation to the *The Late Late Show* broadcast in more depth. In relation to the current discussion, the didactic role of the national broadcaster as a concrete and an abstract institution of both the state and the nation's culture must be acknowledged here as one that sought to promote the use of condoms on medical grounds, and thus move away from the stalemate, of moralistic and traditional discourses that had previously bound ideas of official Ireland so tightly. Ironically, however, it also continued to occupy a role as moral adviser. A similar controversy had occurred during the summer of 1980 when the Irish Medical Association demanded that the Department of Health adopt a defined policy on the use of intrauterine contraceptive devices. The State, Church, professional medical bodies and the public were divided on whether the device in question was an abortifacient or not and whether their use was contrary to the position on abortion set out in the Constitution. While the national broadsheets did not adopt a didactic approach, the reportage of the controversy focused on the split between theological concerns and the scientific analysis of the device's function. Analysis of the

discourses surrounding the device indicates a divisive split between the discussion of issues of sexuality, reproduction and morality.

Examples of that division include the following quote from Eamonn O' Dwyer, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at UCG who is reported to have stated that "While the committee has not stated that the intrauterine contraceptive device is abortifacient, it has to be conceded that whatever prevents the implantation of a fertilised ovum is in effect an abortifacient."³⁴³ This was printed as part of a report on the intrauterine device in the *Irish Independent*, which indicates a proliferation in the use of medical discourse in issues surrounding sexuality and reproduction. On the same day, *The Irish Times*, published an article that emphasises the role of interpretation in the decision-making process surrounding the intrauterine contraceptive device. In furthering this emphasis, the article reproduces a quote from Dr. David Nolan, who is reported to have remarked that "those who hold that pregnancy is a continuous process from the moment of which the sperm fertilises the ovum in the uterine tubes until the time that the delivered bay takes its first breath of air will be able to find justification in the report for their belief that the IUCD is abortifacient."³⁴⁴ The commentary continues to analyse the IUCD as a device that both pro-life camps and pro-abortion camps could interpret to their advantage suggesting that medical language is not simply factual but may be used to support different opinions.

In this sense, traditional dominant trajectories of thought and attitude continued to shape Irish society. However, it is worth noting that what appeared to be a mono-culture based on the close knit ties of community networks in place since the nineteenth century, and the strict codes of recognition that fed into a national ethos and constitution, came under increasing pressure during the 1970s and the 1980s. Large scale movements challenged

343 Moore, Kevin, "Doctors seek ban on birth control device" in *The Irish Independent* 2 June 1980, 7.

344 "But many experts say that the pregnancy does not commence until the blastocyst has successfully implanted itself in the wall of the womb (a process called nidation). There is considerable justification for this argument in the fact that naturally about half of all blastocysts fail to nidate and are shed at the time of the woman's next menstrual period." "Theologically (if the theological argument has to do with the preservation or destruction of souls) this would argue that some form of baptismal ritual should be performed at every menstrual period following intercourse unprotected by effective contraception. Biologically, it argues that the natural starting point for a successful process of pregnancy is nidation rather than contraception." Nowlan, Dr. David, "Medical report examines IUCD's mode of action" in *The Irish Times* 2 June 1980, 5.

the national ethos. One such movement was the Women's Movement, whose growing presence in the 1970s problematised the assumption upon which the national ethos specified that the role of women in society was one best suited to motherhood. Other less significant movements also began to indicate cracks in the constraints of the dominant culture that presented itself as Irishness. Worker protest, for instance, gathered momentum in the late 1970s and culminated in large scale strikes in the 1980s which highlighted the unrest and unhappiness of PAYE workers and the unemployed. Since PAYE workers largely lived in urban areas, worker protest may be read as the voicing of the disquiet of urban inhabitants, thus indirectly challenging the traditional Irish identity as rural and associated with land ownership. Furthermore, demands for the tax credits of individual to be treated on an individual basis were also growing. Largely, these demands came from members of the Women's Movement who wished to bring an end to the conjoining of the finances of married men and women into a single economic unit that erased the independence of both parties.³⁴⁵ Challenges posed to taxation and the use of some medicalised discourse in the discussion of women's bodies fractured the traditional, tightly bound concepts of womanhood in Irish society. Slowly, the concept of the traditional woman was becoming undone and different discursive formations were emerging that gave expression to different types of women. Woman was becoming women just as gradually, a culture that formerly appeared to be a mono-culture was being threatened by elements of resistance that were becoming increasingly vociferous. Ironically, as the categorisation created by state mechanisms appeared to structure the public habitus of the nation-state, demands were placed on those structures to facilitate the differences between individuals. Although the resistance generated as a consequence rarely culminated in any major change, it is certainly indicative of the modes of behaviours and practices, people and entities that existed in parallel with official dominant structures but that had previously gone unacknowledged. Some elements of that resistance also constituted what would become the vexatious, once official structures could no longer contain them. While most of these movements were relatively minor, their development during the 1970s suggests a growing critique of

345 On Wednesday March 1st 1978 *The Irish Times* published three letters on the issue of women and tax units. On the 2nd of March 1978 the same newspaper published three letters on the same issue and on the 3rd it published five letters on women and taxation. During this time the controversy over *The Spike* was being discussed on the front page of each of the national broadsheets. There was also extensive coverage of a controversy caused by TD George Colley who described the demands surrounding the restructuring of the tax system as the demands of "well heeled women" implying that the restructuring was not within the interests of working class women. This controversy had been discussed in the national broadsheets since January 1978. Anon. "One wife in two has a job." *The Irish Times* 3 January 1980, 3, Anon. "Women ignored in the budget" *The Irish Independent* 10 Feb 1978, 10, Anon. "Well heeled agitators 'horrify' Colley" *The Irish Independent* 20 February 1978, 1.

Irish society. The 1980s and the closing decade of the twentieth century would see this critique develop further. The opening up of the print and popular media partially facilitated this critique.

Cinema, one of those forms of popular media that was to partially develop as a critiquing tool of Irish social, political and cultural life. However, cinema production in Ireland did not undergo any major infrastructural growth until the 1980s and even then the number of releases of Irish films per year was minimal. Developments in Irish cinema did not induce any major shift in knowledge. However, it may have introduced the beginnings of a new grammar of cinema and the growth of a visual critique of the assumptions of Irish identity and ethos. A very small group of film makers who emerged in the 1970s represent the flickers of resistance that critiqued Irish society and which would grow into more substantial movements in the 1980s and 1990s. Ruth Barton describes the small group of independent film makers who emerged in the 1970s as one that “sought to establish a new Irish cinematic idiom” that looked at Ireland from “the inside out”.³⁴⁶ The work of experimental film makers such as Bob Quinn, Liam O’Leary, Pat O’Connor and Thaddeus O’Sullivan in the 1970s marks the move, instigated by indigenous film makers, away from traditional romantic representations of Ireland on the cinema screen. Together these film makers created the conditions for the formation of what Lance Pettitt describes as “a nascent national cinema” that was, unlike the cinema in earlier decades, largely unhindered by the assiduous censorship that had been exercised in the past.³⁴⁷ While distribution was limited, cinema as a form of critique was gathering new capacities to analyse the concrete and the cultural framework of the nation-state outside of the official parameters of its ethos.

At this point it is worth noting that the freedom of critique that existed, albeit on a minor scale in Irish cinema in the 1970s, had not always existed. Irish cinema had, since its inception, been subjected to social censorship guided by the strong moral attitudes of individuals who banded together to form local self-censoring organisations. The industry itself assisted this brand of local censorship in order to create a type of cinema

³⁴⁶ Barton, Ruth, *Irish National Cinema* (London: Routledge, 2004) 85.

³⁴⁷ Pettitt, Lance, *Screening Ireland: Film and Television Representation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000) 97.

that appealed to the moral sensibilities of the respectable middle classes and indeed to their disposable income.³⁴⁸ Censorship continued under the 1923 Censorship of Films Act, as well as through the effect that conservative moral thinking had on the screening bills in cinemas across the country. The cinema became a conduit through which middle class respectability and morality could exert its influence. Vigilance societies wielded their influence on cinema, radio, television and print publications until the 1980s. Independent film makers in the 1970s found a way to address the taboo issues that up until then Irish cinema had avoided. In one of the first uncensored creative movements established since the foundation of the State, independent cinema, during the 1970s, set about demythologising the local through a type of film making that did not “revere” “its national history” or “its traditional institutions”.³⁴⁹ Examples include Thaddeus O’Sullivan’s *On a Paving Stone Mounted* (1978), Bob Quinn’s film *Poitín* (1977), Joe Comerford’s *Down the Corner* (1977) and Quinn’s four part documentary *The Family* (1978). A generation of Irish film making that was “distinguished by a level of formal experimentation as much as by its political engagement” was using that experimentalism to challenge tacit conservative Catholic moral thinking in Irish society.³⁵⁰ While they did not execute any radical shifts in thinking they may be regarded as symptomatic of the emergence of the conditions that would facilitate a broader and more influential social critique in the coming decades.

Cinema in Ireland in the 1970s continued to be dominated by the making of feature film such as *Ryan’s Daughter*, which was released at the beginning of the decade, and served as a link with the film making of the 1960s. However, the return of film makers from abroad to begin an independent movement served as a catalyst for the laying of the preliminary foundation of what would eventually become a significant element of cultural life in Ireland and of a healthy film industry. Irish society was experiencing gradual changes that had been building since the 1960s. Eventually, these changes

348 For details on the censorship of early Irish cinema see chapter 5 of Dennis Condon’s *Early Irish Cinema* in which he details the influence of vigilance societies on Dublin cinema and efforts made by the industry to make cinema more appealing to the middle classes. Efforts were also made to ensure that cinema houses were safe places for women and children as they were known for outbreaks of anti-social behaviour. Condon, Dennis, *Early Irish Cinema 1895-1921* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2008) 211-267.

349 Pettitt, Lance, *Screening Ireland: Film and Television Representation* 103.

350 Barton, Ruth, *Irish National Cinema* 87.

would build into much more substantial ones which would develop even further when, in the 1990s, Ireland would become part of a growing global culture. In the 1970s these changes were still in an embryonic state but the new modes of critique and exploration put in place by the experimental film making of that generation in some ways acted as a preview of the public debates on abortion, divorce and sexuality that were to crack open the long sustained tabooed silences with a tumultuous noise in the 1980s.

In the 1970s however, the significant infrastructural changes and the challenges to the dominant social structures that were to take place in the 1980s were still in their embryonic stages. The repetitive transmission of history as a mediated narrative reflected the extent to which cultural and institutional structures were engrained in Irish society.³⁵¹ Challenges to those narratives structures and the dominant framing positions that they perpetuated caused widespread controversy. Reactions to the television drama, *The Spike* demonstrate the moral panic created by representation of young people in a second level school as rebellious. Nude scenes in *The Spike* also highlighted controversy that any deviation from the usual conservative framing of the body in Irish society had the potential to cause. The reaction to *The Spike*, to be analysed in the next chapter, demonstrates how conservative and liberal positions became more compounded in Irish society during the late 1970s. It also points to the conflict that arose from the clash between a slowly emerging modernisation and traditional Ireland. Furthermore, it is indicative of the mobilisation of moral panic in connection with a specific political position, as detailed by McRobbie and Hall. Despite the indicators of change and the relaxation of censorship on both an official and unofficial level, the conservative moral thinking of the first part of the century continued to dominate the official parameters of Irish life. Just as “Catholic social teaching” was deeply engrained in Irish society in 1957, it continued to act as a dominant social bond in the 1970s and 1980s. The structures and institutions established in the nineteenth century still defined the continuum upon which the dominant discourses of cultural, social and political life in Ireland developed, just as the resistance to those seemingly all encompassing discourses continued. The vexatious, however, was as vexing as ever and continued to challenge the conceptualisation of modernisation and modernity that were developing.

351 Ruth Barton offers a discussion of the repetitive transmission of history in Irish culture. Barton, Ruth, *Irish National Cinema* 94-95.

Challenges to the engrained traditions and structures often went unnoticed. However, during the 1970s, and more often and more nosily during the 1980s, the tabooed silences that had grown around normative representations of the idealised body and sexual behaviour in Irish society were being challenged. As with other decades, this resistance was just as necessary and elemental to the structure of Irish society as it had always been. By this I mean that the resistance to the dominant structures, as well the silent unacknowledged behaviours that spill over to become the vexatious, continued to create the zone of opposition that verified the existence and virtuosity of the accepted and dominant discourses of morality and respectability. However, the proliferation of media outlets and the treatment of unofficial discourses meant that there was an increased focus on resistance to the engendered structures of society. Gradually, the engrained structures of historical transmission were being challenged as new voices began to be heard through media outlets.

The voice of the “Other” in Irish society began to inch out of its silent place of liminality and encroach on the spaces that had been dominated by the prevailing ideals of Irishness, and its notions of moral purity that were sustained by an idealised modernisation. In the 1980s, both abortion and divorce remained illegal under the Constitution of the State, indicating that the Constitution remained in line with the conservative Catholic morality that had shaped society. However, the shift of media focus onto these issues intensified the pressure to the enduring traditional structures. The shift of focus prompted discussion of the dominant issues outside of media outlets. This media focus and the increased discussion in the nation’s habitus combined with the demands of social groups such as the Women’s Movement on the confining social, political and cultural structures of the time. Outbursts of the vexatious during the 1970s and 1980s were also intensified by the expansion of the media and the coverage it gave them. Together the pressure of the vexatious, the actions of concerned social groups and the media combined in a way that contributed to the gradual erosion and negotiation of the dominant discourses of traditional Ireland and the discourses of modernisation at work in Irish society.

Arguably, the gradual erosion of traditional discourses and the partial re-negotiation of the ethos of the nation-state were masked by a rise in the perception of atavistic returns and the hardening of conservative positions, causing a pronounced split between the attitudes of the left and the right in Irish society. The divide between left and right is discernible in the representations and discussions of *The Spike*, the divorce and abortion referenda, “The Kerry Babies Case” and the death of Ann Lovett. The representation of gay people, of drug users and sometimes of feminist movements was also affected by the split between the left and right. Adding to this, the appearance of intravenous drug users on the daily news bulletins caused ripples of fear to run through Irish homes wherein intravenous drug users were perceived as a threat to the safety of their children, their homes and their property, thus causing a degree of moral panic and confusion to gather in the gap between the emerging liberalism and traditional conservatism. In 1981 *The Irish Independent* reported that “Drug abuse continues in Ireland. Warnings, explanations and even shocking visual material which ought to put anyone off taking drugs have been used in a campaign which is failing.”³⁵² Indeed, in the *Irish Press*, a widely read conservative newspaper closely aligned with the Fianna Fáil political party, a special report published in 1980 detailed the consequence of young people returning from Britain addicted to heroin.³⁵³ Throughout the report the reader is given the impression that Britain is the source of the Irish drug problem and that while it was mainly an urban problem, all young people are at risk.

The report quotes from an interview held with one Inspector Mullins who describes the drug problem in Ireland as having “originated” in Britain and British medical practices. Mullins details how during the 1960s young people “who had not heard of drugs” moved to Britain from Ireland only to “discover” that they could cheat the health care system into providing them with heroin. The tone of the interview implies that Britain is somehow a space where young, innocent Irish people can easily fall, into not only an amoral life, but also into a physical dependency on heroin. The return of these drug users to Ireland positions Ireland as a morally pure and naive space being contaminated by the immorality of life in Britain. In a sense, the framing of the nation was being filtered through and pitted against its relationship with Britain. What were perceived as

352 Anon, “Drugs Victim” in *The Irish Independent* 12 June 1981, 10.

353 Black, Fergus, “The Inside Report” in *The Irish Press* 23 April 1980, 7.

new, urban problems or contaminations were considered to be in opposition to, not only the idea of Irishness, but also the lived experience of Irishness. For such a perception to continue, and for ideal of Irishness to continue to be supported by the national ethos and habitus, it became necessary to be reject what were considered the more toxic urban problems, along with other unwanted elements of modernisation.

The national narrative required the partial rejection of modernisation. Since Britain was perceived as an agent of toxic modernisation that rejection involved the pitting of ideas of Irishness against what being British was considered to encapsulate. The use and abuse of illicit drugs on a large scale may have been a relatively new phenomena in Ireland. However, some of the more conservative discourses through which it was being discussed were rooted in republican discourses that expressed ideas of Irishness as being vulnerable and susceptible to the immoral influences of the British state and Britishness itself. Rather than addressing issues of urban poverty and exclusion in Ireland, this type of discourse draws on the paradigms of republicanism and emigration that had developed in previous decades. Through these paradigms young Irish people were seen as being morally pure and uncorrupted until they encountered the problems associated with urban life in Britain. The toxicity of drugs both synthesised and derived directly from nature were seen to carry the perceived toxicity associated with urban life and specifically urban life in Britain. Irish drug users were, as a result, positioned within the seemingly atavistic language of cultural memory that rejects the problematic elements of modernisation and modernity. Following from this, drug users were perceived as victims of the broader systems and structures of a separate post industrial society in a way that is reminiscent of attitudes expressed in Irish society towards Britain in earlier decades. The possibility of addressing the dialectic between problems that arise from modernisation and the condition of modernity were, consequently, consigned to the silences beyond the narrative of Irishness. Thus the contamination or intoxication of the body by illicit drugs was seen as a phenomenon that positioned the impure body outside the narrative of Irishness. The impure body of the addict, whose skin was punctured by syringes or whose interior biology was coated and drenched in hedonistic toxins, was one that could only be included as a body soaked in the immorality of another society. Its existence supported the narratives of history that created frames through which the transmission of ideas of Irishness as being pure but vulnerable could be constantly recycled.

In the decades following the 1960s, when drug use in Ireland became more prevalent, it continued to be discussed as a problem that was not only associated with urban poverty but also as one that was beyond the possibility of recognition as an Irish issue in Ireland. In broadcasts that will be analysed in the final chapter, the heroin epidemic in Ireland during the 1980s is structured by narratives of otherness which are framed by their opposition to Irishness and the contaminating factors of Britain, but also by comparisons with Africa and ‘Third World living conditions’.³⁵⁴ Consequently, the moral panic that was generated around drug usage was positioned within a complex weaving of historical geographies and narratives that sought to reject urbanisation and elements of modernisation. In a way, the rejection of elements of modernisation and modernity meant that when those elements surface they could only be addressed through a very limited vocabulary.

Simplistic comparisons were used, such as that between Ballymun in Dublin, a disadvantaged urban area in the grip of a heroin epidemic and the whole of Africa. Little or no differentiation was made between the conditions of emergence in an urban area of high density housing in suburban Dublin and a whole continent. Since certain parts of Africa were being discussed in the media at the time as being in an abject state of famine, the conflation of urban problems in Ireland with “African” problems added further tension to perceptions of urban problems in Ireland. In this sense, the body was being framed by pre-existing narratives of neglect and powerlessness that suggest society and government sees the disadvantaged, urban citizen as a weakness in the national narrative. On the one hand, the presence of impoverished urban citizens suggests modernisation and a rejected element of modernity. On the other hand, by being aligned with Africa urban issues are also being placed in parallel with societies that are seen as less developed. Africa is seen as a place in urgent need, in a state of desperation but whose individual state identities and the identities of individual people are wiped out. Likewise, the needs of individuals in Ballymun are also ignored. Instead, the community of Ballymun is treated as a broken mass reflecting the conditions of modernity elsewhere. Modernity in Ireland is not only rejected but is, in this case,

354 Mulholland, Joe, *Today Tonight 2* RTÉ Archive Reference 97D01611 Recorded on 12/05/1987

deposited in the abstract geography or the mental map of poverty, desperation and neglect of a post-colonial continent.

Recent development in the analysis of modernisation, modernity and Modernism in Ireland as being part of a global network of relations facilitates the consideration of issues such as AIDS as a syndrome that became located in an abstract geography of poverty beyond Ireland but that could not be located with any specificity within the official narrative of Irishness or recognised within the official domains of the national ethos. The dominant definition of modernisation in Ireland has been acknowledged as one that views progress predominantly in material and technological terms that were incompatible with what are seen as traditional ideals.³⁵⁵ Surveys of attitudes towards modernisation suggest that in the narrative of Irish history the concepts of modernisation and being modern have coalesced into one other. Consequent to this coalescence, an attitude formed that seemed to dominate the perception of modernisation as a potentially liberating phenomenon. Considerations of modernisation locate it within a general feeling in Irish society that inferred that, once it was achieved, modernisation would somehow, as Cleary writes, “deliver cultural and psychological release from the purgatorial nightmare of Irish colonial history.”³⁵⁶ In some respects, this perception of modernisation implies that the psychological effects of history became wrapped up in materiality and history itself seems to become a concrete object. The material landscape of history rendered modernisation and the rejection of modernity as a project readable in a concrete reality that became symbolically manifested in the landscape of material wealth. This landscape may also be interpreted through the absence of the markers of some types of modernisation.

Because modernisation became readable through technological advance and material wealth it became bound up with a sense of it as a delayed release and what will be

355 This view of modernisation in Ireland has been critiqued by Conor McCarthy as one that places a faith in technology that is “crudely materialist”. McCarthy, Conor, *Modernisation, Crisis and Culture in Ireland, 1969 – 1992* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000)15.

356 Cleary, Joe, “Modernization and the Aesthetic Ideology” in *Outrageous Fortune* 158.

referred to as nostalgia for the future.³⁵⁷ Here, nostalgia for the future means a desired and anticipated break from both the past and the present facilitated by technological modernisation that would allow a new society to be created in the present. In other words, there existed a constant anticipation for change in the present that was associated with the technological developments associated with economies more deeply embedded in advanced capitalism. In a way, that has given rise to an experience of Modernity as an imagined point at which the slow narrative of history must arrive through material and technological advancement. The conflation of modernity and modernisation in Ireland has, as a result, produced a sense of delayed desire as well as an incomplete and uneven but inevitable and delayed progress. Furthermore, modernity and modernisation in Ireland have become part of a rejected mental landscape where ill-fitting realities are deposited.

Modernisation as a delayed release and a nostalgia for the future influenced the framing of the dominant discourses of the narratives of history as well as contributing to the shaping of the conceptualisation of Irishness. Ironically, some of the cultural and structural elements that became burdened by the weight of a delayed desire for modernisation were present in the nineteenth century radical expressions of modernisation and the failure to recognise them as such contributed to the “Othering” of an emergent modern Ireland in the second half of the twentieth century. The growth of cultural and territorial nationalism, the regularisation of welfare and state structures, and the increased categorisation of people within the state’s bureaucratic system were all typical insignia of the modern nations that emerged across Europe in the nineteenth century. With the rise of each nation there also emerged the prospect of nation-states that advanced their power and control over society by strengthening their networks of power. In this respect it is important to consider Ireland in the nineteenth century from two angles. Firstly, as an emerging modern nation and, secondly, as a nation of contradictions that were to haunt twentieth century Ireland. The poverty gaps that existed between the classes, the management and at times mis-management of the people and the economy, the semi-modernised bureaucracy, and the entwining of Church and state that were to continue into the next century, all find their roots in the

³⁵⁷ See Fredric Jameson for a development of the construction of nostalgia for the present from which the idea nostalgia for the future is developed. Jameson, Fredric, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University press, 1991).

nineteenth century and before. The ghost of nineteenth century modernisation and its contradictions were to reverberate right through the first half of the twentieth century into the 1980s and indeed beyond. As a result one reaction to modernisation was encapsulated in the narratives of rural romanticism, moralism, class respectability and economic stagnation. Indeed, the contradictory elements of these narratives saw ideals of Irishness create frames through which discourses of official Ireland as a traditional nation-state were filtered. While the nation-state is an expression of both modernisation and modernity, borne out of the international changes instigated by the ideas of the Enlightenment, industrialisation and the rise of modern political power, the Irish nation-state was seen as a traditional entity. Its identity was predominantly expressed through official, but traditional discourses, which not only necessitated the rejection of Ireland as a modern nation but also facilitated that rejection. Consequently, the emergence of AIDS, the result of a virus that defied geographical borders and concepts of idealised moral frameworks in Ireland, contributed to the vexing of those frameworks.

While the contradictions that lay in Irish society and its discourse have been discussed for some time, they have not been related to the discourses of the body in the media to any great extent, which is a gap that this research seeks to address. In contextualising the discussion of those contradictions, it is worth noting that early post-colonial debate in Irish literary studies saw critic Declan Kiberd describe Ireland at the end of the nineteenth century as an island that was defined by a “strange mix of backwardness and forwardness everywhere.”³⁵⁸ Kiberd argues that this unique combination gave rise to the experimental literature of Modernism in Ireland. He pinpoints the emergence of a well-educated sector in society as a facilitator to the growth of literary experimentalism suggesting that access to education as a social structure is one of the key elements in creating the conditions for an experimentalism that can challenge and undo the past. If this is the case, then Modernism in Ireland may be directly linked to a chasm created by the establishment of social structures and their differentiated impact on the population, as well as confirming a binding link between the structure of society and the cultural phenomena which that society produces. Ironically then, the structures of the previous century facilitated, in the proceeding century, the re-imagining of the future as a break with tradition, thus carrying the residue of historical links from the past, into a possible future via the present. The paradox of Modernism in Ireland however, is the

358 Kiberd, Declan, *Inventing Ireland: The Literature of the Modern Nation* (London: Jonathon Cape, 1995) 24.

continuation of the dominant discourses and official structures that shaped the frames of the daily lived habitus, despite the clear critique of them by the art and literature of Irish Modernism. The structures of state institutions and official discourses of Irishness combined to cohere networks of thought and habitus into a web of control that appeared to be traditional, but operated in the same anonymous way as modern power.

The significance of official structures and discourses was garnered through time and repetition. Structures put in place by the British state and by organised churches during the nineteenth century, combined with the rise of the Catholic middle class, the trauma of the Great Hunger and the continuous sense of loss that mass emigration visited upon the remaining population and the wider diaspora, created a framework through which various expressions of nationalisms would emerge in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Old and new symbolisms combined to create modes of expression that retained links with the past, facilitated expression in the present, and allowed a structured hope to build around expectations for the future. Thus, the past became an element of the future before it had even occurred. While the gathering of people in support of nationalism made it a very real and tangible movement in society, the symbolism and system of representation that bound it together was invented. The rise in print culture and mass politics contributed to the fabrication of a seemingly pre-existent and homogenous nation, just as investment in infrastructure and institutions attempted to establish a sense of a homogenous state between Britain and Ireland. Along with other commentators, Kiberd views nineteenth century Ireland as a structured colonial “laboratory” from which the Ireland of the Literary and Cultural Revival would emerge as an invented nation whose symbolisms would in some ways clash with perceptions of modernisation.³⁵⁹

The emergence of the discourse surrounding the Irish nation involved a constant oscillation between that “backwardness and forwardness” that would produce the experimentalism of Joyce and Beckett, the satirical critique of Irish identity as backward by Flann O’Brien, the criticism of a constraining and seemingly one dimensional

³⁵⁹ See McDonough, Terrence, *Was Ireland a Colony? Economics, Politics and Culture in Nineteenth Century Ireland* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2005).

Catholic identity by Patrick Kavanagh, Kate O'Brien and Seán Ó' Faoláin, as well as the repetition of a code of representation associated with pastoral Ireland by writers such as Liam O'Flaherty. Overall, the congeries of expression that symbolised and explored that "invented" nation suggest that Irish culture became caught between the growing inertia of a trajectory of thought and symbolism borne out of nineteenth century politics, culture and society and a desire to liberate itself from that inertia through the materiality of modernisation. The ceremony associated with organised religion and the cohering networks that came with the closely knit ties of the Catholic Church were extremely resilient so that the type of secularisation that comes with modernisation occurred in a pattern similar to but not the same as the pattern displayed in other European nations. Rather, the force of ceremony and organisation to frame the dominant modes of perception continued until what Tom Inglis has described as the rise of individualism within Irish Catholicism rather than a complete movement away from religion.³⁶⁰

It is worth noting at this point that the modes through which that liberation could be achieved always existed in parallel with the traditional structure of feeling associated with the transmission of history and the shape of the dominant structures of society. To imply that traditional Ireland and the experimentalism associated with a desire for liberation from the past are incompatible would be to ignore the parallel existence of the past and the undoing capacities of the style and ideas that emerged in the opening decades of the twentieth century. Indeed, in James Joyce's experimental text *Ulysses* a minor scene where the character of Father Conmee sends a child to post a letter exemplifies the use of an everyday occurrence to link the past with the future through experiment. Joyce uses the figure of the Catholic priest to illustrate the significance of his role and the respect that commands within a Dublin community. Characters, whom Father Conmee encounters on his walk, all address him with a level of polite respect, including the group of young boys he meets on Fitzgibbon street in Dublin.

"Father Conmee gave a letter from his breast pocket to master Brunny Lynam and pointed to the red pillarbox at the corner of Fitzgibbon street.

³⁶⁰ Inglis, Tom, "Individualism and Secularisation in Catholic Ireland" in *Contemporary Ireland: A Sociological Map* Ed Sara Sullivan (Dublin: Pluto Press, 2007) 68-70.

...

The boys sixeyed Father Conmee and laughed.

-O, sir.

-Well, let me see if you can post a letter, Father Conmee said.

Master Brunny Lynam ran across the road and put Father Conmee's letter to father provincial into the mouth of the bright red letterbox, Father Conmee smiled and nodded and smiled and walked along Mountjoy square east."³⁶¹

The fate of Father Conmee's letter points to the comfortable co-existence and interaction between the postal system as a structure of the state and the priest as a figure of Irishness and the cultural significance religion played in Irish society. The postal system was established in the nineteenth century and continued to operate under the auspices of the British state until Independence in 1922. Both the red pillarbox and the priest exist as a part of the habitus of the city.³⁶² If as Kiberd writes, Joyce, through his experimentation, "side-stepped the story of Cúchulainn"³⁶³ and the weight of his historical symbolism and hence the past, then Flann O'Brien threw himself wholeheartedly into the experimental satirising of that other legendary figure, Finn, by playing "handball against the wideness of his backside", thus undermining the reverence paid by Irish culture to the mythological past.³⁶⁴ Within the official discourses of the national narrative there was a constant dialogue at work undermining the constructions of the past in the present, indicating that resistance to the structure of the national narrative was always present but did not have the sudden shock effect of outbursts of the vexatious.

Cultural constructions along with the concrete structures of Irish society have been integral to the creation of dominant discourses and the conflicting ones that undermine

³⁶¹Joyce, James, *Ulysses*. With an Introduction by Declan Kiberd (London: Penguin Classics, 2000) 282.

³⁶³ Kiberd, Declan, "Introduction" in *Ulysses* (London: Penguin Classics, 2000) xii.

³⁶⁴ O'Brien, Flann, *At Swim-Two-Birds* (New York: Walker and Company, 1966) 18.

them. Just as evidence of the structural roots of Irish society may be traced through the radical modernisation of the nineteenth century, the roots of cultural representations that supported very specific ideologies in the twentieth century may also be traced back to the previous century. Economic structures have been just as integral to the formation of the official discourses of Irishness throughout both the twentieth and the nineteenth centuries. The economic structures of the Atlantic economy, the colonial empire and the local economy all contributed to the gradual construction of a narrative of Irishness that dominated the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Representations of Ireland that support what Emer Nolan calls, the “economic and cultural core of the autarkic policies of the independent Irish state up to the 1960s”, find their roots in the hefty pastoral novels of the nineteenth century.³⁶⁵ The pastoralism of novels such as Gerald Griffin’s *The Collegians* and Charles J. Kickham’s *Knocknagow* laid the literary foundations of a type of critical literary archive that saw preservation of traditional rural life become “peculiarly important” to Ireland’s “developing nationalist ideology” that “legitimised” twentieth century Irish society and failed to take account of scientific and modern perspectives.³⁶⁶

The experimental texts that emerged in twentieth century Ireland, however, point to the critique of and resistance to the identity encapsulated in the traditionalism, naturalism and pastoralism of the bildungsromance novels and the literature of the Revival. Consequently, Irish modernism is the expression of the experience of modernity that emerges from the cracks in the dominant culture and is, as Paige Reynolds argues, “characterized primarily by conflict, fragmentation, or antagonism”, in a way that challenges the culture of the state and the literary “mutations”³⁶⁷ of Irish history carried forward from the nineteenth century and the Revival.³⁶⁸ In twentieth century Ireland, the desire to become something else, other than a nation-state so tightly bound up with the dominant discourses of naturalism, middle class respectability and conservative

365 Nolan, Emer, *Catholic Emancipations: Irish Fiction from Thomas Moore to James Joyce* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2007) xv.

366 Nolan, Emer, *Catholic Emancipations: Irish Fiction from Thomas Moore to James Joyce* xiv - xv.

367 Nolan, Emer, *Catholic Emancipations* 103.

368 Reynolds, Paige, *Modernism, Drama and the Irish Audience for Irish Spectacle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) 15.

Catholic morality, aligned itself in society with the sympathies of modernisation and in writing with the challenges of experimental Modernism. The failure of the Independent State to modernise the structures of the State until the late 1950s contributed to the confinement of Irish society throughout most of the twentieth century to a chasm between the past and the future so that the present became defined by grief for the losses experienced in the past, the inertia of its symbolism and a desire to become something else.

Considering the fractured nature of the experience of modernisation, and the contradictory conflation of the aspirations people held for modernisation and modernity, it is not surprising that the modes of expression that have emerged from circles of creativity in Irish culture have ranged from the experimental to the pastoral and yet also seemed to become stuck in naturalism in the middle of the twentieth century. An economy that remained stagnant until the 1960s dominated the image of the country as a rural, pastoral one, which in turn contributed to continuation of naturalism and pastoralism. In one sense, blame for the failure of government to support and develop the sciences in Irish society cannot lie solely with government or official state structures.

The economics of the sciences and the experience of the individual researcher were put under severe pressure towards the end of the nineteenth century. Collaborative research became a more important part of science and medicine and this required a greater financial input from both government and the commercial sector. Developments in scientific instruments also required a greater financial input. Financers and the government both turned their attention towards larger wealthier countries that possessed a greater pool of resources from which the sciences could draw.³⁶⁹ Bearing this in mind, the ignored and fractured nature of modernisation and modernity in Ireland is however, also partially responsible for the outbursts of the vexatious that upset the dominant modes of discourse and pointed to a deep underlying resistance to those discourses. If Irish identity was bound in tight nodes of historical representation, idealised official

³⁶⁹ See Sean Lysaght's essay "Science and the Cultural Revival: 1863-1916" in *Science and Society in Ireland: The Social Context of Science and Technology in Ireland 1800-1950* Eds. Peter J. Bowler and Nicholas Whyte (Belfast: The Institute of Irish Studies, The Queen's University Belfast, 1997) 153-167.

discourses and community networks that supported and perpetuated a habitus informed by a conservative moral ethos, then sporadic eruptions of the vexatious posed significant threats to those nodes. They also pointed to the build up of tensions surrounding the containment of the forbidden by the official discourses of Irishness. The vexatious spontaneously burst out through the fractures that could not quite maintain official discourse or the changes that modernisation seemed to suggest, were possible, if not already underway.

Until at least the middle of the twentieth century, concepts of modernisation seemed to be antithetical to the dominant perception of Irish identity that emerged from the curious comingling of Revivalist literature that celebrated Ireland's mythological and pagan past, with a daily habitus that largely seemed to be shaped by the strict principles of conservative Irish Catholicism and an associated respectability. The division of this experience meant that Irishness was viewed through a splintered lens that saw Irish history as a ruptured narrative. However, the sealing and gathering of those splinters into and by a dominant identity created the sense of a homogenous nation. A splintered and divided sense of history remained however, and this splintered perception had more in common with what Seamus Deane argued in 1979 was the perception of nineteenth century emigrants who viewed history as "continuity betrayed".³⁷⁰ Deane argues that Irish literature continued to critique itself through comparison of what went before, which in some respects continues to build on this sense of disruption, difference and lack of continuity, and accounts for the continuity of the past in many aspects of Irish Modernisms. He writes that the "sullen" literature of the thirties, forties and fifties "confronted and absorbed the political and cultural force of Irish Catholicism, sometimes with hostility and sometimes with sympathy, and always with a consciousness of its difference from the preceding generation of Yeats, Synge and Joyce."³⁷¹ The disruption or "betrayed continuity" Deane describes was to Gibbons, and later to Cleary, identified as one of the key characteristics of the Irish experience of modernity.³⁷² The "shock of the new", incurred in the nineteenth century through both modernisation and the social traumas previously mentioned, would continue for

370 Deane, Seamus, "An Example of Tradition" in *The Crane Bag: The Question of Tradition* 3.1 (1979) 42.

371 Deane, Seamus, *Celtic Revivals : Essays in Irish Modern Literature* (Winston-Salem: Wake Forest University Press, 1985) 146.

372 Gibbons, Luke, *Transformations in Irish Culture* (Cork: Cork University Press in association with Field Day, 1996) 6.

generations, only to begin again during the twentieth century jolted Ireland into the distress of modernity.

The “shock of the new” also placed millions of Irish people in direct contact with an international economy, new languages and metropolitan centres that held no resemblance to either their original rural homesteads or even to the port cities through which they had passed on their routes out of Ireland. The lens through which Irish history was to be interpreted was splintered by what seemed to be a sudden disruption of time and societal change, which suggests that in one way modernisation and modernity had already become part of the national habitus. For the national ethos however, extending any degree of recognition to those processes of modernisation or to the conditions of modernity that had already permeated Irish society could not be reconciled with the deeply engrained ideas of naturalism, middle class respectability and the intertwined expectations of Church/State morality. The perception of a splintered national history may also be found in the analysis of urban problems in the Ireland of the 1980s as being similar to an “Africa situation” where nations suffered as a result of neglect, and the ghost of successive failed economic and cultural developments continuing into the present.³⁷³

In recent years, post-colonial analysis of modernisation and modernity has, in Ireland, turned its attentions towards an analysis of the material world and Ireland’s position with global world systems. For all its associations with traditionalism and Ireland’s mythological past neither the Revival, its literature nor nationalism and the influence of Catholicism have managed to create a singular identity that could sustain the distress caused by disruptions of Irish history. Indeed, to even imply awareness of history having been disrupted and/or of either those disruptions or history as they were thought to have occurred, points to the very irony of the history of the island that emerged from the nationalism of the nineteenth century. It implies that there was a pre-determined history that was continuously being disrupted or interrupted by outside forces or unplanned events. The distress caused by these disruptions could be considered part of the modern condition whereby events seemed to disrupt time in a way that is incongruous with the seemingly intended set of events. The results of this distress have

³⁷³Mulholland, Joe, *Today Tonight* RTÉ Archive reference 97D01611 Recorded 12/05/1987.

initiated two positions in the critiques of modernisation and modernity in Irish criticism. Terence Brown for instance, describes the incompatibility of the Irish experience of history with the notion of modernity and modernism as a broadly accepted idea that is unlikely to provoke dissent. At the same time, Brown challenges this idea. In reconsidering the literature of the Revival, the construction of an Irish identity by that literature and the Revival itself Brown concludes that each of these shares in the methodologies employed by the experimentalists of high modernism. To Brown the identification of these methodologies point to the points where nationalism and Modernism meet and facilitate a way of examining the Revival as nationalist and Modernist simultaneously.³⁷⁴ Through this type of analysis or re-assessment an examination of the fractures and meeting points between official and unofficial discourses has become increasingly possible. Perception and the frameworks through which the body is positioned have yielded to the multiplicity of their composition allowing for a multi-faceted analysis. Identity is increasingly analysed as one whose idealisations constituted by a constant state of becoming, transience and the persistence of certain discourses. History, the present, and the perception of both, exist in a constant state of multiplicity and synchronicity. That is, the past and present exist simultaneously. For the purpose of this research the significance of the discussion of this simultaneity lies in the acknowledgement of the complexity of the frame through which discourses of Irishness developed and the capacity of the vexatious to erupt through those frames and to de-stabilise them.

Bearing this in mind, the enduring and influencing capacity of dominant discourses to continue to shape our habitus must also be acknowledged. Historicity and the depth to which the perception of it is embedded in cultural memory and practices also resist new modes of interpretation. Following from this we can ascertain that the emergence of a new culture and the mode of interpretation it may bring to the past can only ever exist in synchronicity with the present and the elements of frames of perception that occupied positions of dominance in the past. To more liberal sectors of society this simultaneity allows certain objects, people, practices and entities to be interpreted as atavistic returns of the past into the present. Instead, the synchronicity of concurrent practices and modes

³⁷⁴Brown, Terence, "Ireland, Modernism and the 1930s" in *Modernism and Ireland: The Poetry of the 1930s* Ed Patricia Coughlan and Alex Davis (Cork: Cork University Press, 1995) 24-43.

of interpretation may be considered as the constant dialogue that is at work in society between power positions that wish to claim the future. Society constantly undermines itself and erodes itself from within. Through this slow process of erosion and attrition the dominant discourses of society yield to the emergent culture and construct something new.

The power of the official structures and the national ethos is worth noting here. Communities are bound by the official concrete and abstract structures of our culture, and while they are continuously being undermined from within, those structures also continue to shape the practices of the present. Despite the scandals detailed by the Ferns Report and the Dublin/Murphy report, the Catholic Church remains a significant element of community networks in Ireland. While weekly church attendance statistics have fallen, the ceremonies associated with regular practice remain significant in Irish society. Furthermore, although the Church has begun a public dialogue on the possibility of withdrawing from its role as one of the main providers of primary education in the Republic, its influence on the official structures of the state continues to exist. Untangling the threads of those official structures of education which have endured since the nineteenth century may prove to be a difficult task, but for the purpose of this research, the significance of their endurance points to the extent that the structures of the past have survived time and have been carried forward, not only into the present, but also it seems likely, will continue into the future.

The historical threads of the past that developed into the binding structures of Catholicism and middle class respectability endured the purpose-driven wave of technological and material modernisation initiated in the 1960s and stretched their connective filaments into the proceeding decades. Despite the self critiquing discourses of resistance, the waves of modernisation and the constant threat of the eruption of the vexatious from its place of unrecognised silence beyond the parameters of recognition set out by the ethos of the nation state, the official ties endured. Engrained practices, structures of community and the dominant frames of perception remained the stalwarts of Irish society. With this in mind, it is significant that in 1980, just four years before the vexatious disturbance of the ‘Kerry Babies Case’, one commentator remarked that Ireland was moving away from, what the *Irish Times* described as, the “moribund age”

of ‘de Valera’s Ireland’.³⁷⁵ With the exception of the 1960s, the preceding decades appeared to lie stark and barren in contrast to the potential suggested by the changes that seemed imminent. While accounts of ‘de Valera’s Ireland’ have been described by one critic as being “overwhelmingly oppressive” recently hoary perceptions of the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s as a sparse era of barren mono-culturalism have been reviewed to include more nuanced accounts of a culture that was in contact with movements outside of Ireland.³⁷⁶ Interaction with those movements spurred the delicate growth of creative, artistic and philosophical modes of expression that glowed with an incandescence that has stretched across the latter half of the last century.³⁷⁷ Moreover, historian Diarmaid Ferriter has written that the term ‘de Valera’s Ireland’ has become “shorthand for all the shortcomings of twentieth-century Ireland”.³⁷⁸ However, the era of de Valera’s government continues to be largely associated with acute poverty, high rates of unemployment and emigration, and an oppressive confessional culture fostered by the “conflation” of Church and state.³⁷⁹

Upon initial consideration, Irish society appeared to be teetering on the brink of change in the early 1970s. The economic boom experienced in the 1960s came about as a result of the re-structuring of the economy carried out under the direction of Taoiseach Seán Lemass and the civil servant T.K. Whitaker. Consequent to the policies put in place by the Lemass government, after 1957 a major shift occurred in which the economy went from one protected by isolationism to one open to attracting foreign investment. The commitment politics had made to a policy of protectionism in the preceding decades made way for a politics that Terence Brown writes, sought “to adapt itself to the prevailing capitalist values of the developed world.”³⁸⁰ New economic policies

375 Annon. “Recent Paperbacks” *The Irish Times* 2 May 1980 8.

376 Cleary, Joe, “Introduction” in *Outrageous Fortunes: Capital and Culture in Modern Ireland* Field Day Files 1 Series Eds. Seamus Deane and Breandán Mac Suibhne (Dublin: Field Day Publications, 2006) 7.

377 See Fallon, Brian, *An Age of Innocence: Irish Culture 1930-1960* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1999).

378 Ferriter, Diarmaid, *Judging Dev: A Reassessment of the Life and Legacy of Eamon de Valera* (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2007) 4.

379 O Brien, Eugene, “‘The boat that moved’: The Catholic Church, Conflations and the Need for Critique” in *The Dublin/Murphy Report: A Watershed for Irish Catholicism?* Edited by John Littleton and Eamon Maher (Dublin: The Columba Press, 2010) 92.

380 Brown, Terence, *Ireland: A Social and Cultural History 1922-2002* (London: Harper Perennial, 2004) 203.

stimulated a fresh set of cultural and social goals that contributed to the loosening of structures that had bound life in Ireland so tightly to nationalist and conservative Catholic agendas. Ireland was to become a place of change and for some of material success in which the oppressive class, structural and cultural constraints of the past would be left behind. Under such conditions, the model of liberal modernisation that was being recommended implied an alleviation of the pressured containment that had, in the past, forced certain elements of society into the space of the vexatious.

Just as self-definition is sought through language, so too, is the identity of “modern” and “traditional” Ireland.³⁸¹ The malleable nature of language however, means that a complete or final definition of either “modern” or “traditional” Ireland may never be fully achieved. Since both are defined through language and as “modern Ireland” has never been fully formulated in line with the usual markers of modernity and modernisation, we may contend that neither “modern” nor “traditional” Ireland have ever fully existed. Rather elements of both have existed simultaneously. Over two centuries, Ireland has been becoming modern, albeit at a gradual and a measured pace. This process of becoming modern existed in parallel to and in interaction with “traditional” Ireland. Both modes interacted with each other through measures of improvement introduced by governments and through interaction with local and international markets. The regularisation of interaction between the public and the government created the foundations of the bureaucratic state, its institutions and the banking system. The culture, in which institutions became an integral element of the structure of the new state after 1922, also emerged from those nineteenth century foundations. In this respect, the beginnings of the modern state and how our cultural interaction with it were laid long before the structural and economic changes in the latter half of the twentieth century that seemed to mark a move into modernity. Furthermore, there is ample evidence to suggest that Ireland was involved with the processes of modernisation that were occurring elsewhere.

381 Kiberd, Declan, *Inventing Ireland. The Literature of the Modern Nation* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1995) 11. Kiberd makes this statement in reference to the construction of an Irish identity through the use of the English language by the “lords of the language”, the colonial power.

Participation in this wider process of modernisation is significant for a number of reasons. Firstly, interaction with other cultures and economies contributed to the development of trade as well as the spread of ideas. Indeed, during the 1950s when Irish Catholicism and the economy seemed to be at their most stagnant, emigrants continued to put Irish society in contact with new economic ideas, new concepts of materialism and cultural ideas.³⁸² Since emigration had been a prominent feature of Irish society throughout the nineteenth and most of the twentieth-century, it is fair to surmise that the change it brought to the process of modernisation in Ireland was both consistent and ongoing. Secondly, while in the past the impact of Irish involvement with broader economies was not considered with the attention it has received in recent studies of Irish culture, that interaction has had a significant impact on the development of the historical narrative of Irishness. That same involvement has in turn contributed to the dominant frameworks of official discourses of Irishness and has influenced the positioning of the body and the perception of it within those discourses.

By considering Ireland within the parameters of an Atlantic economy and the political and cultural framework of change that transformed Europe after the French Revolution, it is possible to see Ireland, in some respects, as a colony that interacted with multiple frameworks of powers and not as one that related, simply, to its colonial centre.³⁸³ In this way, Ireland may be considered as a territory, later as a nation, and more recently as a nation-state in interaction with the global movement of capital that characterised the modernisation of western economies and their accompanying life styles. Ireland's position within and interaction with global systems of power and capitalist movements of finance is a complex one that brought certain aspects of the population into the sphere of modernisation. It is this partial participation of the population with the process of modernisation that was to contribute to the formation of the official discourses of Irishness and which was also to assist in the creation of material aspirations associated with modernisation and increasing consumerism. In many respects, this process was at work as far back as the beginning of the nineteenth century. For example, the economic

382 See Louise Fuller *Irish Catholicism Since 1950* for further development of this point.

383 See Cleary, Joe, "Irish Studies, Colonial Questions: Locating Ireland in the Colonial World" in *Outrageous Fortunes: Capital and Culture in Modern Ireland* 11-35 and Cleary, Joe, "Amongst Empires: A Short History of Ireland and Empire Studies in International Context" in *Éire-Ireland: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Irish Studies* 42.1&2 (Spring/Summer 2007) 11-58.

boom prompted by a surge in exports to Europe during the Napoleonic wars prompted the re-building of many of the “Big Houses” that had been destroyed during periods of unrest in the eighteenth century.

The boom itself was later, as Ó Gráda writes “put down to political factors”.³⁸⁴ However, during the three decades at the end of the eighteenth century “agricultural output and rents undoubtedly rose, traditional industries such as provisioning, brewing, and distilling prospered, and the new techniques of the Industrial Revolution also made inroads.”³⁸⁵ To add to this, the Irish economy and agricultural practices benefited from the buoyancy of the British market. The boom that brought about the re-building of the “Big Houses” indicates that only certain sectors of society were benefiting from the boom and that the inequalities at the center of the Irish economy remained the same. Those inequalities remained at least partially intact until the economic boom of the 1960s brought an economic resurgence to previously deprived areas of urban and rural Ireland. However, the nineteenth century boom itself is also an example of the direct effect of the movement of capital from major centres of power to the periphery in a way that reversed the usual perception of the periphery as being dependent on the center for economic sustainability. The result of that boom was then translated directly into the local economy. The local economy however, was a site of contradiction. Despite the influx of profit, the rural peasantry continued to live in hovels described in the *Dublin University Magazine* as “a concentration of all that is filthy and inconvenient”.³⁸⁶ The shared residency with domesticated farm animals and peasants’ tiny plots of land unexposed to the techniques of the agricultural revolution, suggested a society that had been, only partially, exposed to the process of modernisation and the cultural memory of failed modernisation that persisted as part of the romantic pastoralism of late nineteenth and twentieth century Ireland.

384 Ó Gráda, Cormac, *Ireland: A New Economic History 1780 -1939* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994) 4-5.

385 O Gráda, Cormac, *Ireland: A New Economic History 1780 -1939* 4-5.

386 Anonymous, “Ireland in 1834: Review of Inglis’ Journey in Ireland” in *The Dublin University Magazine* V.XXXV (1835) 2.

At the same time, archaeological evidence unearthed in Roscommon suggests that some tenant farmers in Ireland were beginning to imitate the traditions of the Anglo-Irish in both farming methods and lifestyle. Not only that but archaeological evidence found at the site paints an image of the larger tenant farmer as a participant in both local domestic markets as well as import markets. The site in Roscommon excavated by Charles E. Orser Jr. was the former holding of the Nary family on the Mahon Strokestown Park estate.³⁸⁷ The Nary family cabins, excavated between 1998 and 2002,³⁸⁸ show evidence of “creeping improvement” and the imitation of the life style of bigger farmers and large Anglo-Irish landowners.³⁸⁹ Many items found at the site had been mass-produced and their sister replicas found as far away as Newfoundland and Iowa suggesting the participation of Irish traders in the expanding global markets of the nineteenth century. In addition, there were also over 100 earthenware vessels that were “undoubtedly imported from England” between 1810 and 1836 found at the site.³⁹⁰ At the core of these inconsistencies lies the terrible contradictory inequalities that would

387 The Nary’s were evicted from their farm in 1848 as a result of the withholding of rent and their participation in a rent strike. Their farm in the town land of Ballykilcline was approximately 12 hectares in size making them one of the largest tenant farmers on the Strokestown Park House Estate. The estate had been under lease by the Anglo-Irish Mahons until 1842 when their contract was terminated and Her Majesty’s Commission of Woods, Forests, Land Revenues, Works and Building took over the running of Strokestown Park House and its lands that had become swamped in debt as a result of the lengthy rent strike.

388 Orser Jr., Charles E., “An Archaeology of a Famine Era Eviction” in *New Hibernia Review* 9.1 (2005) 45-58.

389 Orser Jr., Charles E., “Symbolic Violence, Resistance and the Vectors of Improvement in Early Nineteenth Century Ireland” in *World Archaeology* 37.3 Historical Archaeology (2005) 402.

390 The use of these vessels in the division of dining into stages is indicative of a deviation from the traditional single pot cooking of rural Irish society and a degree of movement towards the dining habits of the landed gentry. Orser Jr., Charles E., “Symbolic Violence, Resistance and the Vectors of Improvement in Early Nineteenth Century Ireland” 398-400. Orser documents further evidence of improvement at the site of the Murray farm also on the Strokestown Park Estate. Orser, Jr. Charles E., “Of Dishes and Drains: An archaeological Perspective on Irish Rural Life in the Famine Era” in *New Hibernia Review* 1(1)1997.120-135. The Murray farm located in the town land of Gorttoose had been leased from the Mahons from at least the early nineteenth century. The Murrays had then subdivided the leased land into smaller tenancies that were let to 33 other families. In May 1847 35 families including the Murray’s subtenants were evicted from their tenancies at Gorttoose. Most of these families were resettled in America. The Murrays were not evicted however and archaeological evidence shows the foundations of a stone farmhouse built in 1850 that the Murray descendants continued to occupy for some generations afterwards. Evidence of drainage dating from the same period of construction was also found on the Murray farm. A number of these drains had collapsed however the French drains constructed in 1850 were intact at the time of the excavation in 1997. French drains were considered a “boon to agriculture” in the nineteenth century as they did not collapse like the design of their predecessors did. Orser, Jr. Charles E., “Of Dishes and Drains: An archaeological Perspective on Irish Rural Life in the Famine Era” in *New Hibernia Review* 1(1)1997.130. The Murrays were no longer the middle men between their tenants and the landlord and their modernisation of agriculture is symptomatic of their new positions. In the 18th century many landlords were more like “wholesalers” and “therefore cared or knew very little about the circumstances of individual farms or town lands.” Ó Gráda, Cormac, *Ireland: A New Economic History 1780-1939* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994) 30. The Murrays were part of the group of large middle class Catholic farmers that emerged in nineteenth century Ireland and were to maintain their status and power Irish in society well into the late twentieth century

bring about the collapse of the local economy in the 1840s, that would in turn bring the “shock of the new” associated with the condition of modernity into the lives of the peasantry.³⁹¹

It could be argued that the term “shock of the new” supports the claim of the existence of Irish modernity too conveniently. After all, Ireland had experienced massive loss of life as a result of famine in the eighteenth century. Furthermore, acute food shortages that threatened to become famines, punctuated the first half of the nineteenth century. Ó Gráda’s claim that “The Irish were better fed, better heated healthier and perhaps even happier” than their European counterparts during the eighteenth and early nineteenth century complicates the claim even further.³⁹² During this period, the landscape was being carved by the straight-lined intersections of canal and railway lines, and banking facilities were being established everywhere, except in the more industrialised northern section of the island. Indeed, in the 1850s, the area in Kerry where the first infant that was part of “The Kerry Babies Case” was washed up in the 1980s, was also the site for the laying down of a telegraph line by Cyrus Field and the Commercial Cable Company that linked Europe with communications in America. Both communications and the movement of capital were opening Ireland up to a world beyond itself and beyond its colonial center. Ó Gráda and Mokyr write as both capital and labour were free to move between Britain and Ireland, the two countries shared a common currency and Ireland “shared” in British economic cycles.³⁹³ Britain’s increased industrialisation placed demands for increased agricultural production on the Irish economy, which indirectly, increased the need for banking and other bureaucratic systems created by market demands and the movement of capital. In this respect, Ireland could not avoid participating in certain aspects of the process of modernisation and of a broader network of financial and material relations.

The contradictions that the participation in and partial modernisation of the economy brought contributed to the intensification of social division and, consequently, the

391 Cleary, Joe, “Introduction” in *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Irish Culture* 7.

392 Ó Gráda, Cormac, *Ireland: A New Economic History 1780 -1939* 23.

393 Mokyr, Joel and Cormac Ó Gráda, “Poor and Getting Poorer? Living Standards in Ireland before the Famine” in *The Economic History Review, New Series* 41.2 (1988) 209.

experience of exclusion and alienation characteristic of modernity. The intensification of this social division was not fully alleviated by self-government. The mass movement of the impoverished rural population to urban areas and abroad also brought the modern and, what was deemed the traditional, into contact with each other. Indeed, in the nineteenth century the intense perpetuation of class division and the divorcement of the labouring classes from the land as a result of mass evictions caused homelessness and social dislocation. Both were “a major source of distress and death”³⁹⁴ that was widely documented at the time. One commentator in *The Dublin Review* referred to the “myriads of ejected tenantry who are known to be ... perishing on the bogs and highways of Ireland”,³⁹⁵ which resulted in the widespread break-up of the family unit, further trauma and alienation. Added to widespread general poverty and depravation and the forced migration of millions, it has been argued that the dreadful tremors caused by the Great Famine could be symptomatic of a country experiencing modernisation before its time.³⁹⁶ Gibbons and Cleary argue that the “shock of the new” mentioned in chapter one, which is associated with modernity, had arrived in Ireland much earlier than mass technological, cultural or economic change. It seems that while Ireland’s history is “enigmatically at odds with the standard vectors of modernisation that Western European core countries apparently exemplify”, it certainly has experienced difference aspects of the modern, as well as of the condition of modernity, at different points in its history.³⁹⁷

Adding to the “shock of the new” in the nineteenth century was the growing demands being placed on both the legal system and the economy by the rise of the middle class Catholic farmer. The rise of the middle class farmer who improved his land and seemed to participate in processes of modernisation held an ironic position in Irish society. On the one hand, they seemed to represent advancement while on the other hand, the large middle class farmer was bound by the expectations of his class and the emerging vision

394 Kinealy, Christine, *The Great Irish Famine: Impact, Ideology and Rebellion* (Hampshire: Palgrave, 2002) 44.

395 Anon, “State and Prospects of Ireland: Agrarian Disturbances in Ireland, Produced by Falls in Prices” in *The Dublin Review* 1.11 (1836) 285.

396 Gibbons, Luke, “Introduction” in *Transformations in Irish Culture* 6.

397 Cleary, Joe, “Introduction” in *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Irish Culture* 7.9.

of the Irish state in what Emer Nolan terms, an “idyllic Catholic pastoral landscape”.³⁹⁸ Moves towards complete modernisation clashed with such images of Ireland and, while participation in European markets increased, so too did the similarities between Ireland and other states involved in the capitalism of the western world. Despite this growing similarity, the preservation of traditional rural life became “peculiarly important” to Ireland’s “developing nationalist ideology” that involved an ignoring of scientific and modern perspective of Ireland.³⁹⁹ Ironically, after 1801 Irish participation in broader British and European markets had the detrimental effect of turning the island into, what Tom Garvin describes as a “monocrop economy”, whereby Ireland became a “huge cattle ranch, condemned to import virtually all manufactured goods from the bigger and industrialised economy next door.”⁴⁰⁰ Ireland became completely dependent on one type of agricultural production and on the cycle of the British and European markets. Furthermore, the inequalities of the nineteenth century economy had not been fully alleviated by the Land Wars, the Land Acts or indeed by Independence thus ensuring the contradictory elements of the Irish economy fostered an idealisation of a pastoral vision that suggested Ireland had, somehow, avoided all elements of modernisation and modernity. While on the surface Ireland appeared traditional, in reality the island was participating in a broader, modernised economy and as a result was vulnerable to its changes.

Despite this ideal pastoral vision, it is evident that Ireland, over two centuries, had gradually become modern. The movement of capital and our dependency on other economies continued well beyond the nineteenth century and was, in fact, an integral part of the debates surrounding our acceptance into the EEC. In an article entitled “What do we tell Europe?” published in *The Irish Times* in 1963, political commentator Michael Viney writes that the discussions that then Taoiseach Seán Lemass was set to have with the EEC were dependent on a very delicate balance. Viney remarks that “If, in order to achieve full membership, he (Lemass) puts too bold and self sufficient a face on our economy he may surrender any chance of E.E.C indulgence towards our aid to

398 Nolan, Emer, *Catholic Emancipations: Irish Fiction from Thomas Moore to James Joyce* xv.

399 Nolan, Emer, *Catholic Emancipations: Irish Fiction from Thomas Moore to James Joyce* xiv.

400 Garvin, Tom, *Judging Lemass: The Measure of the Man* (Dublin: Royal Irish Economy, 2009) 125.

industry.”⁴⁰¹ The Irish economy, it seems, was balanced on a delicate point between proving that it was both robust and self sufficient but not so independent that it did not require the grants that the EEC had to offer or the advantages a structured participation could offer. Another article by the same author, “Image and Mirage”, published after the American President Kennedy paid a visit to Ireland, attests to this sensitive position in trying to manage Irish identity, the perception of Ireland abroad and the reality of our economy. In “Image and Mirage”, Viney writes that “Ireland is not yet in a position to feel that any publicity is good publicity, and we are right to be sensitive to what is written about us. Quite aside from our international diplomatic status or our hopes for the tourist industry, overseas publicity will colour the attitudes of those who deal with us economically and this, for the moment, matters vitally.”⁴⁰² In Ireland, as Tom Garvin argues, “political culture had traditionally linked political sovereignty with cultural and economic recovery” and this was expressed through an obsession with symbolism.⁴⁰³ Consequently, political independence became intertwined with economic independence in a way that contributed to the policies of isolationism of the 1930s and indeed the symbolic significance of economic independence. Those policies however, simply served to illustrate the extent to which the Irish economy was dependent on the modernised British market which, in a twist of modern economics, had created a type of market reification that isolated Ireland from its source of manufacturing supplies.

By the 1970s, parts of Ireland encountered the modern through technology and material change while, simultaneously, emigration and acceptance into the EEC brought the nation to a world that was becoming increasingly globalised. However, the oil crisis in the late 1970s complicated this process once again. The oil crisis “ground”, what Conor McCarthy describes as, the “Republic’s punitive” modernisation”, to “a halt” and the economy slipped into an acute and lengthy recession.⁴⁰⁴ The modernisation process seemed to be suspended. Moreover, Ireland as a nation-state, retained many of the hall marks of a traditional society making a transition into early modernisation. In the

401 Viney, Michael, “What do we tell Europe?” in *The Irish Times* April 11 1963, 8.

402 Viney, Michael, “Image and Mirage: This was Ireland, was it?” in *The Irish Times* July 8 1963, 7.

403 Garvin, Tom, *News From A New Republic: Ireland in the 1950s* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 2010) 35.

404 McCarthy, Conor, *Modernisation, Crisis and Culture in Ireland, 1969-1992* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000) 14.

nineteenth century, Europe had experienced a rise in literacy and the use of the vernacular in publications in a way that contributed to a growth of nationalism and an awareness of the differences between nations. While World War One highlighted the conflict between nations, World War Two and the Holocaust shifted the emphasis from the necessity of the recognition of nations to the need for co-operation and equality across Europe. In Ireland however, territorial and militant nationalism continued to define the Republic and its relationship with its neighbours, particularly from the 1960s onwards.

To add to this, in contrast to Ernest Gellner's analysis of the role of culture as the bonding factor in industrial and post industrialised society, in Ireland, both social structure and culture worked together as the cogent force that maintained the frameworks of identity that accommodated the ideals of Irish identity and nationalism alike.⁴⁰⁵ The role of territorial and militant nationalism certainly defined cultural, social and political life on the island throughout the 1970s and 1980s. In addition, levels of religiosity and belief remained high in Ireland. By 1989 the percentage of those attending Confession had fallen to 11 percent. However Mass attendance remained high and the Irish Catholic population continued to observe religious ceremony and to mark births, deaths and ceremonies with religious rites.⁴⁰⁶ Indeed according to the EVS (European Values Survey) in 1981, 87 percent of Catholics attended Mass once a week or more. This declined by just 2 percent over the decade, although by 1999 it had decreased to 65 percent.⁴⁰⁷

The fact that Mass attendance remained high suggests that the Church as a structured organisation remained an important part of Irish culture and society. Furthermore, the structures of the Church persisted as a cohering factor of some significance in relation to the persistence of community networks established in post Famine Ireland. The

405 Gellner, Ernest, "The Sacred and the National" in *Encounters with Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994) 63.

406 Nic Ghoilla Phádraig, Máire, "The Power of the Catholic Church in the Republic of Ireland", *Irish Society: Sociological Perspectives* Ed . Clancy, Patrick et al (Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, 1995) 597.

407 All statistics quoted from Cassidy, E. G. "Modernity and Religion in Ireland: 1980-2000" in Cassidy, E. G. ed. *Measuring Ireland: Discerning Belief and Value* (Dublin: Veritas, 2002) 26.

continued centrality of the Church in Irish society served to prolong the type of “imagined community” Benedict Anderson describes in his discussion of nationalism as a “sociological organism, moving calendrically through homogenous, empty time”.⁴⁰⁸ Jim Maclaughlin argues that the role of the intelligentsia in the maintenance and enforcement of an ideal of culture and nation was pivotal in Ireland.⁴⁰⁹ Since the structures of care and education in the Republic were predominantly controlled by the state in conjunction with religious orders, ideals of both the religious sacred and the nation as being sacred were passed on from one generation to the next in a similar and repetitive way. The inheritance of these ideals and the ceremony through which they were passed on ensured that the structures, originally established in the nineteenth century, maintained their status in Irish society. Partial modernisation, coupled with the constraining poverty of the 1930s and 1940s, created the circumstances through which the power of the Catholic Church, also established in the nineteenth century, could become so closely aligned with the state, so much so that the impact of that alignment remains evident in the twenty first century and continues to influence the official discourses of Irishness that positioned the body within specific frames of perception within Irish culture and society.

Ironically, while modernisation and improvement assisted in the gradual fabrication of Ireland or in its invention, as Declan Kiberd describes it, modernisation also became the rejected element of Irish identity.⁴¹⁰ In other words, the construction of Irish identity rejected, on an ongoing basis, suggestions of modernisation in Ireland. For instance, during the period between the foundation of the state and the 1960s, the image of Ireland as a “traditional” society was managed, through censorship and the constant reinforcement of discourse, to ensure the appearance of status quo. High rates of emigration continued after the foundation of the Free State guaranteeing that there was a constant movement of people mostly, out of the country, and ideas being exchanged through news, letters and by returning emigrants. Indeed, Clair Wills documents the mass movement of people back into Ireland from Britain at the beginning of World War

408 Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* Revised Edition (London: Verso, 2006) 26.

409 Maclaughlin, James, *Re-Imagining the Nation* 24.

410 Kiberd, Declan, *Inventing Ireland: The Literature of the Modern Nation* (London: Jonathon Cape, 1995).

Two. According to Wills, women and children rushed to return to Ireland and a confusion over conscription laws prompted hordes of young men who had been working in Britain to return, largely, to their rural villages and farms.⁴¹¹ Suddenly, thousands of now unemployed young men and women returned to Ireland seeking escape from what would become one of the distinguishing events of modernity in Europe: World War Two. Modernisation and exposure to the condition of modernity did occur but not at the same rate as the rest of Europe. However, the management of Irish identity continued in a way that suggested modernisation was not a significant element of Irish society. Along with the partial rejection of modernisation, censorship and identity management meant that behaviour, individuals and events considered incongruous to that idealised identity became consigned to the space of the vexatious. In some ways, this rejection contributed to the rate at which modernisation occurred but it did not prevent it occurring completely. In the late 1950s and 1960s when policies encouraging modernisation were embraced, the type of modernisation being advocated was an economic, technological and material one.

At the same time, the conditions that facilitated the rejection of modernisation had already been established prior to 1922. Governments after 1922, but particularly after de Valera's election as Taoiseach, placed particular stress on these conditions creating a nuanced version of Irish identity that justified the synthesis of Church and State institutions. During the increasingly industrialised nineteenth century, the impact of economic activity upon nations, their class structures and the affiliation of those structures with religious thinking was being felt across Europe. Indeed, Max Weber argues that the rise and decline of institutions of religion is linked to the ownership of capital and to changes in the ownership of that capital.⁴¹² In Ireland however, the ownership of land and capital did not induce quite the same change on institutional religion as it did in Europe. One reason for this may be the absence of the major industrial and technological change that occurred in Europe. While class structures in Ireland had experienced incremental shifts as a result of the Catholic Emancipation Act, and the gradual restructuring of land ownership, class structures did not undergo the

411 Wills, Clair, *That Neutral Island: A Cultural History of Ireland During the Second World War* (London: Faber and Faber, 2007) 48-50.

412 Weber, Max, "From Max Weber" Eds HH Gerth and C Wright Mills (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946) 267-87 in Robertson, Roland, *The Sociology of Religion: Selected Readings* (Suffolk: Penguin Books, 1971) 19-20.

monumental shift or increase in fluidity between the classes brought about by industrialisation and technological advancement elsewhere.

In Ireland the structures of identity, institutions and organised religion became very closely aligned. Emigration also played an important role in siphoning away young men and women who may have challenged the emerging structures and identity. In the absence of class fluidity and the limitations imposed by geographical position, the aspirations of the growing Catholic middle class, so closely affiliated with politics, became the goal of the rural poor and the working classes.⁴¹³ While elsewhere shifts in capital induced movement away from institutional religion, in Ireland it served to consolidate participation in religious ceremonies and conjoined the official realm of the sacred with class division, power and wealth. Ireland did not necessarily become any more or less religious and it is certainly impossible to ascertain whether the changes of the nineteenth century impacted upon peoples' faith to any degree. However, in contrast to much of the rest of Europe, the idea of Ireland as a nation became increasingly bound up with official Catholicism, rather than shifting towards secularisation, thereby making the modernist project in Ireland not only incomplete but also different from the type of modernisation and modernity being experienced in Europe. The community networks, their culture and their discourses established by the Church-State structures that reach back into the nineteenth century were set to endure modernisation and in some ways they quelled the negative expectations people had of the experience of modernity.

At this point it is worth noting however, that expectation of and a desire for economic modernisation dominated discussion about the future of Irish society. Indeed, a Free Trade Agreement between Britain and Ireland was negotiated in 1965 and after repeated attempts, in 1973 Ireland was accepted as a member of the E.E.C. This acceptance was to have long term implications for the Irish economy, its infrastructure and the modernisation of society. The political and institutional structures established under the auspices of nineteenth century British utilitarianism and civic nationalism, as well as the culture that developed around those structures, were also faced with the challenge of

⁴¹³ Elements of Durkheim's and Weber's reflections on religion offer, when combined, a position from which the impact of institutional religion in Ireland in the nineteenth century may be understood.

operating in conjunction with the governments of the other member states of the E.E.C. In addition, the emergence of a generation of young people with a higher level of education and expectations than previous generations, meant that the effects of free secondary school education, first introduced in the 1960s, were beginning to be felt across most sectors of society.

Furthermore, despite being made up of many constituent organisations, during the 1970s the Women's Movement became a somewhat structured and effective organisation whose protests and demands for equality gathered momentum to become a significantly charged political and social force. Indeed, Joe Cleary argues that the coincidence of the rise of second-wave feminism and modernisation theories in Ireland in the 1960s and 1970s “share a structure of feeling in which contemporary Ireland is viewed as a ‘traditional’ society now undergoing an exhilarating liberation from the past.”⁴¹⁴ There can be little doubt that, certain elements of the ethos propagated by the idealised “traditional” identity of the nation-state were experiencing significant challenges that were presented under the guise of modernisation. In short, the role of women in society was being transformed, the special position afforded to the Catholic Church was being questioned and admission into the E.E.C. initiated some long term structural and economic change. Upon broaching the 1980s, both the culture and the structures that had endured and contained for so long seemed about to be transformed and consequently, the dominant frames of perception seemed to be on the verge of a destabilising challenge.

A radical re-shaping of the dominant frames of perception was not to come to fruition immediately however, as the “exhilarating liberation from the past”, suggested by the “different constitutive elements of the modernising, neo-liberal orthodoxy”, did not come about, at least not in the 1980s.⁴¹⁵ Change certainly did occur. However, it was not spread consistently or evenly through Irish society. Social and cultural structures were certainly expanding and class difference was being intensified. The perceived effects of

414 Cleary, Joe, “Introduction” in *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Irish Culture* Eds. by Joe Cleary and Claire Connolly (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 16.

415 Cronin, Michael, Gibbons, Luke & Peadar Kirby “Introduction” in *Reinventing Ireland: Culture, Economy and the Global Economy* (London: Pluto Press, 2002) 7.

free second level education were illustrated at the time by a light hearted cartoon published in *The Phoenix* in 1983.⁴¹⁶ The cartoon is anchored by the satirical quip, ‘I blame free education’ which is spoken by one elderly gentleman to another. The reaction is spurred by graffiti on a wall which reads ‘Arvoir Beauvoir’, ‘Picasso was a ponce’ and ‘Stockhausen stinks’. This rather tongue-in-cheek response indicates the rise of a socially and culturally aware youth, who were conscious of movements that began outside of Ireland, whilst simultaneously perhaps, critiquing the quality of free education. It may also be pointing to the emergence of an elitist critique, by members of the upper classes, of those from working class backgrounds who were availing of free education, often through the Vocational School System, for the first time. In any case, opportunities for social mobility were enhanced by the rise in the standard of education or probably would have been, had Ireland not been experiencing a rise in unemployment, as well as in emigration. At this point in the early 1980s, Irish society was in a transitional phase whereby the number of inherited work opportunities was diminished as a result of a need for modernisation in Irish agriculture and indigenous industry, while simultaneously, a dependence on trans-national corporations (TNCs) was growing.

The increasingly well educated workforce found themselves competing against each other in a volatile labour market, whose dependence on TNCs was to eventually give rise to the economic ‘black hole’ of the mid nineteen eighties.⁴¹⁷ As well as choosing to emigrate, the well educated, young workforce found themselves joining swathes of other unemployed people in welfare offices. Increasing social and cultural pressure was being placed on the structures of Irish society as mounting frustration and boredom added to this pressure. The television program *The Spike*, produced by Noel O’Brian for

416 Matthews, Tom. “I blame Free Education” *The Phoenix*. Vol 1 (11), 1983, 4.

417 O’Hearn, D. “Global Restructuring and the Irish Political Economy” in *Sociological Perspectives*. Ed. Clancy, P (et al). Dublin, Institute of Public Administration, 1995, 90-131. This ‘black hole’ refers to the ‘huge outward flow of capital’ as referred to by O’Hearn on page 99. As a result there is great disparity between the GDP (economic output) in the late seventies and eighties and the GNP (which indicates the level of economic welfare). This ‘black hole’ siphoned much of the economic output generated away from the GNP in efforts to pay national debt. It was also taken out of the country by the TNCs operating in Ireland at the time. Overall this hindered the growth and maintenance of employment opportunities and ensured that those employed were subjected to high taxes. Consequently, employment fell, emigration rose and the economic welfare of those employed in both the working class and professional classes did not reflect the level of Irish economic output. High taxes were to give rise to further protest in the 1980s when workers took to the streets to campaign against taxation.

RTÉ in 1977, which will be analysed in the next chapter, points to the intensification of class division in Irish society in the 1970s and 1980s. It also creates a narrative around the frustrations of the young people who were caught in a seemingly endless, cycle of poverty and emigration, and the stagnancy of the political and institutional structures that were acting as an aged and creaking framework that could no longer meet the needs of a changed society.⁴¹⁸ Indeed, the failure of institutions in Ireland to achieve their aim bears testimony to the claim made by Girvin referred to in chapter one, that the regularisation set out by institutionalisation was only ever achieved on a formal level. While this is partially true, it may also be said that the official regularisation and categorisation of people also created a sector of society that could not be fully contained by official structures. Political and institutional structures, which had contributed to the creation of vexatious entities, were adjusting only slightly to the intensification of stratification and to the cultural negotiation that was at work.

In retrospect, it may be more accurate to say that the representation of that change projected an impression of the transformation of Irish society into one breaking away from the containing architecture that had grown over the previous century and a half. The repetitive disciplining and shaping of the people by a nation-state defined by its interactions with the Church, and by inherited historical conditions, had created a system of relations that permeated all aspects of Irish life. Such a deeply-rooted system was expressed through both physical and intangible structures of society as a system that appeared to be both robust and enduring. The suggested potential of change and the incremental changes that were introduced pressurised this system in a way that may actually have placed vexatious entities under a more intense lens than ever before. This alone however, was not enough to transform Irish society. Just as the existent system of relations had been formed over a long period of time, it would also take some time before a new system of relations would emerge that could gradually absorb the dominant one into it.

In the meantime, the outcome of the divorce and abortion referenda in the 1980s allowed the conservative Catholic right to show its enduring strength in, what one set of

⁴¹⁸ O Brian, Noel, *The Spike* (RTÉ: 1977) RTÉ archive reference LX3885.

commentators describe as a “backlash”, against the modern project in Ireland.⁴¹⁹ In actuality however, the dialectic that had developed in Irish society between the vexatious and structures of control that appeared to be enduring, were undergoing a significant shift in the 1980s. In the following chapter an analysis of *The Spike* will explore discourses of the body, sexuality and the processes at work that were creating a poor, social “Other” through institutional frameworks. This “Other” are highlighted as vexatious entities in Irish society that were constantly threatening to burst out of the social space to which they had been assigned by the nation’s architecture. Troubling, problematic bodies however were not confined to this social “Other”. Vexatious bodies were surfacing at the edges of Irish society throughout the 1980s as the case studies presented in the ensuing two chapters will show.

419 Cronin, Michael, Gibbons, Luke & Peadar Kirby “Introduction” 7.

Chapter Five

Offensive Bodies in *The Spike* (1978)

By continuing to present material achronologically this chapter considers how entrenched behaviours and attitudes persisted in Ireland alongside modernisation. Analysis of material points to the contradictions encapsulated in this persistence which led to what is presented in some media outlets as an atavistic haunting of modern Ireland by religious ideas of the sacred. This spectral tension was compounded by the growth in media outlets which provided channels through which problematic bodies could be considered and through which divergent voices, including that of the Women's Movement, could counteract traditional expectations of behaviour and codified registers of power. Despite the growth in media outlets however, entrenched attitudes continued to garner power in Irish society. In analysing the controversial television drama, *The Spike*, this chapter considers how the momentum of complaint that surrounded the drama forced its removal from programming. Further analysis also points to the dismissal by some sectors of Irish society of growing urban problems which were highlighted in *The Spike* and of the growing pressures these problems were placing on official structures and on discourses of the body. These problems included issues surrounding unemployment, drug use, sexuality and morality. Failure to contain these problems through the usual social mechanisms point to the growth of a set of social conditions which had the potential to disturb, upset and vex traditional structures.

This chapter will focus on the controversial 1978 RTÉ television drama *The Spike*. Here, *The Spike* will be analysed as a text that epitomises the clash between conservative and liberal discourses of morality, class respectability and secularisation during the late 1970s and 1980s. As a text *The Spike* also creates a focus for the analysis of the generation of moral panic in the media surrounding issues of the body in the late 1970s; there was extensive media coverage of the reactions to this television drama at the time. *The Spike* and the reaction to it highlight the tensions that surrounded issues of modernisation in Ireland. The space of the body became a site where many of these tensions were played out and this may be traced through *The Spike* and other media forms of the time. This chapter will trace those tensions through an analysis of media representation.

Contemporaneous to the “backlash” against the “modern project” was the emergence of a more diverse type of representation enabled by changes in the print media. Facilitated

by a proliferation in media publications and radio channels, change became visible through a more pluralistic type of media representation.⁴²⁰ The print media facilitated the emergence of the “Other” into mainstream popular culture. In some respects this pluralism may be considered change in itself, however, it may be more accurate to consider the changes such pluralism brought about to be more transformative in the long term, than in the immediate years. In any case, consequent to these more pluralistic modes of representation, the media in Ireland began to reflect the multi-faceted structure of identity more broadly and more often. Youth and popular culture found its voice through an increased number of popular magazines and pirate radio stations that began to flourish in urban areas. Throughout the 1970s, a more diverse range of voices found opportunities to express their opinions in a way that contributed to the development of the questioning of the idea of a singular Irish conservative Catholic identity. To many commentators it seemed that within the pages of many emerging publications in popular culture, sexual and cultural revolutions were changing the face of Irish society.⁴²¹

Certainly the frames within which the body and sexuality were being discussed were changing and were moving away from the frames of perception that had dominated their representation in the earlier part of the century. A number of articles published in the realm of popular culture attest to that change and suggested that the oppressive attitude towards sex and sexuality, honed by idealisation of Irish identity and the “conflation” of church and state was, gradually, being undermined. Indeed, some of the coverage of the abortion referenda in the popular publications of the time represent the “backlash” of the conservative Catholic right as a media event or spectacle. Protests from within conservative politics are represented atavistically as though the popular media was witnessing a return from the past and is voyeuristically presenting that return to its

420 See Morash, Christopher, *A History of the Media in Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) 182.

421 An edition of *Magill* in 1978 featured a special article on the sexual revolution in Ireland entitled ‘The Sexual Explosion’. A “special survey” supporting claims of this explosion revealed that “A clear majority of young Dublin women believe that extra-marital sex is permissible”. Anon. “The Sexual Explosion” *Magill* 1.7 (1978) 10 The cover of the magazine reads “Adultery Irish Style “and shows a picture of a naked man and woman, entangled in each other and about to kiss. The article accompanying this photo is titled ‘Sodom and Begorah’. The article portrays an Ireland “represented not in fields, villages or firesides but at the throbbing discos and singles pubs throughout the country, where young men go to “score” and married men chance “a bit on the side” Anon. “Sodom and Begorah” *Magill* 1.7 (1978) 12. Almost ten years later in 1987 Pat Ingolsby, poet and television personality published a poem in *In Dublin* on the promiscuous nature of people in night clubs in Dublin and the nature of adultery suggesting that some of the issues surrounding sexuality in Ireland remained important news items. Ingolsby, Pat. “Up and down the Strip”. *In Dublin* 276 (1987) 12.

readership. Where earlier the representation of Irish society by the media was in line with dominant ideas of Irishness, it seems that the popular media of the 1970s and 1980s focused on the destabilisation of that established narrative.

What appeared as atavistic to some also suggests an anticipated clash between liberalism and conservatism. Emphasis placed by the popular media suggested that the voice of conservative lay Catholics belonged to a traditional Ireland that was now being left behind. The popular media of the late 1970s and 1980s frequently portrays traditional Ireland as being stringently conservative and as being out of touch with the people. Liberalism, in the meantime, is portrayed not only as the true contemporary voice of the people but is also presented as the voice of the future. The outcome of divorce and abortion referenda in the 1980s however, would suggest that the portrayal of liberalism as the dominant discourse was not correct. Despite this, a series of photographs published in *Magill* in 1982 exude this sense of performance. Published in black and white one of these photographs presents a well known street evangelist, “Mad Mary”, on the right hand side of the photograph with her arms thrown upwards and a crucifix in her right hand. The anchor line underneath the photograph is a quotation from activist Julia Vaughan that reads “The issue was clear cut. We didn’t want it [abortion] to go with any other controversial issues”.⁴²² Despite efforts made by activists to ensure the debate on abortion was treated in isolation however, in this photograph there is a clear clash of the representation of activists with the more conservative, outspoken elements of Catholicism in Ireland.

⁴²² Speirs, Derek, “The Issue Was Clear Cut” in *Magill* 5.10 (July 1982) 18.



"This issue was clear cut. We didn't want it to go with any other controversial issues" - Julia Vaughan.

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The huge columns of the GPO to the left of the photograph create a significant historical backdrop for the photograph, in which, the evangelical protests of the elderly lady on the right seem to embody the protests of traditionalism. Significantly, the banner on the right refers to “Irish Aborted Babies”, thus implicating nationality with a specific type of morality that is anti-abortion. A second photograph in the series also refers to “Irish babies” and pits the idea of defenceless, unborn children as the innocent victims of mechanistic English “abortion mills”, implicating morality with nationality even further.⁴²⁴ The sensationalist language used in the banner echoes biblical language. The slogan “The Abortion Mills of England Grind the Bodies of Irish Babies into Blood that Calls out to Heaven for Vengeance” not only assigns a voice to unborn children but also a nationality that seeks “Vengeance” from another intangible entity. In some ways, unborn children are being presented here as vexatious beings that upset the status quo.

423 Speirs, Derek, “The Issue Was Clear Cut” in *Magill* 5.10 (1982) 18.

424 Speirs, Derek, “The Abortion Mills of England Grind Irish Babies into Blood” in *Magill* 5.10 (1982) 23.

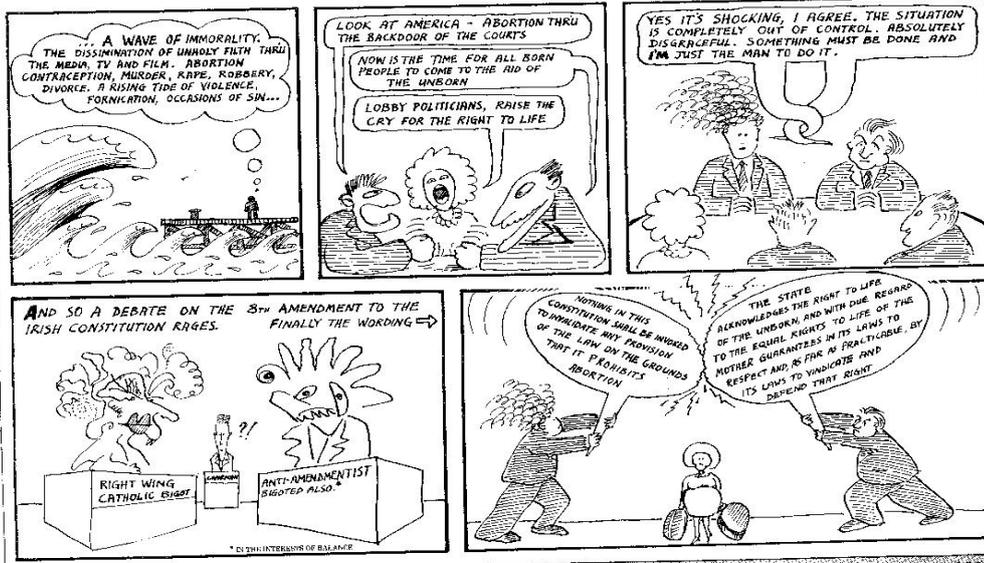


Considering all of these changes in a way that suggests that a cultural, political, social or sexual revolution was taking place may, however, be a gross exaggeration. On one hand these changes would certainly suggest a departure from a traditional type of society that supported the traditional and official structures of state and community ethos and habitus, and that a move into the more secular and fragmented habitus associated with modernity was occurring. On the other hand however, the transformation of Ireland into a modern society that perpetuated a modernist, secularist experience of the world remained incomplete. For instance, a cartoon in *Magill* published in 1982 in which the debate surrounding the wording of the abortion referendum is discussed highlights the stubborn positions that existed in stalemate in Irish political, social and cultural thinking.⁴²⁶

425 Speirs, Derek, "The Abortion Mills of England Grind Irish Babies into Blood" in *Magill* 5.10 (1982) 23

426 Armstrong, Robert, "How Long More Must We Tolerate This Awful Government?" in *Magill* (1983) 21.

How long more must we tolerate this awful Government? BY ROBERT ARMSTRONG



Here the pregnant mother is caught between two conflicting positions illustrating the extent to which structures constructed through language can contain individuals and furthermore how complex issues may sometimes be confronted through a mono-discourse that fails to address social complexities adequately. In this case, the social change that was reflected in the voices that called for a change in the abortion and divorce referenda was being confronted through a lens constructed from the crossing of moral and legal discourse and, as a result, cultural and historical issues remained unaddressed. Failure to confront these cultural and historical issues adequately contributed to a sense of the rise of atavistic discourses and attitudes rather than an acknowledgment of the continuation of modern Ireland in conjunction with traditional networks of shared beliefs. If, as Joe Cleary writes, Ireland has had a “vexed” relationship with modernity, then the 1970s and 1980s saw the continuation of that frustration as the perpetuation of legal and medical discourse plastered over the gaps in social discourse on abortion and other moral issues. In one way, these issues seemed to be discussed only through the language of the extreme conservatism or the extreme liberalism. However, one clear example of the intersection of moral discourse with medicalised language can be found in the discussion of the use of an intrauterine device introduced to women seeking more diverse modes of addressing the issue contraception discussed in the previous chapter.

The uneven change in semantic diversity, when discussing issues concerned with the body that were previously ensconced in moral discourse, suggests that the re-calibration of discourse occurred at a rate that was as incremental and as hesitant as modernisation in Ireland. The failure of official social and cultural relations to acknowledge modernisation and modernity in Irish society in any mode other than in economics and technology, meant that the semantic tools were not immediately or fully available to discuss the body in a way that fully accounted for or reflected the changes in Irish society. Indeed, neither were all sectors of Irish society fully exposed to those semantic changes. Certainly, within certain sectors of the media there is a noticeable change in the treatment of the body. However, in official discourses the body had remained wrapped in traditional discourses that were only cracked open sporadically by occurrences of the vexatious and over time by their gradual erosion. Despite the serendipitous and undermining occurrences of the vexatious however, the official discourses of Irish social, political and cultural life continued to be defined by occlusions. Previously these occlusions had maintained a sense of an official traditional Ireland. However, the organised movements of the 1970s and 1980s pressurised the cracks between official Ireland and occluded Ireland in a way that began to produce change at the level of discourse. Changes at the level of discourse created a space through which the body could be perceived and discussed through a more diverse metaphorical lens, and these changes began to facilitate the gradual re-positioning of the body within a more kaleidoscopic lens than the monoglotic one that had formerly structured ideals of traditional and official Ireland.

The restructuring of the prism of language through which ideas of Irishness were constructed was, and continues to be, a graduated process. The presence of the Catholic Church as a shaping apparatus, and the continuation of its influence, mean that although Ireland had experienced certain aspects of modernisation, in many respects discourse at the level of habitus as well as official discourse did not adapt to fully articulate the experience of modernisation. Ireland had encountered the modern materially and technologically, rather than through a modernist experience that encapsulated all of Irish society.⁴²⁷ Since shifts of change occurred in Ireland incrementally modern Ireland can only be viewed as an incomplete project or as one that has produced a version of

⁴²⁷ Cleary, Joe, "Introduction" in *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Irish Culture* 2.

modernisation and modernity. That version is, in some ways, specific to the local and the various relationships the local has with a global set of relations. In this sense the local and the national have been a significant motivating and structuring force in modernising Ireland.

A proliferation in print media outlets in the 1970s would seem to have undermined the traditional trajectories associated with the construction of local and national relations. As the diversification of media outlets and the space they created for the critique of official discourses of Irishness facilitated the expression of voices that were previously contained by the official discourses of Irishness, the identities associated with that network of local and global relations would also seem to have been undermined.⁴²⁸ From the outset, the proliferation of media outlets, and the diversification of opinion that it enabled, would seem to suggest the fragmentation of the traditional voice, the gradual disintegration of grass roots community structures upon which that traditional voice relied, as well as the weakening of the national institutional structures that contained that same voice.⁴²⁹ Nevertheless, the persistent surfacing of vexatious entities attests to the continuation of a dominating paradigm of ideas in Irish identity was considered an expression of the moral purity of the nation. In other words, the diversification of media outlets may have facilitated the expression of ideas and opinions that were previously contained by the dominant discourse. However, this does not necessarily mean that the dominating discourse was undermined by that diversification as much as it may have initially appeared.⁴³⁰

428 An article in *Hotpress* in 1978 points to the mobilisation of media outlets by the Women's Movement. Anon, "Feminist Radio on ARD" in *Hotpress* 1.24 (1978) 25. The same issue also carries an advertisement for the Irish Gay Rights Movement suggesting that the rise in popular magazines aimed at young people was creating a space through which more diverse voices could reach an audience. Anon, "Irish Gay Rights Movement" in *Hotpress* 1.24 (1978) 5.

429 Popular magazines such as *Magill* offered space for advertisements of products and services such as The Well Woman Centre in Dublin which members of Catholic groups protested against. The Centre was being advertised for "women who want to choose" pointing to the constraints traditional Ireland was seen to have placed on individual freedoms. Anon, "Dublin Well Woman Centre" in *Magill* 1.6 (1978) 61. In 1978 *Hotpress* also carried an article applauding the opening of the Well Woman Centre in Dublin. Sheehy, Mairin, "Stay Well Woman" in *Hotpress* 1.18 (1978) 12. *Hotpress* also carried a series of articles in an issue published in 1980 on Gay Pride Week. Anon, "Proud to be Gay" in *Hotpress* 4.1 (1980) 1; Anon, "The Word is Out: Biography of the Hirschfield Centre" in *Hotpress* 4.1 (1980) 13.

430 A program broadcast by RTÉ on the life of a gay couple in 1980 suggests that the national broadcaster was gradually opening up space through which divergent voices could be heard. However, this program was not followed by any similar type of program. RTÉ, *Glad to be Gay: The Week in Politics RTÉ Archive* 01-40-02-02

One instance of the survival of discourses that contributed to the construction of an idealised Irish identity was the shaping of a neutralised sexuality at both local and national level that in turn fed into the code of representation through which a conservative national ethos informed by Catholicism was expressed. Much of the representation that surrounded that neutralisation was either directly or indirectly associated with the representation of the Virgin Mary and the traditional family as the basic unit of society. Through representation, the maternal body⁴³¹ was “idealized out of..., ... representation” creating a neutral image that could represent the nation and the nation-state.⁴³² If the gendering of the nation brought the image of Ireland in line with a contained, non-sexualised vision of the Virgin Mary, then it also brought sex, sexuality and sexual reproduction under the remit of state management.

The role of the church, its institutions and their interaction with both the state and its institutions was vital in the maintenance of a forceful discourse that neutralised both male and female sexuality and defined it in relation to a dual sex model that compounded the perceived social differences between male and female.⁴³³ Thomas Laquer sets out the dual sex model as the replacement for the “one sex model” that had dominated the ancient world. The dual sex model takes anatomical differences into account and divides bodies into one of two genders. This division is steeped in a history of power relations that defines gender tension. The official discourses of the nation and state could work within the space created by a neutralised sexuality to uphold official discourses of the family and sexuality. Until the latter decades of the 20th century, the focus of this dual sex model in Ireland was the containment of reproduction, and the

431 Throughout the 19th century Ireland had been represented as female. During the 20th century these representations became related more specifically to the Catholic iconography devoted to the Virgin Mary. In her analysis of “Race, Sex and Nation” Geraldine Meaney suggests that the development of a stoic Mariology in Ireland contributed to the neutralisation of a type of radicalised female that had taken part in the violent political movements of the 1916 rising, the War of Independence and the Civil War.

432 Meaney, Geraldine, “Virgin Mother Ireland” in *Gender, Ireland and Cultural Change: Race, Sex and Nation* (New York: Routledge, 2010) 7.

433 Thomas Laquer graphs the emergence of a dual sex model that defines gender and sexuality in relation to the anatomy and sexual reproduction alone. Laquer, Thomas, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (London: Harvard University Press, 1990).

perceived sinfulness of flesh and its capacity to tempt. While the proliferation of media sites increased in the 1970s and 1980s so too did the number of challenges to this apparently simultaneously neutralised and differentiated sexuality. These challenges were expressed with more vigour and occurred more frequently suggesting the emergence of a more pluralistic society that acknowledged and accommodated what was previously contained by the dominant frames of perception. However, the results of referenda held on abortion and divorce during the 1980s imply that swathes of the electorate continued to support the principles upon which the management of sex, reproduction and marriage in the Republic had been based.

The reaction to referenda results, as well as to vexatious events mentioned such as the “Kerry Babies” case, and the death of teenage mother Ann Lovett during childbirth at a Marian shrine in County Longford, also attest to the cracks in the official discourses of Irishness and the challenges being presented to the dual sex model that privileged the family in Irish society. A cartoon published in the magazine *In Dublin* which accompanied an article by outspoken feminist Nell McCafferty entitled “Countdown to the referendum” suggests that the discussion of the upcoming abortion referendum was dividing perceptions of the body in two.



There is also a suggestion that some of the mystery surrounding the body is being released, and as McCafferty writes in a subsequent article, that the delay surrounding the referendum meant that Ireland was “opening up” and “learning” more about sex. Gradually the layers of moral discourse surrounding sexuality and the body were being

434 Anon, “Countdown to the Referendum” in *In Dublin* 179 (1983) 10.

peeled away and the body was being discussed in what was perceived as more transparent medicalised language.⁴³⁵ By degrees discourse was beginning to adjust to the changes that had occurred in society in a way that facilitated the expansion of the metaphorical lens through which Irishness was constructed and perceived. The position of the body within that metaphorical language was as a result undergoing incremental shifts. Overall however, it seems that language could keep pace with social change. Perhaps it is the apparent contradiction between the actual change in society and suggested liberalism of modernisation that was occurring, albeit it at a gradual pace, and the electorate's resistance to that change which intensified the appearance of the AIDS and other vexatious entities in Irish society in the 1980s.

Prior to the widespread appearance of AIDS in Irish society vexatious occurrences in the late 1970s and the early 1980s demonstrate the role the media and representation played in contributing to the stretching of official discourses of Irishness in a way that facilitated change. One example of this is the treatment of the "Kerry Babies Case" in the early 1980s. Those events illustrate the role of the media in creating the conditions that facilitate the representation of the vexatious.⁴³⁶ Inglis argues that the case itself documents the movement of a society undergoing a sometimes painful transition from conservative Catholic morality to a more independent secularist lifestyle.⁴³⁷ While aspects of the case and its documentation bear Inglis' argument out, it can also be argued that the case indicates a shift in the paradigms of representation facilitated by hegemonic negotiation of traditional paradigms, rather than a pronounced shift towards a secularist life style. Furthermore, the case also suggests the continual influence of the structures that created that vexatious entity in the first place. In some respects, those cultural, political and social structures continued to maintain an invisible hold on moral thinking in Ireland, suggesting that the 'Kerry Babies Case', and its documentation, is representative of the clash of the active re-formation of a residual culture and the emergence of a new one, rather than being indicative of a complete departure from

435 McCafferty, Nell, "Countdown to the Referendum" in *In Dublin* 181 (1983) 10.

436 Inglis, Tom, *Truth, Power and Lies: Irish Society and the Case of the Kerry Babies* (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2003) 12.

437 Inglis, Tom, *Truth, Power and Lies* 3.

traditional society through modernisation or secularisation.⁴³⁸ The role played by the media in the case indicates the capacity of the media to amplify change and of social groups to mobilise the media to present change as a more intense movement than the adjustments that were actually occurring.

Despite the mobilisation of the media there were no reports in the print media about the “Kerry Babies Case” that addressed the issue of the Infanticide Act. The Infanticide Act was one of the first Acts passed by the new Republic of 1949, however, it failed to address the social causes of infanticide which had prevailed in Ireland throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Instead, infanticide became an action considered through the mono-discourse of a medicalised lens only. James Smith argues that the Act made “child murder almost exclusively a woman’s crime.”⁴³⁹ As a “woman’s crime” it was seen through the conjoined lens of social rules and the medicalisation of what was seen as female hysteria and forms of mental illness. By the onset of the 1950s, infanticide was considered a growing problem in Irish society and was one that had seen little letup since the nineteenth century. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, persistent poverty, a growing ethos of social and moral respectability, and the restraining of social behaviour through a confessional culture moulded by the Catholic Church, had all been enforced by the bureaucratic and physical structures of a state that fostered the incremental development of modern power. Each of these factors was integral in creating the stigma attached to infanticide that may have prevented the emergence of a framework that would have made the acknowledgement of infanticide as a crime that came about as a result of social injustice and/or mental illness acceptable.

It may also be argued that the unacknowledged role of social injustice may have been one of the factors that created the motivational forces that drove some women to a point of despair whereby they committed infanticide. Society’s failure to acknowledge the problems and stigmatisation that single mothers faced induced the perpetuation of the

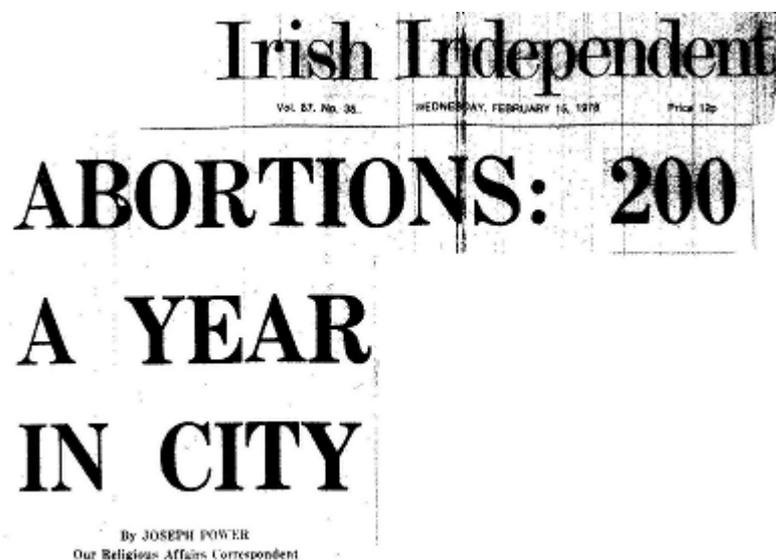
438 For further development of the ideas of residual and emergent culture see Williams, Raymond, *Problems in Materialism and Culture* (London: Verso, 1980).

439 Smith, James, *Ireland’s Magdalen Laundries and the Nation’s Architecture of Containment* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007) 59.

problem and a deepening silence around issues of stigmatisation. Moreover, society's failure to engage with the problematic structures of official Ireland continued to produce the silent conditions where the vexatious lay waiting to erupt. As a result the concealment of infanticide became a way of preventing the attachment of stigmatisation that would complicate ideals of motherhood and the representation of women. Illegal abortions, concealed pregnancies and the abandonment of children also stem from the same motivations and the pressures caused by discourses of containment that systematically consigned certain practices to unacknowledged sites of silence and taboo. Modern power, however, operates through silent surveillance and in Ireland it was enforced, if not engendered, by the confessional culture. Like the corpse that was found on a County Kerry beach in the 1980s however, infanticide does not erase the vexatious once it has become visible in the physical world. The silent invisibility of the vexatious only exists in the space beyond language. Once the vexatious bursts out of this space it leaves that silent non-place and is exposed as a public spectacle. Despite the identity of the child murderer remaining a mystery, the act of infanticide that brought the infant's corpse to a beach in Kerry came to be associated with the discourse of single mothers in Ireland, indicating the difficulties dominant social discourse has adapting to the vexatious. Rather, dominant discourses force the vexatious to adjust through slight hegemonic negotiations making the accommodation of the vexatious a long and difficult process.

In relation to infanticide, the opportunity to erase biological connections, familial and social responsibility was one that mothers, distressed by a burden with which they were unable to cope, continued to take in the Independent state. Few realistic alternatives existed for women who found themselves single, pregnant and without the means to support a family. Illegal abortionists certainly existed and women often travelled to Britain to avail of abortion services that, while illegal until 1967, were more readily available. An analysis of media representation however shows that a spate of articles in the late 1970s indicates a growing awareness of those illegal services. Media representation was opening the issue of abortion in both Britain and Ireland up. However, it did this in a way that implied awareness that abortion was a common occurrence within Irish society if not in Ireland. Abortion was being discussed in the

media more openly and more frequently.⁴⁴⁰ It also received extensive coverage within forums of popular culture, by activists inside and outside of universities. Eventually the perpetuation of discourse and increased social and political pressure from groups that challenged the dominance of the national ethos was to bring the issue of abortion to a referendum and later again to a second referendum.



441

440 Gillespie, Elgy "Ireland's Hidden Exports" in *In Dublin* 111 (1980) 6.

Although, coverage of the first constitutional referendum in Ireland did not grow until 1983, there is a marked increase in articles concerning abortion in the years preceding 1983 indicating a growing interest in constitutional rights.

The *Irish Independent* carried an article in 1978 detailing the number of back street abortions taking place in Dublin. Annon. "Abortions: 200 a year in city." *Irish Independent* 15 February 1978,1.

Women availing of back street abortions are portrayed as desperate in this article. They resort to 'abortion godmothers'. Many of the details of the article are sourced from a Fr. Kiely of Rotunda Girls Aid who gives an image of the church as understanding but against abortion. He comments that girls who go to England for abortions "nearly always have nervous a nervous breakdown when they realise what has happened" suggests that the desperation the girls experience leaves them unable to make a sound decision on the fate of their pregnancy.

The following day *The Independent* printed an article supporting the claims of the previous day.

Annon. "Abortion: Estimate of 200 a year supported." *Irish Independent* 20 February 1978, 28.

The end of the month saw another article being published by the *Irish Independent* on abortion.

Martin, Janet "Abortion generates much heat but no light." *Irish Independent* 27 February 1978, 8.

Martin comments that 'abortion remains a horror story'. She also refers to the change in constitution in Britain and to speculation that British MPs were influenced by the book 'Babies for Burning' when they were making their decisions.

The *Irish Times* ran a series of articles in 1980 which reported on voting held by the Students Union groups of respective colleges and Universities.

Murphy, Christina. "UCD students vote on abortion." *The Irish Times* 17 January 1980, 1.

Annon. "UCD poll rejects abortion." *Irish Times* 17 January 1980, 4.

Annon. "Murder, abortion link rejected" *Irish Times* 21 January 1980, 1.

441 Power, Joseph, "Abortions: 200 a Year in City" in *Irish Independent* 10 February 1978, 1.

Other pregnant women were committed to either Magdalen laundries, which continued to operate until the 1990s as homes of asylum from which many would never re-emerge, or into regional County homes that offered committees more flexible entry and exit choices. These women were forced to offer their children up for adoption and rarely had any contact with them ever again. In rare cases women and families defied the social stigma that an unplanned pregnancy brought and raised the baby either alone or with the support of their families. Of course, there were also cases where fathers supported their child or children but they did so as invisible benefactors. However, the overriding cultural memory of unplanned pregnancies in Ireland is directly associated with loss and unnecessary, sometimes lifelong, committal to an asylum. For those who did manage to keep their child, social stigma was typical.

Apart from the threat of committal to an asylum or a containing institution, the threat of social stigmatism provided an effective restraint that allowed women to continue to live within the community but not as part of the community. Furthermore, through the Infanticide Act, the new state, while acknowledging the continuing and growing problem of infanticide, also split a mother's biological body from her mental and emotional state. In failing to acknowledge the role of a male partner or the patriarchal state in contributing to social, cultural, religious factors that culminate in the psychological pressures that instigate infanticide, the Act placed the blame solely on the emotional state or the temporary insanity of the mother. An increased level of naming and categorisation contributed to the perpetuation of discourse that contained the idea of the single mother and mothers who committed infanticide. The Infanticide Act demonstrates the nexus of discourses that combined to support the ethos of the Nation-State and to support the concrete and social networks that had been evolving over the nineteenth and twentieth-centuries and that continued to form community cohesion through containment and taboo and to dominate discourses of the body.

The Infanticide Act of 1949 had been passed with only one objecting vote, that of Maj Vivion de Valera who objected on the grounds that the bill was contrary to his religious beliefs. His declared objection in the Dáil however, also indicated that he voted against the Bill as a sign of resisting the potential liberalisation of morality in Ireland in a

manner that mirrored the trends in “English liberal thought”.⁴⁴² The concept of a specific type of morality being unique to Ireland or England implies the dominance of a monolithic view of both societies that defined one nation as not being the other. This trend of inventive projection is not isolated to 1949. If, as Kiberd argues, “that the English helped to invent Ireland”, then elements of post-colonial Ireland also invented another space called Britain against which the official structures of the Irish nation-state, could be measured.⁴⁴³ As argued elsewhere in this thesis, official Ireland continued to use the perceived lax morality of Britain to enforce the view of official discourses in Ireland as being indicative of the elevated position of the morality of the Irish nation-state as can be seen in relation to commentaries on abortion and divorce on Britain in Irish national broadsheets in the late 1970s and 1980s.⁴⁴⁴ In 1978 *The Irish Independent* published an article entitled “Imprison my husband abortion woman pleads” detailing the story of a woman who won the right to have an abortion against her husband’s wishes. In providing the details of the story the usual privacy afforded to marriage is cracked open. The dubbing of this woman as “abortion woman” suggests the overwhelming of her identity by a proposed action. She became the short-hand for abortion her identity as a person, a wife, mother and woman is erased. Two years later *The Irish Independent* published an article in which a priest was reported to warn that the “abortion trail” to Britain from Ireland was growing.⁴⁴⁵ The crossing of the Irish Sea was a rite of passage for those who could not carry their pregnancies for a variety of reasons. The perceived

442 Dáil Éireann 115, 28 April. 1949 in Smith, James, *Ireland’s Magdalen Laundries and the Nation’s Architecture of Containment* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007) 59

443 Kiberd, Decland, “Introduction” in *Inventing Ireland: The Literature of the Modern Nation* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1995) 1.

444 Anon, “Imprison my husband abortion woman pleads” in *Irish Independent* 6 September 1978, 24.

Blackwell, Annette, “Priest warns on Sexual Trends” in *Irish Independent* 8 April 1984, 9. In this article Blackwell reports that “Family life in Europe is heading for a future of unmitigated disaster of present sexual trends continue according to Dominican priest” She goes on to quote Father Bowe’s saying that “the abortion rate for the six European countries that have legalised abortion is “little short of horrifying” . Anon, “Family planning ‘threat to heritage’” in *The Irish Times* 14 February 1978, 8. In this article it is reported that a speaker at the Mid Western health Board’s conference warned “inside 10 years the black population would be the power of Britain because of the extent to which sterilisation and abortion were being practised by whites”. The speaker, one Mr. Sean Hillery a chemist from County Clare associates abortion here with a racist attitude and Britain. Deegan, Liam, “Congress and Contraception” in *Irish Independent* 7 August 1978, 6. This letter appeared in the Letters to The Editor section of this national broadsheet. The letter quotes the British Health minister Roland Moyle telling the House of Commons that there were 28,917 abortions on girls up to 19 in 1976 in Britain. The number increased in 1977 to 29,765 “this is in a country where contraceptives are freely available” The letter writer goes on to remark that “It is pertinent to ask members of the ICTU executive if they have teenage daughters and if so, have they given a thought to the risk of them becoming victims of the moral decay inherent in the call for free contraceptives”. Anon, “Easier Legal abortions in Britain so numbers rise” in *Irish Independent* 16 August 1978, 3.

445 Anon, “Abortion Trail is Growing Priest Warns” in *Irish Independent* 25 June 1980, 7. This article comments on the perceived rise in the numbers of women travelling to the UK to avail of abortion services.

“growth” in those participating in this passage may have been a result of a growing openness amongst women who would admit to travelling to Britain for an abortion more readily than in previous decades. A rise in educational standards may also have contributed to this perceived growth. More women may have found themselves faced with the choice of being full time single mothers with very little support or remaining within their careers. The shame associated with unplanned pregnancies outside of marriage was still a pressing worry for women in this situation in the late 1970s and 1980s. In the face of exclusion and poverty, the “abortion trail” to Britain offered one solution for women who found themselves in this situation. As a result, Britain continued to be considered as a place that offered services that counteracted the ideals of Irish woman and motherhood as set out in the Constitution and dominant discourses of Irish society.

While media discourses critiqued Ireland’s relationship with Britain it also enforced elements of that relationship through the type of representation it presented to the public. This elevated position was in itself a reason for the “conflation” of church and state which acted as the glue that loaned coherence to the different elements of the Irish nation, thus rendering it the Irish Nation-State. If during colonisation, Ireland was the “other”, the official discourses of post-independence Ireland instigated a process of representation that “other-ed” Britain. Post-Independence Ireland as a place, a nation and as a state, was seen as the antithesis to Britain; Catholic and Gaelic, the Irish nation was considered the pinnacle of the “Gaelic” spirit safely isolated from its opposite, not only by a stretch of water but also by a dominant frame of perception that shaped official discourses of Irishness. It was this dominant frame of perception that compounded the congeries of forbidden acts, attitudes and people that would together become the vexatious. In constant attendance to the maintenance of moral ideals and class respectability, the ethos of the Nation-State enforced itself through the official social, cultural, political and religious habitus of the population. The fortitude of that ethos meant that the cohesion that habitus brought to the Nation-State would not collapse suddenly under the liberal pressures of 1970s and 1980s Ireland but would react and change with those challenges. Indeed the ethos of the Nation-State had grown out of a history of challenges and had, since its initial emergence, grappled with resistant histories. The structures of Irish society remained robust despite ongoing resistance generated by Civil Rights Movement in Northern Ireland, second wave

feminism and the change initiated by entry into the E.C.C. While resistance persisted so too did the traditions of the official national ethos and habitus. It was into this contradictory context that the controversial drama *The Spike* was released.⁴⁴⁶

The Spike is a drama that was broadcast in early 1978. Seven episodes were made, but only five were broadcast however, before *The Spike* was withdrawn from RTÉ's list of programmes. Controversial reaction to the plot and themes of the drama caused considerable protest amongst conservative groups and individuals who expressed their disgust through the national print media. Following a nude scene in episode five, "Night class", the drama was cancelled and the last two episodes, "Requiem for a head" and "It's none of your business, O'Mahony", were never aired. *The Spike* is set in a rundown second level school in which the Principal Mr. O'Mahony struggles to maintain order. The pupils of the school are largely drawn from poor urban backgrounds. Each episode deals with the challenges and issues faced by both the teachers and the students. In episodes one and two we see O'Mahony attempt to bring order to the school by proposing that students attend after school study sessions in order to improve their results in their upcoming Leaving Certificate exams. The school has come under review by the Department of Education because in applying for funding to replace the crumbling buildings with a new school. However, it has come to the Department's attention that the exam results obtained by students of *The Spike* are noticeably lower than in the majority of other schools. Consequently, the Principal tries to put mechanisms in place that will regularise students' results.

However, his attempts are met with resistance from the teachers, students and the local business owners. The teachers of *The Spike* refuse to teach any more than is specified in their contracts; the students refuse to co-operate and the local business owners, who also sit on the school's Board of Management, refuse to allow students time-off from their part time jobs in order to attend the proposed study sessions. Conflict ensues. Principal O'Mahony's home is vandalised and the safety of his family is threatened by the students who also stage a riot. The tension between O'Mahony as the leader of an institution and the local employers leads to O'Mahony being bribed with sex by the

⁴⁴⁶ O' Brian, Noel, "The Horses of Instruction: Part One" in *The Spike* (RTÉ:1977) RTÉ archive reference LX 3855.

assistant to the most powerful businessman in the locality. Eventually he yields to both the bribery and the wishes of the employers.

The main themes of the remaining episodes are briefly summarised here before analysing the drama in detail. The third episode “The Blooding of Miss Finnuane” also focuses on the themes of order, professionalization of the staff and the regularisation of the behaviour of the student body. Like the other episodes however, it also develops the theme of the corruption of the official discourses and structures of society. Episode four, “The Curtin Equation”, builds on this theme by developing a plot line whereby O’Mahony’s daughter enrolls in *The Spike* only to be seduced by her Maths teacher, Phillip Curtin. This episode also deals with the sensitivities shown by Kenneth, the art teacher, to residues of the past that continue to exist in the present. In addition the episode addresses the issue of mental ill health through Kenneth’s nervous breakdown. The following episode, “Night class”, was the final episode broadcast and was the one to receive the most controversial audience reaction. “Night class” addresses issues surrounding married women returning to paid employment, the definition of the ideal woman and different perspectives on nudity.

The first episode of *The Spike* entitled “The Horses of Instruction” sets the scene for the context and themes of the whole drama.⁴⁴⁷ It is set in a rundown school in an unnamed Irish town where the school principal attempts to bring order to the behaviour of both staff and students. Throughout *The Spike* the viewer is reminded of the inability of the tightly bound structures of society to respond to the needs of groups who are excluded from mainstream society and who exist outside of the dominant “field ... of operations”. Each program reverberates with a sense of warning as they depict the serious and urgent nature of urban poverty in Ireland, the rebellious and sometimes destructive tendencies of teenagers from what are now termed disadvantaged areas and the prevalence of broken homes and the corruption that runs through official state structures and business life. In some respects each program is a re-ordering of the dominant discourses of contemporary Irish society in a way that shows the cracks in the dominance of those discourses. The reception of the programme instigated debate in the popular media, the national television and radio stations. The “Letters to the Editor” sections of the majority of the national broadsheets reflected the extent of interest and of the

447 O’Brian, Noel, “The Horses of Instruction: Part One” LX3885.

controversial discussions that surrounded the drama. The reaction to the programme indicates that the gradual re-ordering of the dominant discourses and their systems of signification was not very well received by certain influential groups in Irish society at the time. The representation of the rejected elements of society in *The Spike* aggravated influential conservative groups, such as the League of Decency, who became particularly vocal in their disagreement, thereby suggesting that what may have seemed like atavistic outmoded attitudes were actually the beliefs of a large number of people who participated in networks that continued to act as cohering factors that threaded Irish society into a series of close-knit communities. The ethos and habitus of those communities participated in the construction and maintenance of an official Irish ethos and *vice versa*.

Returning to the analysis of *The Spike* it is worth noting at this point that one of the main themes of the drama is the chaos of a space that is unregulated by official systems and discourses; that is the chaos that exists within a space that lies beyond the reach of official narratives of order, ethos and identity. The first episode of *The Spike* opens with scenes of chaos in a school corridor. In the midst of the chaos a mother pleads with a man, whom we later learn is the school principal Mr. O'Mahony, to allow her daughter to return to school. The tone of the episode is set when the principal declares that her daughter had not been at school for three weeks to which the mother replies, "her Daddy is away", suggesting that the absence of a paternal figure in the family home has had a marked negative effect on her daughter's school attendance. Whether or not the student's behaviour is a result of a reaction to her father's absence the whole episode is defined by the theme of the inconsistent presence of figures of authority and in particular male figures of authority. It seems that on one level, the program is responding to a gap that developed in society where the space of absent or what are seen as ineffective male figures of authority has not been filled by anyone else or any other type of authority. Episode Three is particularly significant in this regard as it plots the maturation and professionalisation of a young female teacher and her transformation into a figure of order and authority at *The Spike*. It can be argued that in this episode social change is beginning to catch up with the disorder of the dilapidated school.

Throughout *The Spike* sexuality and the body are framed by traditional dominant perceptions of a dual sex model in which patriarch and male authority play a central role. The unspoken and unacknowledged corruption of that official and dominant discourse is portrayed throughout the series. Furthermore, the following episode “Horses of Instruction: Part Two” gives an insight into the subversion of Mr. O’ Mahony’s patriarchal role within his family.⁴⁴⁸ His authority as a traditional father figure is undermined when his daughter rebels against him and insists that she go to work in a local shop. O’ Mahony sees this as his daughter’s failure to meet his aspirations for her. To add to this, later in the program O’ Mahony’s wife leaves the family home to return to Cleggan where her parents live. The couple’s home had come under attack from students of *The Spike* who vandalised the front door and garden during the night. While Mrs. O’ Mahony returns to Cleggan out of fear there has also been a breakdown in communication between the couple as O’ Mahony is no longer able to protect his wife and daughter from the threats which his students carry out. In the first episode however, the role of authority in the school itself is the central focus of the program.

The future of the school is threatened by an unexpected examination by a school inspector. Prior to the arrival of the inspector one of the teachers remarks to the school principal that “The tigers of wrath have more wisdom than the horses of instruction.”⁴⁴⁹ Since this statement is offered just as the principal sends the teachers who are both late and drunk back to class after lunch its irony could hardly have escaped the viewers. Attempts made by the principal to both supervise and control his staff set the theme of centralised surveillance and the significance of figures of authority for the whole series. Teachers are supervised, the students are supervised, parents are supervised and the school is supervised by an inspector who is in turn supervised by the Minister for Education. Each controlling and supervising mechanism supports a specific official discourse. Bells ring to announce class and the regulation of the school day through biopolitics. However, throughout each episode cracks in those official mechanisms and discourses are consistently apparent.

448 O Brian, Noel, “Horses of Instruction: Part Two” in *The Spike* (RTÉ: 1977) RTÉ Archive reference LX3868.

449 This line is taken directly from a poem by William Blake indicating the intellectual reflection of this particular teacher.

Despite the intensive levels of surveillance *The Spike* remains defined by chaos and a lack of order and, simultaneously, by the attempts made by official structures and discourses to order that chaotic space. Students who create problems, by committing petty crime in the local area, are contained by the concrete and abstract structures of the state. One such student is threatened by a Garda who visits *The Spike* in search of him. The student, who was the perpetrator of a crime in the locality, is encouraged by the Garda to confess or else he will have to visit the local Garda Barracks. The Garda's aggressive quip "and you know what happens in the barracks" suggests that the student will be subjected to violent force in the barracks if he does not confess straight away indicating that within the official structures of the state there are spaces that accommodate behaviour that is not officially endorsed by state discourses but may be signified in code within those discourses. This level of containment is however, only superficial. As the series develops it continues to shine a light on the official mechanisms, the official role of institutions and discourses of society and often lands on behaviour that illuminates what was largely ignored in Irish society at the time; that is, the social problems associated with urban living and the rejected elements of modernisation which form the core of the themes and issues addressed by *The Spike*. The body is positioned within these themes in a way that points to the conflict and tensions that arise between behaviour, that is recognised as socially acceptable by the official discourses of society, and those which continue to breach the tacit social and cultural rules and eventually erupt as the vexatious. Not only is this point relevant to the series itself but it also applies to the reaction the series provoked in the wider media.

Bio-politics play a central part in the development of the main themes of *The Spike* and discussion of those politics was key to the reaction in the broader media. The significance of *The Spike* for this research lies in its capacity to demonstrate how the official discourses of Irishness and the Nation-State were failing to adapt to the realities and lived experiences of Irish society. Locating the reaction to *The Spike* within the context of the official structures of Irishness and the increasing tension between it and unofficial Ireland also points to the salience of conservative views of the changes and challenges that had been growing throughout the 1970s.⁴⁵⁰ While the type of material

450 In her analysis of *The Spike* in Irish TV and Society Helena Sheehan notes the breath of reaction to the television drama in the Irish media. Sheehan, Helena, *Irish Television Drama: A Society and Its Stories* (Dublin: RTÉ, 1987) Republished in 2004 on CD-Rom.

and technological progress associated with the accelerated patch of modernisation experienced in Ireland during the 1960s seemed to have become stagnant as a result of high unemployment and an economic downturn in the 1970s, the more negative social aspects of modernisation do not seem to have reached a corresponding plateau. Indeed the fallout from the stagnation of the economy caused an intensification of problems like urban poverty and alienation of the individual associated with modernity and modernisation. This intensification was felt more acutely in some areas of the country than others and within some sectors of society than others and consequently a gap developed between the levels of change being experienced by different sectors of society and within different aspects of the national ethos and habitus.

The clash between state surveillance of the education system and the unordered spaces of society that resist regulation, introduces the theme of control and order in the first episode. Amid the chaos of the opening scene the school principle Mr O' Mahony is approached by a suited gentleman who addresses him as "A mhaistir". "A mhaistir", the Gaelic for master, denotes the taxonomic level of respect and formality between the two men as well as the continued links with a language that had been identified as a definer of Irishness and of official state policy. The addresser introduces himself as the "Cigire" or the Inspector sent by the Department of Education to inspect the school on behalf of the Minister for Education. From the outset a clash of discourses suggests a level of discord that is present not simply at the level of semantics but also in the overall frames of perception that have been constructed through the monoglotism of official discourse. Evidence of this discord emerges early in their exchange when the Inspector names the school by its official name "St. Aidan's" while the principal corrects him stating "We call it the Spike" indicating a gap between the codified ethos that led to the school being named after a saint and a movement towards a more secular attitude. It emerges that The Spike is the name given to the school locally indicating a process of re-signification at work within the resistant aspects of the public's habitus. Later in the episode the Mr. O' Mahony refers to the perception of the school as "the town dump" where those who are considered "rif raff" are sent for a second rate, under-resourced education. As an institute of education The Spike is perceived as an underperforming one and as a place where the children of working class parents go to school. The school buildings are dilapidated and the facilities are outmoded. St. Aidan's remains a shell despite an application to centralised state funding for the financial resources to provide a new

school. Worth noting at this point is the inspector's repeated emphasis on the role of the Minister for Education in the allocation of funding for the initialisation of building work indicating to the viewer the extent to which the school and local politics are part of a much broader web of control.

That web of control is defined by the formalities of categorisation, by the language of official discourse and even by the use of the Irish language. Each of these factors contributes to a dominant language and plot frame through which the school is portrayed as a place of chaos that is largely ignored by mainstream society. However, it transpires that The Spike must be brought into line with the normative social expectations. At points tensions within this frame become apparent indicating the failure of the web of control to regulate every aspect of society and, despite the layers of categorisation set out by centralised government, behaviours that resist the expectations of those categories continue to exist. Simultaneously, the dominance of the official discourses of the state have created a space occupied by the "riff-raff" of society who were deposited in a zone beyond recognition and were ignored. However, that "riff-aff" are brought to a point of visibility in society as a result of an application made to centralised government for a new school. The demands for normalisation that application places on The Spike and its attendees mean that representatives of official Ireland come into contact with the staff and students of The Spike. Attempts to create a space that is reflective of the standards set by the official discourses of the state means that the people who occupy the previously ignored space must adapt their behaviours to come in line with the expectations of official discourse. The stringency of the official structures that initially created the space occupied by The Spike is the same stringency that insists The Spike transform its goals and reputation in order to be included and recognised as acceptable by the centralised mechanisms of the state. Transformation and achievement of those goals is flagged by the Inspector as being integral to the awarding of a new school for the students of the Spike which means that the student body and staff of The Spike will be recognised as agents of behavioural uniformity rather than the multiplicities of difference that it exemplifies in its chaotic and unordered state.

The Inspector suggests that the "Failure of 65% of students" to achieve passing grades in their Leaving Certificate examinations is preventing the Minister for Education from

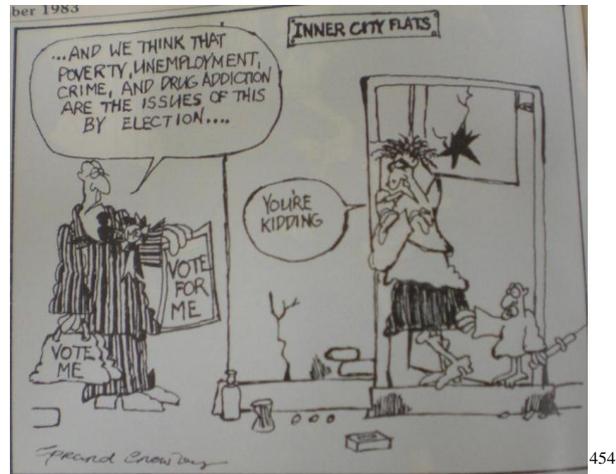
awarding a grant for the building of a new school. It seems that the normalisation of grades in line with the standards of other schools will be rewarded with a new school. However, the extent to which normalisation, categorisation and regularisation have failed the students of St. Aidan's becomes apparent when the principal describes the catchment area as one which promotes "outrageous discrimination" that prevents students from areas perceived as unsuitable from gaining entry into schools with higher levels of academic achievement and better resources. Following from this, the cycle of low grades, high rates of student drop out and local poverty has continued unbroken. Up until this point the urban poverty associated with generations of students of The Spike had been ignored and, as a result, had been allowed to perpetuate. The official social, governmental and political structures had established expectations which could not be met by St. Aidan's and as a result it had become a refuge or concentrated hiding place for the consequences of urban poverty.

Urban, and in particular urban youth poverty, were already a prominent element of contemporaneous news narratives. For instance, *Magill* cited unemployment as the country's "most daunting problem"⁴⁵¹ and in an article entitled, "The Truth about Poverty Trap", *The Irish Independent* reported that statistics available on unemployment in Dublin's inner city in the same year, 1978, showed that "84% of fathers are unemployed", and furthermore, that "66% of the population cannot read or write".⁴⁵² The population referred to here is the population of inner city areas where unemployment remained high and constant. A cartoon printed in *The Phoenix* in 1983 emphasises the extent of the problem and how embedded it had become in the daily lives of many people living in the inner city. The cartoon suggests that by the time urban poverty was being considered as part of a political agenda it had already stunted development and impacted upon everyday life to an acute extent. An issue of *The Phoenix* published in 1984 focuses on divide between urban working class poverty and those in power and which the issue argues was becoming more deeply entrenched in Irish society. The cover of the issue carries the headline "Recession Deepens" while inside a cartoon of politician Garrett Fitzgerald as a satirical leader of the monarchy during the French

451 Anon, "A Nation of Unemployed?" in *Magill* 1.9 (1978) 68.

452 Anon, "The Truth about Poverty Trap" in *The Irish Independent* 20 September 1978,1.

Revolution reads “Let them eat cream!”⁴⁵³ The perpetuation of high unemployment, social problems and a social divide between rich and poor suggest that there was an increasing level of pressure being placed on the official structures that framed the structures of discourse that constructed an idealistic, pastoral identity for Irishness.



The results of urban pressures were youth unemployment, anti-social behaviour and high emigration. While high levels of unemployment and emigration remain in line with aspects of the traditional narrative of Irishness, the type of anti-social behaviour and drug use that was becoming more visible in urban areas was not associated with the framework through which the dominant national ethos of conservative Catholicism and respectability had been filtered. Indeed, the reaction to the changes in social networks, habitus and community structures communicates the sense of unease felt within official Ireland towards what were seen as mainly youth and urban problems.⁴⁵⁵ While he takes particular issue with Punk rock the significance of this speech for this research lies in what Dr. Birch interprets as a rejection of tradition. Indeed in an ironic pointing to the inertia of tradition another cartoon published in *The Phoenix* in nineteen eight three

453 Sutton, Nicholas, “Good Companions” in *The Phoenix* 2.16 (1984) 5.

454 Crowley, Gerard, “Inner City Flats” in *The Phoenix* 1.23 (1983) 10.

455 One example of this may be found in a speech delivered by Dr. Birch, the Bishop of Ossory, who remarked that he was “concerned with the rejection of tradition” in Irish society and the challenges presented by Punk Rock. Dr. Birch described Punk Rock as both “revolting” and “dangerous” and the mentality that accompanied it as one that claimed “unencumbered violence as a right”. Power, Joesph, “Punk Rock revolting, Dangerous – Bishop” in *The Irish Independent* 1 March 1978, 1 Elsewhere in 1978 Seamus Breathnach wrote that the problems associated with youth unemployment were being compounded by their criminalisation. The rise in arrests amongst those under the age of 21 was, he argued, perpetuating the problem. Breathnach, Seamus, “Criminalising the Young” in *The Irish Times* 1 February 1978, 10.

shows a father remark to his young son in relation to his education “And be a good boy or you won’t grow up to be unemployed like everybody else!” thus suggesting that education was in some ways perpetuating the status quo rather than enabling young people to challenge it.⁴⁵⁶ It seems that regulation, order and the implementation of biopolitics⁴⁵⁷ on their own are not enough to raise the grades or overall recognised achievements of a school whose results, the principle says, “have been the same for three generations”. When the Inspector recommends an increased level of order in the school it is met with some scepticism by the school Principal. The Inspector’s testimony that “order is essential for educational endeavour” is received with a guffaw by the Principal suggesting that the resistance to regulation experienced in *The Spike* is not one that will be ordered easily. In this sense *The Spike* appears as an alternative centre of power that can challenge the official discourses and ethos of society. The depiction of an aberrant fictional school, however, was enough to force the discussion of the issues which the episodes raised in the broader media, thus forcing official Ireland to face its own “invisible blind spot”.

The cumulative effect of Irish society facing its “invisible blind spot” was controversial and forced RTÉ to withdraw *The Spike* from programming. The momentum that gathered around *The Spike* was dependent on the significance of the role of the national broadcaster in Irish society at a time when the competition presented by other broadcasters was only available in limited areas of the country and to a limited number of viewers. In this sense, the national broadcaster was an agenda-setting network and as a result drew intense attention from audiences. In the case of *The Spike*, strong audience reaction generated a degree of moral panic around the challenges that the drama presented. In one letter to *The Irish Times*, for instance, the letter writer remarks that the author of *The Spike* had “rocked the nation”.⁴⁵⁸ This negative reaction was largely concentrated within conservative right wing social groups such as the League of Decency whose founder, Mr. J B Murray, was reported to have received the news of the

456 Anon, “Now be a good boy...” in *The Phoenix* 1.24 (1983) 26.

457 Another cartoon in *The Phoenix* points to the irony of regulation and biopolitics and their relationship with social divides. In the 1984 cartoon a well dressed woman observes to one dress in shabbier clothes: “My son joined the FCA”. The second woman replies “Mine joined the vicalintes” to which the wealthier woman replies “Whatever keeps them off the streets at night”. Butler, “Whatever keeps them off the streets at night” in *The Phoenix* 2.22(1984) 14.

458 Morahan, Basil, “That Spike” in *The Irish Times* 3 March 1978, 9.

cancellation of the series “with jubilation”.⁴⁵⁹ However, the series also initiated reactions from individuals in a similar vein to the reaction given by RTÉ’s Controller of Programming Muiris MacCoinghil who “disagreed sharply” with the RTÉ Authority’s⁴⁶⁰ decision to discontinue *The Spike*.⁴⁶¹ In any case, combined, the reaction was enough to force the withdrawal of the program and the redeployment of Muiris MacCoinghil to another post in RTÉ.

In relation to this research a more significant result may be gleaned from the reaction and the controversy that came to surround *The Spike*; in forcing Irish viewers to face the “invisible blind spot” that had been formed by the stringency of official discourses, *The Spike* contributed to the ongoing elements of re-signification at work in undermining the official discourses of Irishness. This in turn contributed to the very gradual restructuring of the dominant frame of perception. To imply that *The Spike* achieved this alone or on any large scale would be to overestimate the significance of the program’s impact. Rather, the script, and the reaction to the drama illuminate the cracks in the official discourses of Irishness which had never been laid bare so blatantly in a fictional way on the national television station before. In analysing the plot of *The Spike*, its portrayal of Irish society and the public reaction, this research is outlining the context for the emergence of the AIDS body as one which materialised from a society where official discourses were constantly under threat from the eruption of the vexatious. In other words, society was threatened by the eruptions of vexatious entities, practices or people that had been created by conservative moral structures that promoted cultural and class respectability that could neither be sustained nor contain all of the different groups and individuals through a monoglotic lens of perception, the observation of a stringent set of rules that governed body politics or through tacit cultural expectations.

459 Walsh, Dick, “RTÉ split as Spike is dropped” in *The Irish Times* 3 March 1978, 6.

460 The RTÉ Authority was set up under the Broadcasting Act 1960 and it served to govern the national public service broadcasting. Decisions within the broadcaster were under the observation of the Broadcasting authority.

461 Walsh, Dick, “RTÉ split as Spike is dropped” in *The Irish Times* 3 March 1978, 6.

The Spike may have induced an extreme reaction from the public that included the official condemnation of the programme by the Limerick County Council.⁴⁶² However, the plot of the programme does not advocate the introduction of extreme change. Indeed, the plot advocates the normalisation of student behaviour through bio-politics. While on the one hand, the programme provides a limning insight into the rejected elements of modernisation and in the later episodes deals with issues surrounding the body, on the other hand, it fails to depart from traditional solutions to the chaos that characterises the school. Indeed, in episode three of *The Spike* entitled “The Bleeding of Miss Finnucane”, the viewers watch the introduction of a new teacher, the eponymous Miss Finnucane, to the school and witness her disciplining of the students through traditional methods. The title of the episode suggests an echo of violent introduction or agricultural processes through which a novice becomes a trained adult. This episode will be referred to again later but for now, a brief outline of the programme will suffice. On her first day at St. Aidan’s, Miss Finnucane is informed that an Inspector from the Department of Education will be attending her classes with a view to inspecting them. Not only is Miss Finnucane aghast but so too are the students of *The Spike*, one of whom remarks, “Inspectors don’t come to the Spike. It has too many problems.” *The Spike*, it seems, had up until that point been regarded as a space of such chaos and confusion that bringing it into line with the normalised behaviours of other regulated schools seemed impossible.

Indeed, the usual power structures at work in a centralised institute such as a school were, in *The Spike*, completely subverted. In an act of protest against the principal’s attempts to introduce after school study hours, during which it was expected that students would do their homework, the students refused to attend school at all. The usual hegemonic processes at work in an institution characterised by centralised and supervised power are not present within the student body of *The Spike*. While protest may be described as resistance rather than subversion, the criminal damage carried out by the students and their success at manoeuvring the local media against the school principal indicates a level of subversion not usually associated with this type of institution. Moreover, the mobilisation of the media indicates a level of interaction between the students of *The Spike* that does not usually occur. It also suggests that the visibility of the vexatious elements of society can be intensified by media attention. In

⁴⁶² Anon, “Nudity adds to RTE series controversy” in *Irish Times* 25 February 1978, 1.

one respect this may contribute to the compounding of dominant perceptions of the vexatious or indeed, contribute to a positive change in the dominant frames of perception that occluded the vexatious in the first place.

It is worth noting at this point that the participation of the protesting students in the practices of the mainstream media does not necessarily mean that the vexatious is being fully recognised, or even that recognisable elements of the vexatious are being fully accommodated or accepted by the mainstream media. In this sense, the vexatious is not the same as the “Other”. Here, the subversive capacities of the students are used to protest against the attempts being made by the official structures of society to call their behaviour into line with the normalised social expectations. Those expectations are shaped by the traditional and official structures of the national ethos and habitus. However, the power structures adopted by the student body replicate those of official power structures rather than being subversive, structure-free anarchist groups associated with the Punk Rock ideals of the late 1970s and early 1980s. The student body is divided into leaders, who speak on behalf of the other students and who also drive the actions taken by the group of students. The vexatious in this case exemplifies an adaptability that will eventually allow it to become integrated into dominant discourse. While the vexatious can overwhelm official structures, and this applies to the violent protest carried out by the students of *The Spike*, it may also be temporarily included in the official discourses of society; for example, in the series the mainstream (fictional media) media uses the vexatious to undermine, question, or support the official structures of society. This suggests that the vexatious is momentarily given access to what Judith Butler describes as the “tacit performativity of power”, but here, it is on the terms set out by the mainstream media.⁴⁶³ In this case, those terms are defined by the parameters of news constructed through its own official language.

The vexatious comes to participate in the domain and in the official structures in which that language operates in a way that gives the vexatious “a certain possibility for social existence”, albeit a temporary one in the temporal domain of the language of a dominant discourse. The illocutionary aspects of *The Spike* drive the plot forward. However, the

⁴⁶³ Butler, Judith, *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (London: Routledge,1997) 159.

themes that are developed in the series bring meaning to the language used in each scene that exceeds their illocutionary function. In other words, their context exceeds their intention. Furthermore, speech acts in the programme are read in conjunction with trajectories of power and the performance of power thus giving them a perlocutionary weighting that becomes conflated with the public's reaction to a fictional story.⁴⁶⁴ In this instance *The Spike* may be read as a drama series that exceeds its diegetic world and demonstrates how discussion surrounding that excess creates public interest. In relation to *The Spike* that interest generated moral panic that intensified around the gap between the dominant discourses of habitus and ethos and the elements of modernisation that had occurred in Irish society; moral panic intensified around the temporary emergence of the "invisible blind spot" that had ordinarily prevented a conservative viewership from having to face the rejected elements of modernisation. Those rejected elements threatened to undermine the dominant "field of ... operations" and caused, not only a re-shuffling of the signs that constituted that field, but also a re-signification and replacement of those signs. What this threat of re-signification suggests is the fragmentation of a habitus and ethos that had brought social cohesion to an emerging nation in the 19th century and to the official discourses of the Irish nation-state in the 20th century.

The threat of the vexatious is the fragmentation of a stable ethos and habitus that have emerged from concrete power structures. However, the threat that the vexatious poses is also a temporary one that may only undermine such structures through a series of successful outbursts. Following from this, just as the violence of the student protest is quelled and the threat of subversive re-signification is subdued, so too is the threat which the programme itself posed to the order of official discourses, habitus and ethos. That threat is also stifled by what seemed to be the atavistic reactions of the conservative sectors of Irish society. For instance, a headline in *The Irish Times* claims that "School girls consider series disgusting" indicating an agreement with the moral judgements made against *The Spike*. As well as this a number of letters printed in *The Irish Independent* express further criticism of *The Spike*.⁴⁶⁵ One student wrote to *The*

464 In *Excitable Speech* Butler discusses illocutionary speech as speech acts that "in saying do what they say" while perlocutionary speech acts are acts that "produce certain effects". Butler, Judith, *Excitable Speech* 3.

465 Anon. "School girls consider series disgusting" *The Irish Times* 1 March 1978, 14.

Irish Independent on behalf of her student council stating that “We find the programme, crude, unrealistic, without entertainment value. We regret that RTÉ stoops so low to produce so little.”⁴⁶⁶ Another letter criticises the language used in the drama stating that “the coarseness of the language is offensive” and that “the plot is insulting to the very meanest intelligence”.⁴⁶⁷ In short, it is evident that conservative groups and individuals continued to support official Ireland. However, official Ireland would also continue to be challenged by outbursts of the vexatious that would challenge it even further. Eruptions of the vexatious will always be re-consigned to a place of silence whereby it seems not only is it not recognised by domains of official culture but also that its momentary participation in those domains was the result of a type of mis-recognition. The repetition of this mis-recognition however, has the capacity to breed familiarity within the domains of official power and was eventually to lead to the emergence of the vexatious from a place of occlusion to a place of at least partial recognition. Reaching the point that brings the vexatious permanently out of society’s “invisible blind spot” and into the recognised “field of... operation” is a lengthy and arduous process. In relation to the domain of dominant social, political and cultural discourse in the 1970s and 1980s, eruptions of the vexatious indicated the extent to which the positions in which the body was held by official discourse were not hermeneutically sealed but were certainly entrenched in traditional structures of feeling and a cohering ethos. Following from this entrenchment is the seemingly atavistic representation of aspects of Irish social, political and cultural life. Through hegemonic negotiation the vexatious may adapt to the official domains of culture and discourse and *vice versa*, bringing both into a state of mutual but not necessarily equal acknowledgement. A state of recognition may arise when both have become suitably adapted to accommodate each other. The vexatious however may fit into the domains of the dominant culture but not before it contributes to a shift in the metaphorical lens through which the domains of the dominant culture are negotiated and perceived.

The Spike and the public reaction to it are part of this process of negotiation that would eventually lead to a marked shift in the type of language through which the body is positioned in the discourses of the official habitus and ethos of the Irish nation-state.

466 McLoughlin, Evelyn, “Letters to the Editor” in *The Irish Independent* 2 March 1978, 12.

467 Mhaille ni, Mháire. “The Spike” *The Irish Independent* 2 March 1978, 12.

The diegetic world of *The Spike* showed the cracks in the discourses of both that habitus and ethos as well as the inability of both to meet the expectations set out by their official discourses. The chaos and violence initiated by the student protests suggests that there was a growing sector of society that could no longer be contained by silence, occlusion or containment. Adding to the chaos that surrounded the subverted power structures, Principal O'Mahony remains unsupported by the Board of Management. Indeed, the response of the Chairman of the Board is to criticise the Principal's efforts to introduce regulation of school behaviour and his attempts to raise the expectations of the students. Mr. Magner, the Chairman and local business man, remarks "we don't like new ideas and we don't like problems". Furthermore, he remarks acidly that the function of The Spike is "to contain the riff raff of the town" which endorses a comment made by a parent earlier in the program that the "Brothers at the grammar ... send ye all the rubbish." Mr. Magner's justification for maintaining that status quo at The Spike seems to endorse the inequalities of social stratification and invokes the engrained religious thinking on the acceptance of an individual's situation when Mr. Magner remarks that "you get in trouble when you interfere with what God intended." Mr. Magner's remark corresponds to a comment made earlier by one of the parents, which suggests that the structures of religion hold a privileged place in the stratification of the local area that allows the Christian Brothers to choose which students to accept into their school on a seemingly discriminatory basis.

In this sense it may be argued here that the structures of the Church and their overlap with or suturing into the structures of society provides a veil or mask through which the perceived respectability of the middle classes can protect their own business interests on a local level, and ensure that the working classes continue to exist as a working pool or resource from which they can draw cheap and unquestioning labour. The slippage within both parents' comments and those of Mr. Magner indicate the unreliability of speech as well and the multiplicity of the layers of power encapsulated in the structures of organised religion in Ireland at the time. Mr. Magner's remark carries an implied warning or even subtle threat indicating that Mr. O'Mahony should ensure that the status quo continues rather than attempting to invoke raised expectations that would upset the established stratification of the locality. In attempting to preserve the interests of local business owners who employ the students of The Spike to do part-time work at a lower rate of pay than would be usually granted, Mr. Magner attempts to mobilise the

seemingly accepted discourse of religion and acceptance of an individual's "lot". Supported by the Board of Management it seems that the status quo to which Mr. Magner refers is one that the majority would like to see preserved. This subverts the usual expectations we would have of a power structure established to provide students with the best education and opportunities possible for them.

Power in *The Spike* is central to the drawing up of the limits of the "field of operations" that allows the recognition of the equal rights of individuals in a just society, and in this case, in a society that has undergone elements of modernisation but remains predominantly defined by the traditional cohering structures of a Nation-State that remained closer to the image it developed of itself in the nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth century than to the state that was part of the EEC in the latter part of the twentieth century. Power defines the actions carried out by the student body themselves suggesting that while they belong to a part of society that is occluded from mainstream official discourses and their world is largely a chaotic un-ordered one, the student body adopts power positions that relegate the weak and more vulnerable within their group to positions of absolute powerlessness. The infliction of extreme physical violence on one of the youngest, smallest students, David Closky, and the label he is assigned as a "scab" by the other students suggests that when it seems a member of the student body is about to co-operate with the requirements of the dominant structures of society, it will respond with resistance through illocutionary violence and perlocutionary "injurious acts" of naming that draw on structure, context and historicity.⁴⁶⁸

In *The Spike*, and in real life, transgressive acts breach the dominant discourses and constantly verge on the complete undermining of the official structures of society. The corruption of an accepted sexual morality produces what are perceived as multiple transgressive acts that break the codified rules of behaviour and signification. The vexing potential of these acts is reined in by the role played by the central authorial figures that are present in the programme. In order to overcome the mob-like power of her students, Miss Finnucane, played by Angela Harding, resorts to the use of exercise

⁴⁶⁸ Butler, Judith, *Excitable Speech* 28-36.

as a means of controlling the student body through a type of traditional bio-politics. Physical activity, it seems, will diffuse what are seen as the mis-directed energies of the student body. This is not achieved however before the students pass a porn magazine around the class room as well as stealing Miss Finnucane's underwear from her suitcase and throwing them around both the class room and the school yard. While exercise seems to calm the students, *The Spike* does not present any methods or solutions that promote intellectual reflection on the part of the students. The plot of the drama frequently points to the social discrimination that separates the students of *The Spike* from those attending other schools in the area as one of the main causes of the perpetuation of social and cultural poverty. However, it fails to present the students with any solutions that treat them as anything other than cogs in the wheels of surveillance that require they fulfil normative expectations of respectability. Solutions in *The Spike* are administered in line with traditional methods that find their roots in the isolation of the working classes as vessels to be contained through repetitive work or in this case regulatory exercise.

If absent patriarchs can be identified as one of the defining aspects of *The Spike*, then the sexual corruption of those present may also be considered as another defining theme. The web of power that operates in *The Spike* is characterised by all the major workings of modern power. Father figures continue to play a significant part in the representation of the corruption of that power in this drama both by their presence and their absence. Furthermore, the oppression of women under that system of power is compounded by the actions of women themselves. For instance, in episode two it is revealed that Mr. Magner forces local employers to fire students of *The Spike* from their part-time jobs. He does in order to put pressure on the school principal. Magner realises that many local families are dependent on the extra money that their children earn in their part time jobs and that without those jobs the children would leave school entirely in order to join full time jobs. As a result, some of the jobless teenagers turn to illegal activities to earn some money. Since the local economy offers these teenagers and working class families very limited options in terms of work some of the girls turn to prostitution as a last resort. A number of the girls are discovered on the docks providing sexual favours in exchange for money. The teenage girls are found to be students of *The Spike* who could no longer contribute to the running of their respective households because, under the instruction of Mr. Magner, their posts in local businesses were

revoked by their former employers. Furthermore, the Garda Superintendent who relates these details to Principal O'Mahony suggests that "mothers" are "sending their daughters down the docks to consort with sailors". In his own piece of policing, Mr. O'Mahony approaches a girl on the docks who turns out to be Sally, one of his students. His appeal, "For God's sake Sally get home out of that", has both an illocutionary and a perlocutionary effect. While O'Mahony instructs Sally to go home, the irritated functionality of his tone lacks any sense of surprise and implies that this is a commonplace and expected event.

Despite social change introduced by the Women's Movement it seems that in the diegetic world of *The Spike*, urban poverty seemed to claim young females amongst its most vulnerable victims. The implication is that free secondary school education and the impact of the changes brought about through the partial technological and material modernisation on the island had not alleviated the pressures of poverty for these girls. While on the one hand the type of social stigmatisation, alienation and poverty that had led to the isolation of young women in nation-wide institutions such as Magdalen laundries was gradually being cracked open and addressed in the media, on the other hand, the realities of urban poverty which were, in some ways compounded by Ireland's partial modernisation, was contributing to the vulnerability of young women. "The Dark End of the Street", an article published in *In Dublin* in nineteen eight six highlights the vulnerability of young women who become prostitutes at a very early age. Forced onto the streets as a result of urban poverty and problems associated with it many of these young women find themselves unprotected and unable to move out of that situation. One young woman is quoted within the article as being "on the game" and "doing the business" since she was thirteen.⁴⁶⁹ Discourses of the body were being re-positioned within the structures of Irish society which were being re-negotiated, and issues that were perceived in some sectors as the corruption of the dominant discourse of sexuality were beginning to emerge from their silent non-place into the public domain as the noisy and disturbing vexatious.

469 Anon, "At the Dark End of the Street" in *In Dublin* 253(1986) 22-25. Earlier in 1980 the Irish Times published an article outlining the effect budget cuts were having on state services. One of the cuts it identified was the abandonment of plans to build a refuge for women caught in cycles of domestic violence in Galway city thus isolating some of the most vulnerable people in society even more. Anon, "Plan for Wives Refuge Dropped" in *The Irish Times* 10 January 1980, 6.

At this point in time teenage sexuality was a part of the broader discussion on sexuality being held in Ireland, and in early 1978, this topic was being teased out in the national broadsheets and in popular magazines. Arguments were made that statistics on the sexual behaviour of teenagers was often distorted upwards in order to promote contraception and abortion, thus implying that teenage sexuality was being used as a smokescreen for agendas such as abortion, which were being negotiated at the time.⁴⁷⁰ Indeed, in January 1978, *The Irish Times* reported that protests led by public interest groups, Mná na hÉireann and Parent Concern, at the Well Woman Clinic on Lower Leeson Street in Dublin City, were vocally opposed to the use of contraception. A placard, photographed and printed on the front page of *The Irish Times*, read “Parents! Contraception means Promiscuity & Abortion”, implying that parents should oppose The Well Woman Center in order to protect their children from promiscuity and abortion.⁴⁷¹ In this respect, teenage sexuality became associated with the conservation of the traditional institution of the family unit and the preservation of the role of parents as protectors in official Ireland, whereas in *The Spike*, teenage sexuality is not only a part of the local underground economy but students also express their sexuality openly while at school. The discussion that was to surround the 1979 Health Act (The Family Planning Act) the following year, which will be considered in the next chapter, was to add to the growing re-negotiation of the dominant discourses of the body and sexuality within the media. That re-negotiation was to show the contradictory positions the body and sexuality held in Irish society that were to be illuminated even further by the controversial emergence of the AIDS body later in the 1980s.

Returning to *The Spike* and the late 1970s, the plot of the program may be used as a prism through which the contradictions of female sexuality may be considered. Indeed, sexuality amongst the middle classes is also presented as an aspect of being female that contradicts social change and moreover, is used for material gain and for gaining access to the system of power at work, but can also be to the detriment of the official structures of morality and the codes through which they were represented with the national ethos and dominant habitus. Female sexuality is used as a tool that enables women to participate in areas dominated by male power. Despite this, we do not see women

470 Anon, “Sex Figures Wrong” in *The Irish Times* 2 March 1978, 1.

471 Anon, ““Parents! Contraception means Promiscuity & Abortion” in *The Irish Times* 18 January 1978, 1.

progress within that system of power. For instance Denise Ryan, Magner's attractive personal assistant stands out in contrast to the other predominantly working class female characters in the drama. She is elegant and well dressed, is employed in what would be considered a respectable position and drives a car. Denise Ryan, it would appear, represents the young single women who were reaping the benefits of the changes instigated by second wave feminism. Behind Ryan's success however, lies what initially appears to be her manipulation of her sexuality to remain in her position. Under the influence of her employer, Mr. Magner, Ryan approaches Mr. O'Mahony in order to seduce him and convince him to change his stance against decisions taken by the Board of Management on an Out of School Study Program set up for the students of The Spike. O'Mahony eventually yields to Denise Ryan's advances and in turn gives into the decisions made by the Board of Management headed by Mr. Magner. Prior to his decision to give in to Denise Ryan however, O'Mahony attempts to resist her and remarks: "You know Brother Kearney is a celibate. He may be impressed by your well toned legs. Or Brother Bradshaw. He collects impressions of cleavages. You may even make Sister Dominic Saviour happy. Why don't you try one of them." The suggestion here is that while members of the clergy had taken vows of celibacy this did not make them impervious to the advances of Denise Ryan. Indeed, there is an implication that as a married heterosexual male, Mr. O'Mahony was somehow equipped with a greater resolve in the face of temptation than members of the clergy.

In the end O'Mahony does accept Ryan's offer and the third last scene of the programme constitutes of a shot of Ryan and O'Mahony in bed together. The scene then jumps to a similar shot of Ryan and Magner in bed together later that evening. It becomes clear that Magner has used Ryan to blackmail O'Mahony and that Ryan has been manoeuvred into a position whereby she has become a pawn in Magner's corrupt business dealings. As the camera pulls in to show the couple in close up, Magner's placations of "Good Girl" receive a bitter retort of "Go to hell" from Ryan. The juxtaposition of the two scenes indicates that despite Ryan's apparent success as a young single woman, behind the facade is a narrative of occlusion and trading of sexual favours for validation within the official structures of society that sought to promote the appearance of a greater movement towards gender equality. Gender equality in *The Spike* seemed to have plateaued in a way that allowed inequality to continue in the gaps between official discourses.

The vulnerability of women is further endorsed by another episode “The Curtin Equation” in which Philip Curtin, the maths teacher, singles out O’Mahony’s teenage daughter Fiona from the other students and manipulates her emotions. The slightly unhinged art teacher, Kenneth, played by Barry McGovern, becomes aware of the inappropriate behaviour that exists between Curtin and his student. However, to his colleagues, Kenneth’s reportage is so obscure and veiled in intellectual commentary that no one really understands his point, until Fiona later attempts to convince her father that Philip Curtin loves her. Despite O’Mahony’s best efforts to reveal Curtin as a parasitic and manipulative man, Fiona continues to insist that he loves her. While this part of the plot moves forward it become apparent that Kenneth is not only hearing voices but he is also seeing people who do not exist. Kenneth seems to have become the embodiment of the clash of the past, the present and the future. He is the living point whereby the past meet the present. As a result of his sensitivity to the traces of the past that surround him Kenneth seems to be able to communicate with the “spirits” of the past through speech. This “communication” is depicted in a scene where Kenneth describes the art room which was part of the old buildings that constituted The Spike.

The building was formerly a workhouse and the art room was the birth ward. Kenneth seems to be sensitive to the echoes of the past declaring, “Such pains, such pangs, then such joy”, while his actions suggest that he is can also see people or rather see back into the past. Historical narratives seem to be alive to Kenneth and could perhaps be read as a commentary on the awareness of history and the pronounced sensitivity felt towards tragic events in the national habitus. Kenneth however, does not simply feel, see and hear the past, he also possesses a pronounced sensitivity toward the corruption of the present. When Philip Curtin is spending time alone with Fiona in a class room near Kenneth’s art room, Kenneth senses that the “beast Curtin” is “prowling” without actually seeing the couple together. The seemingly unhinged Kenneth embodies the role of protector that Fiona’s father was unable to fulfil as, later, while on a school trip with Miss Finnucane, Philip Curtin and the students of The Spike, Kenneth suddenly breaks away from the group only to discover Fiona struggling to escape from Curtin who is attempting to overpower her. The struggle is broken up by Kenneth; Curtin is fired and

Kenneth is granted a reprieve from work for some time so that he may recuperate from the intensity of the pressure he had been under.

The most controversial episode of *The Spike* was episode five which was entitled “Night Class”.⁴⁷² This episode develops the theme of the contradictory nature of feminism in 1970s Ireland as well as highlighting the tensions that lay around the dominant perceptions of the body. Around this period there was a sense that second wave feminism in Ireland was beginning to reach a plateau as the activity associated with feminist organisation began to be “diffused more widely as a political discourse and as a network of mainstreaming organisations across Irish society.”⁴⁷³ While *The Spike* was entering its closing week, a play entitled *Dusa, Fish, Stas and Vi*, written by Pam Gems and first staged in Edinburgh in 1972, was beginning its run in Dublin in the theatre Eblana and starred Maureen Aherne, Patricia MacMenamin, Sorcha Cusack and Susanne Beaver. *Dusa, Fish, Stas and Vi* is set in a flat in London and tells the story of four young women and the problems they are experiencing. Analysis of the production in the *The Irish Times* focuses on the play as a commentary on the Women’s Movement and on the status of the Movement at that time. Maeve Kennedy writes in *The Irish Times* that *Dulsa, Fish, Stas and Vi* confronts the problem of what to do after “Women’s Liberation has come and saved you, knocked out all the old props and pretences around which women have built their lives, without substituting, for many of them, any alternative framework.”⁴⁷⁴ Like many of the young working class female characters in *The Spike*, the newly returned Mrs O’Mahony finds that, despite being surrounded by a discourse of social change and gender equality, there are actually very few outlets for the engagement with that equality in her daily life.

While official Ireland had not engaged with the Women’s Movement to the point that as Maeve Kennedy describes it, “all the props” that formerly defined the role of women and their expectations had certainly changed. For instance, at the start of the episode we

472 O’Brian, Noel, “Night Class” in *The Spike* (RTÉ: 1977) RTÉ Archive reference DLX/00395.

473 Connolly, Linda and Tina O’Toole, *Documenting Irish Feminisms: The Second Wave* (Dublin: The Woodfield Press, 2005) 45.

474 Kennedy Maeve, “After Women’s Liberation Has Saved You?” in *The Irish Times* 27 February 1978, 10.

see O'Mahony relaxing in a sauna when his wife joins him. Mrs. O'Mahony voices a wish to become part of the work force rather than being a housewife. Her statement, "I want the permanent job" suggests that she wants to extricate herself from the traditional female world that defines her, and participate instead in the world of paid employment dominated by men. This episode was broadcast in February 1978, a month during which the Minister for Finance, George Collery, was involved in a controversy over the taxation of married women under their husbands' tax credits. While it was reported that there were "70,000 Women on PAYE" indicating that the number of women involved in the workforce was growing, married couples continued to be taxed as a single economic unit rather than as individual earners. This suggests that neither the Constitution nor the tax system could adapt to the rate of change in attitudes towards women in Irish society.⁴⁷⁵

In a contemporaneous episode of *The Spike*, Mrs O'Mahony decides to apply for the post of nude model for evening art classes being held in The Spike at night. Mr. O'Mahony forbids her from applying and refers to the controversy it would cause. As a perceived stalwart of the community, O'Mahony feels it would be socially unacceptable for his wife to be seen modelling nude in public, indicating the extent to which the tacit rules of social respectability were engrained in the character's habitus and world view. Against her husband's wishes, however, Mrs O'Mahony applies for the job but is told by the part-time art teacher, played by David Kelly, that she does not have a suitable form, and he expresses his frustration with his failure to find a "metric woman" whose body shape would fulfil the ideal projection of beauty. There seems to be an undefined space between the aesthetic implications of the "ideal woman" and living within the confines of gender descriptors. Eventually, a woman from the Self-Confidence class who happens to wander into the art class is found to be the "ideal woman". This woman who initially attended night classes in order to gain confidence while speaking in public, eventually finds it through the recognition afforded to her body shape as being that of the "ideal woman".

475 Anon, "70,000 on PAYE" in *The Irish Times* 15 February 1978, 4.

The final shot of the art class presents the woman, played by Madeline Childers, in the arms of the art teacher who announces their engagement. While the episode was described by the producer Noel O' Brian as a programme that "was trying to express attitudes to pupils and staff in a school to nudity", he also remarked that "It highlighted different attitudes of people to nudity; the headmaster who felt it was not respectable, the porter who felt there was something titillating; and the clinical attitude of the art teacher who claimed that a nude woman should be viewed in a clinical manner and was not erotic".⁴⁷⁶ The reaction to this episode of *The Spike* saw Catherine Murray, the wife of the President of the League of Decency, described the drama as "filthy" and pinpointed it as the cause of her husband's subsequent heart attack. While Mr. Murray's heart attack is undoubtedly unfortunate, its significance lies in the fact that the national print media considered it newsworthy, indicating the extent to which the Irish media engaged with both the conservative right and the liberal left. Furthermore, the contradictory positions of the body in official Irish discourse, whereby a program made by and broadcast by the national broadcaster could provoke such a broad and controversial reaction, indicates the conflicted space between the changes being engendered in the national habitus and the ethos of a partially modernised nation that by that time was part of the EEC. The gradual confrontation of the "invisible blind spot", the re-negotiation of the dominant "field ... of operations" that facilitated recognition, was being played within the media in a way that articulated the slight semantic shift in the dominant monoglotic lens of perception that often represented the traditional cohering networks of Irish society as atavistic, but at the same time, was unable to instigate any major ongoing changes at the level of official discourse. It was from this contradictory context that the HIV/AIDS body was to emerge in Ireland.

⁴⁷⁶ Anon, "Nudity adds to RTE controversy" in *The Irish Times* 25 February 1978, 1.

Chapter Six

“French Letters”: Discourses
of AIDS, Modernisation,
Medicalisation and *The Late
Late Show*

Building on the genealogical practise conducted throughout this thesis, chapter six focuses on the impact of the AIDS body as a vexatious body on discourses associated with official Ireland in the 1980s. By drawing on a diverse range of texts, including episodes of the current affairs program, *Today Tonight* and the chat show *The Late Late Show*, this chapter traces the movement from official discourses of morality towards a discourse that mobilises the language of medicalisation and biomedicalisation. This movement is interpreted as a way of partially accommodating the AIDS body as a vexatious one. By reading this partial accommodation against a backdrop of rising urban poverty and drug use however, this thesis argues that elements of the vexatious may never be fully accommodated within official structures but that the move that the move towards discourses of medicalisation and biomedicalisation carved a significant space within official discourses for the partial inclusion of bodies that had been previously rejected. In turning towards the language of medicalisation and biomedicalisation, this chapter argues that the powerful impact of an eruption of the vexatious under a specific set of conditions highlighted Ireland's move from a burst of accelerated modernisation towards a greater participation in globalisation.

In 1987 the popular chat show *The Late Late Show* broadcast an episode that addressed AIDS in Ireland. During the open discussion, held between a panel of experts and the audience, one of the panel members called attention to the need for people who are sexually active to carry condoms.⁴⁷⁷ That panel member, Annmarie Hourihan, remarked firmly that “you are not a whore, you are not a hardman, an unfortunate turn of phrase, if you carry a condom”. Her call for the use of condoms confronted a prudish attitude towards sex, sexuality and the body that had been fostered by dominant frameworks of conservative Catholic morality and middle class respectability in Ireland. Tom Inglis argues that in Ireland during the twentieth century “One of the primary mechanisms of everyday policing was the control of desire and pleasure, especially sexual desire and

⁴⁷⁷ Byrne, Gay, *The Late Late Show Extra* RTÉ archive reference 96D00773 Recorded 15/05/1987.

pleasure.”⁴⁷⁸ Discussing sexuality, desire and pleasure was just as taboo as carrying out sexual acts. Annmarie Hourihan public call for the use of condoms acknowledges sexual practices and confronts the taboo that had grown around them. Her firm use of coarse language attempted to subvert dominant behavioural expectations in Irish society and to stir up awareness of the urgent situation surrounding the emergence of AIDS. While challenged over a number of preceding decades, that framework remained the dominant terms of reference for both the national ethos and habitus.

Nevertheless, by the middle of the 1980s discourses of the body were caught in a contradictory gap. A number of impacting events and ongoing movements, such as the Women’s Movement, had been changing the shape of official discourse in Ireland. Social networks formed across structures like rhizomes that stretch like “ramified surface extensions” and gather as “concretions” like “bulbs and tubers” promising new growth into the future.⁴⁷⁹ Encounters between social groups meant that force gathered in points that counteracted the usual flow of structured power and undermined the structures of the State; the structures of the State are the constituent parts brought together as a result of the development of domestic power and which cannot be attributed to any one centre of power as being the ultimate ruling power. Protest and, in this case, the emergence of new discourses or “assemblages” from outside official power structures threatened the structured and defined interconnections of the state, and their operations in society.⁴⁸⁰ The interconnections that acted as binds between the state’s constituent parts were challenged by the gathering nodes of force or the “bulbs and tubers” growing in Irish society throughout the 1970s and 1980s. These “concretions”,⁴⁸¹ and the lateral multiplicities from which they emerged, were a direct threat to the system of power that had conjoined or “conflated” the church and state.⁴⁸²

478 Inglis, Tom, “Origins and Legacies of Irish Prudery: Sexuality and Social Control in Modern Ireland” in *Eire/Ireland* 40. 3&4 (2005) 11.

479 Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* Translated by Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987) 7.

480 Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari *A Thousand Plateaus* 4.

481 Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari *A Thousand Plateaus* 7.

482 O’Brien, Eugene, “‘The boat that moved’: The Catholic Church, Conflations and the Need for Critique” in *The Dublin/Murphy Report: A Watershed for Irish Catholicism?* Edited by John Littleton and Eamon Maher (Dublin: The Columba Press, 2010) 92.

Conflation had created an explicit and powerful binary division between those occupying an official space of power and the state and those people, events and entities that lay outside official structures. That dominant “field of ... operations” facilitated the recognition of what was endorsed by the binary divide and occluded what existed beyond its limits or that structured the dominant national habitus and ethos and bound ideals of Irishness with the lived experience of the people.⁴⁸³ There was a clear divide between the power of the “conflated” church/state and its institutions and those who were assigned their subjectivity by the dominance of those cultural, social, political and religious institutions. Outbursts of the vexatious then transgressed the structures and their limits which were supported by the discourses of official, social, political and cultural Ireland. Like transgression, the vexatious forces official discourses to “find itself in what it excludes” so that it may restore order.⁴⁸⁴

Furthermore, negotiations between outbursts of the vexatious, perceptions of official Ireland and explicit confrontations with official discourse’s “invisible blind spot” were frequently taking place.⁴⁸⁵ These outbursts included “The Kerry Babies Case”, the death of teenage mother Ann Lovett and the constitutional challenge David Norris brought against the illegal status of homosexuality in Ireland. For the purpose of this research “The Kerry Babies Case” will facilitate an analysis of the effects of the vexatious on Irish society and the other incidents will not be considered in-depth. Closing the gap between the conservatism of dominant discourses and the vexatious AIDS body required new types of language and ideas. Since the AIDS body was constituted by a number of elements, previously concealed by the dominant parameters of recognition, the language required to discuss this new, vexatious entity was unavailable. Moreover, the dominance of a monoglotic lens of perception restricted discursive engagements between that vexatious body and official discourse. Bringing articulations of the AIDS

483 Butler, Judith, *Undoing Gender* (London: Routledge, 2004) 32.

484 Foucault, Michel, “Preface to Transgression” in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews* Editor Donald F. Bouchard (New York: Cornell University Press, 1977) 34.

485 Foucault, Michel, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1980) 4.

body to fruition called for the development of discursive conduits that could facilitate the inclusion of AIDS discourse within official Ireland. However, for sectors of Irish society, whose habitus reflected ideals of the national ethos, developing and engaging with those discourses was an unsettling experience that would see AIDS being compared to the Bubonic plague⁴⁸⁶ and described as “death”.⁴⁸⁷

Developing a vocabulary of AIDS was an integral factor in the initiation of its recognition and, later, its partial inclusion in official discourses of health and illness. The AIDS body and the space occupied by other disruptive bodies, like that of the TB body, were not entirely compatible. The newness, strangeness and incompatibility of the AIDS body with official discourses and structures pressed on Irish society forcing it to develop a new vocabulary of the body. This development was a difficult experience that effected different parts of society in an unsynchronised and uneven way. The space occupied by TB had also undergone a process that produced its defining cultural, political and social narrative during the late nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth centuries. However, because AIDS is associated with sexual behaviour and drug use, the narrative space that shaped the TB body could not appropriately house the AIDS body as well. Indeed, neither could any other pre-existing disease narrative. In drawing comparative lines between the AIDS body and other bodies, this thesis focuses on the TB body. The TB body facilitates an identification of difference and similarity in that TB in Ireland was associated with poverty and social conditions rather than sexuality. Both the AIDS body and the TB body however came to occupy a space within society that pronounced the threat they posed, the levels of visibility that grew up around them and, despite their social associations, both bodies held the potential to infect others if they were not protected against contact with the respective viruses. AIDS discourse borrowed elements from pre-existing discourses while, simultaneously forging an additional discourse and space, to create what Treichler describes as “a complex and contradictory construct of culture”.⁴⁸⁸ In its emergence, the virus-infected body brought chaos to the “mechanism” of the healthy body and other ill bodies

486 Mullholland, Joe, *Today Tonight* RTÉ archive reference 97D00735 Recorded 9/10/ 1985.

487 Byrne, Gay, *The Late Late Show Extra* RTÉ archive reference 96D00773 Recorded 15/05/1987.

488 Treichler, Paula, *How to Have Theory in an Epidemic: Cultural Chronicles of AIDS* (London: Duke and Durham University Press, 1999) 99.

simultaneously, giving rise to the contradictions and complexities to which Treichler refers. “Mechanism” is used here to refer to bodies that are defined by their tightly bound, closed structures created by official structures.⁴⁸⁹ The AIDS body disrupted the defined space or “mechanism” of the healthy body that had formerly been disciplined into a space consistent with the dominant systems and ideals of Irishness. As it emerged from the space of the vexatious, AIDS upset the coherence of those formative ideals and the mechanistic space of what was considered the morally and biologically healthy body.

In relation to the emergence of the AIDS body, and the development and expansion of its discourse, one of the most significant changes in Irish society was the growth in medicalisation. Here medicalisation is defined by its gradual assimilation of “aspects of life previously outside the jurisdiction of medicine” into the remit of medical discourses and is directly associated with modernisation.⁴⁹⁰ Spaces of the body in Irish society were undergoing increasing medicalisation and, as a result, the role of traditional morality as the governing premise of official discourses was undermined. Tensions between modernisation, associated medicalisation and official Ireland can be traced through media representations of AIDS as it emerged in Ireland. Analysis of these tensions indicates that integrating medical discourse into the space left by the slight displacement of traditional frameworks of morality was accelerated by AIDS and contributed further to these tensions. In short, the emergence of AIDS created an urgent need to discuss the body in biological terms. However, the moral panic that surrounded the syndrome meant that integration occurred in a piecemeal and patchy way, couched in an analysis of what became known as high risk groups. The uncertainty that characterised AIDS during its initial emergence contributed to this panic even more. Not confined to Ireland however, this confusion was symptomatic of the management of the AIDS crisis around the globe. Treichler identifies AIDS epidemiology as “layered, marked by the periodic resurrection of old data, sudden shifts in *interpretation*, the appearance of revised chronologies, an ongoing dialectic between official and less official definitions and

489 Colebrook describes the type of mechanisms to which Deleuze and Guattari refer as a “closed machine with a specific function”. Colebrook, Claire, *Gilles Deleuze* (London: Routledge, 2002) 56.

490 Clarke, Adele E., Jennifer R. Fishman, Jennifer Ruth Fosket, Janet K Shim and Laura Mamo “Biomedicalization: Technoscientific Transformations of Health, Illness, and U.S. Biomedicine” in *American Sociological Review* 68.2 (2003) 161.

accounts, and intense negotiations among a substantial number of interested constituencies.⁴⁹¹ In Ireland, management of the AIDS crises exhibited all of these traits. It was also complicated further by the tensions that grew between official discourse and the growing discourse of an emerging Ireland.

AIDS pressurised official health structures at every level; the confusion which surrounded it added to and perpetuated this pressure. Consequences of this confusion in other countries have been documented by Epstein, Treichler and Waldy amongst others.⁴⁹² In relation to Ireland the impact of the vexatious outburst of AIDS can be read retrospectively in the language used by government boards and agencies as well as in their practices. When asked in 1985 why the Health Education Bureau had not produced an information leaflet on AIDS, Dr. James Walsh, Chief Medical Officer in the Department of Health, replied that it was “very difficult to know what kind of a leaflet to produce.”⁴⁹³ Although the sale of contraceptives to people over 18 had been legalised in February 1985, indicating the success of attempts made by Garret Fitzgerald’s coalition government to introduce constitutional reform and to overcome the authority of the Catholic Church, confusion surrounding AIDS research meant the Health Education Bureau remained partially paralysed in their efforts to address the spread of HIV in Ireland.

As in previous chapters, this chapter will approach the analysis of archive material through an achronological genealogical approach. This approach facilitates an exploration of the role of the media in the expansion and contraction of official and unofficial discourses during a time of transition for Irish society and perceptions of Irishness. Use of terms from *A Thousand Plateaus* will facilitate the positioning of disruptive bodies within the contraction and expansion of discourses according to when

491 Treichler, Paula, *How to Have Theory in an Epidemic* 48.

492 Epstein, Steve, *Impure Science* (London: University of California Press, 1996), Treichler, Paula, *How to Have Theory in an Epidemic: Cultural Chronicles of AIDS* (London: Duke and University Press Durham, 1999) and Waldby, Catherine, *AIDS and the Body Politic. Biomedicine and Sexual Difference* (London: Routledge, 1996)

493 RTÉ News in RTÉ archive BN85/326. Broadcast on the 22/11/1985.

and how those bodies surfaced and disappeared.⁴⁹⁴ Foucauldian frameworks developed in the previous chapters will continue to provide the dominant theoretical approach to this final analysis in a “de-realizing” of the archive and a consideration of the effect of the AIDS body as a body that fractured pre-existing narratives.⁴⁹⁵ As this thesis seeks to analyse the pressures placed on official structures and narratives, this chapter will focus on the representation of the AIDS body in the mainstream media. After a review of the state of official discourse and structures this chapter will begin with an analysis of a 1985 episode of *Today Tonight*, a popular current affairs programme, broadcast by RTÉ and presented by Pat Kenny. Further analysis will explore media representations of AIDS in the national broadsheets and popular culture magazines of the time. Some of the tensions and difficulties discourse encountered in the discussion and provision of information on AIDS can be found in that 1985 episode of *Today Tonight*.⁴⁹⁶ This episode provided Irish viewers with one of the first extended explorations of AIDS that shows the counteracting discourses at work during the emergence of AIDS.

The chapter will close with an analysis of an episode of *The Late, Late Show* broadcast in 1987 which marks the end of the vexatious emergence of AIDS in Ireland and an acknowledgement of it as part of life in Ireland, although not necessarily as part of the national habitus. This transition involved shifting the predominant perception of the AIDS body from a position of agitation to acknowledgement, from viewing it as a vexatious entity to facilitating a hegemonic recognition achieved through a developing confluential lens of morality, medicalisation, modernisation and social concern. A consideration of how the AIDS body moved from being an unrecognised vexatious entity to being an acknowledged, if problematic, body may offer some insight into the development of structures of feeling surrounding AIDS. These structures of feeling were expressed through discourses of AIDS that point to a change in the prevailing perception of the body and to a reconfiguration of frameworks of morality that enabled discussion of what were formerly vexatious, unsettling bodies.

494 Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus : Capitalism and Schizophrenia* Trans Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

495 Rajchman, John, “The Story of Foucault’s History” in *Social Text* 8 (Winter 1983- 1984) 12.

496 Mullholland, Joe, *Today Tonight* RTÉ archive reference 97D00735 Recorded 9/10/ 1985

In relation to the expansion and contraction of its constituent parts, the emergence of AIDS in Ireland marks a watershed in the development of official discourse. Altered by hegemonic practices whereby the language of medicalisation was absorbed by official discourses, the national ethos and habitus were exposed to new modes of expression and perception that precipitated movement away from traditional morality as a primary shaper of narrative formations and behavioural expectations in Irish society. Following from this exposure, the range of possible constructions of the body recognised and facilitated by official discourses expanded. Medicalisation facilitated the partial erosion of morality as a governing premise and, by introducing new modes of thinking, forms of knowledge and modes of representation, enabled the validation or recognition of other types of bodies. Since medicalisation of the body is directly associated with modernisation, the shift in discourse in the 1980s suggests that some aspects of modernisation were accelerating just before Ireland entered the world of biotechnology and biomedicalisation associated with globalisation in the 1990s. While medicalisation had been creeping into official discourses via discussions of the body forged in the public sphere by the Women's Movement over a number of decades, discourses of the body in the 1980s were on the cusp of significant change. Increasing medicalisation was one of the noteworthy factors driving this change.

The intricate interaction between discourses of the body and the context of their emergence are epitomised by the growth of a discourse of AIDS in the 1980s in Ireland. Through this growth, medical discourse garnered a more privileged status than it previously held in Irish society and facilitated the articulation of transgressing bodies. While it gathered this status through community interactions, media exchanges and interplays between the constituent elements of the national power structure, it did so incrementally. That change in status also came about as a direct result of impacting events such as the emergence of AIDS. Discussions of abortion, contraception and AIDS also contributed to a gradual movement away from the dominant moral frameworks through which they had previously been considered.

To some extent, discussions of homosexuality also demonstrate how interactions between existing discourses of the body contribute to the medicalisation of those discourses. However, this contribution was less pronounced in Ireland in the 1980s than

in subsequent decades. The less pronounced impact of medicalisation on discussions of homosexuality discourses may be attributed to the focus placed on a campaign for equal civil rights rather than specific issues surrounding what was seen as a vexatious and transgressing body. Senator Norris's constitutional challenge to the illegal status of homosexuality in Ireland focused on issues of human rights and emphasised the equality of individuals. Since homosexuality was often critiqued as being pathological or medically abnormal, using medical argument to counteract arguments posed in the past was more difficult. Advances in technology and clinical discoveries later promoted the biomedicalisation of the body and facilitated the counteraction of discourses of homosexuality as pathological. However, they were in their embryonic stages in the mid 1980s and had not yet come into line with prevailing discourses of the body in Ireland.⁴⁹⁷ In this sense, Ireland was a place of contradiction caught between partial modernisation, the medicalisation of the body and a dominant habitus whose ethos and official structures were rooted in tradition, concepts of middle class respectability and conservative Catholic morality.

AIDS and the emergence of its discourse introduced a new layer of complexity to discourses of Irishness. The complexity of the changes that occurred in official discourses may be considered as being an effect of force that gathered laterally across structures, and which communicated with centres of power above and below it in order to engender change. Here force is used as set out by Deleuze and Guattari.⁴⁹⁸ Undomesticated, it draws its momentum from a place outside of domesticated centres rather than from official centres. In the case of AIDS that force came from a site beyond recognition. Force is destructive, but in destroying the structured unity created by power and its definite boundaries, force "breaks constraints" and creates new channels of possibility.⁴⁹⁹ The emergence of AIDS as an unstructured vexatious event resembles this

497 Here biomedicalisation is used according to Clarke et al's definition as a "term for the increasingly complex, multisited, multidirectional processes of medicalisation that today are being both extended and reconstituted through the emergent social forms and practices of a highly and increasingly technoscientific biomedicine." Clarke, Adele E., Jennifer R. Fishman, Jennifer Ruth Fosket, Janet K Shim and Laura Mamo "Biomedicalization: Technoscientific Transformations of Health, Illness, and U.S. Biomedicine" in *American Sociological Review* 68.2 (2003) 162.

498 Massumi, Brian, *A User's Guide to Capitalism and Schizophrenia: Deviations from Deleuze and Guattari* (Cambridge: A Swerve Edition MIT Press, 1992) 6.

499 Massumi, Brian, *A User's Guide to Capitalism and Schizophrenia* 6.

type of force which occurs across networks and structures. The mobilisation of previously unrecognised bodies and groups contributed to this force. When AIDS initially appeared in Europe and the United States of America, “alternative forms of communication were necessary given the lack of institutional response to HIV/AIDS”.⁵⁰⁰ This was also the case in Ireland which saw members of the gay community banding together to form networks that provided information on the prevention of infection with HIV and on AIDS. Over time, the upward application of pressure from these groups meant that mainstream broadcasting and print media in Ireland began to devote episodes of popular programmes such as *Today Tonight* which drew on groups such as Gay Health Action and AIDS alliance as a resource when providing information on AIDS and a discussion of the syndrome within Irish society.

One example of this may be found in the *Today Tonight* programme broadcast on the ninth of October 1985 where the report draws on the knowledge provided by the action group “Gay Health Action”.⁵⁰¹ *Today Tonight* was a popular current affairs programme that was initially broadcast three nights a week. The success of the programme led to the increase of this number to five programmes per week. John Horgan identifies the success of the programme as the result of the personality of the producer Joe Mulholland and to RTÉ’s frequent financial deficit. Horgan explains that RTÉ used any available finances in the production of home based programmes.⁵⁰² *Today Tonight* benefitted from this channelling of funds. Being broadcast immediately after the nine o’ clock news meant that *Today Tonight* garnered news hungry viewers and those who were simply relaxing for the evening. Television programming in Ireland offered a narrow cache of choice and as a result audience expectations were close-knit who could easily anticipate what choices would be available to them through the national broadcaster. *Today Tonight* audiences knew that the programme would offer a magazine of current affairs including panel analysis, the provision of information from specialists on topics being discussed and opportunities for government representatives to discuss or

500 Gillett, James, “The Challenges of Institutionalisation for AIDS Media Activism” in *Media, Culture & Society* 25(2003) 609.

501 Mulholland, Joe, *Today Tonight* RTÉ archive reference 97D00735 Recorded 9/10/ 1985

502 Horgan, John, *Broadcasting and Public Life: RTÉ News and Current Affairs 1926-1997* (Dublin: Four Courts press, 2004) 159 - 160.

defend Dáil decisions. *Today Tonight* provided a platform upon which issues concerning Northern Ireland were aired, worker protest and unemployment could be discussed and in a didactic way information on AIDS could be communicated to the public. By drawing on the knowledge of volunteer groups in communicating information on AIDS to the public *Today Tonight* facilitated the movement of these groups into official discourse. “Gay Health Action” was a volunteer group which provided information on sexual health for gay people. In the programme members of “Gay Health Action” are shown answering phone calls from people seeking information. This group is significant for a number of reasons. It points to the contribution made by laterally formed volunteer groups to the construction of a new discourse of the body which interrupted the sealed “mechanism” of official discourse and structures.⁵⁰³ It did so in a way that ignored the illegal status of homosexuality in Ireland and contributed to the undermining of the binary social order that upheld the “conflated” relationship between the church and state.⁵⁰⁴ In creating new “concretions” from which new possibilities for communication and interaction between different positions emerged, lateral networks provided a channel through which medical information could be passed onto the general public. The momentum that had grown around the gay community and its voluntary groups are traced in an article entitled “The Gay Generation” in *In Dublin* in 1985. Rhona McSweeney remarks in “The Gay Generation” that “Dublin’s gay population, formerly invisible, have now begun to reflect the times that are in it and adopt a higher profile in the life of the city.”⁵⁰⁵ McSweeney also refers to the significance of work being done by members of the Hirschfield Centre a social space in Dublin where gay people could gather to discuss issues pertaining to gay rights and simply to meet other gay people. Lateral networks were certainly gathering force and significance in Irish society.

The increasing visibility of gay people also placed them in a more vulnerable position. Two young men were killed in 1985 as a consequence of malicious anti-gay attacks. Charlie Self’s and Declan Flynn’s murders led to the establishment of the Gay Defence

503 Colebrook, Claire, *Gilles Deleuze* 56.

504 O’Brien, Eugene, “‘The boat that moved’: The Catholic Church, Conflations and the Need for Critique” 92.

505 McSweeney, Rhona, “The Gay Generation” in *In Dublin* 234 (26 July – 7 August 1985) 6.

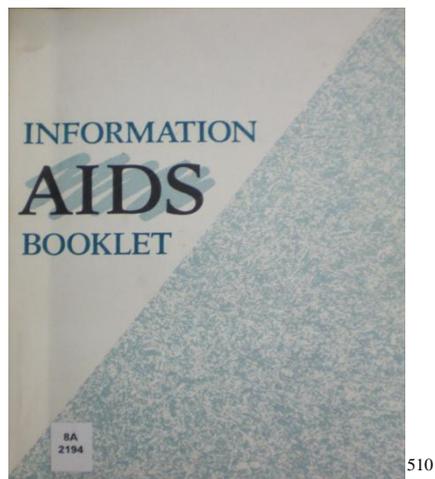
Committee which sought to raise awareness amongst gay people, as well as to protect gay people against what was considered the prejudices of the Gardaí when investigating crimes perpetrated against gay people. While gay people were becoming more visible it was still difficult for them to gain access to the mainstream media as McSweeney suggests when she points out that a gay rights march organised in reaction to the murders of Self and Flynn failed to receive any coverage on RTÉ television.⁵⁰⁶ At the same time however, official structures recognised the significance of the awareness of AIDS being raised within the gay community. The necessity of the work being done by “Gay Health Action” was also acknowledged by official structures when the Health Education Bureau provided an £800 grant to facilitate the production of an information pamphlet for “Gay Health Action” suggesting that the force which gathered around the AIDS body was, in some respects, becoming part of official power structures whose dynamic usually worked from the top down.⁵⁰⁷ Further recognition was afforded to the gay community in an article written by Nuala O’ Faolain who commends “our gay fellow citizens” who “alone...took responsibility for themselves” by communicating with gay people who were members of the gay community.⁵⁰⁸ Those who were not part of the gay community or whose sexuality and sexual practices were not known openly were more difficult to communicate with. In a later episode of *Today Tonight* broadcast in 1987 Dr Walsh, Deputy Chief Medical officer in the Department of Health also acknowledged moves made by the gay community in providing information aimed at other gay people.⁵⁰⁹ Accommodation and recognition of “Gay Health Action” points to the hegemonic interactions that gradually facilitated the recognition of, and communication with, the gay community and the networks they formed. The limits upon which official structures relied for their validity enabled the recognition of transgression so that it could preserve their dominance and domesticate what would, otherwise, could have become a destabilising entity.

506 McSweeney, Rhona, “The Gay Generation” in *In Dublin* 234 (26 July – 7 August 1985) 11.

507 Gay Health Action, *Information AIDS Booklet* (Dublin: GHA, 1986)

508 O’ Faolain, Nuala, “AIDS campaign short on street credibility” in *The Irish Times* 11 May 1987,12.

509 Heney, Michael, *Today Tonight* 1 RTÉ Archive 97D01625 Recorded 13/05/1987.



Confronting what had been consigned to the zones beyond recognition was made both possible and necessary by the need for official structures to access the knowledge and awareness of AIDS that was being fostered within those “concretions” in the 1980s. While being interviewed on the 1985 episode of *Today Tonight* Dr. Walsh remarks that “the man in the street seems to be confused about AIDS” whereas as gay people “know a lot” about AIDS. This remark is followed by a shot of an ambulance climbing a slight hill as its sirens alarm and the voice of reporter, Joe Carroll, stating matter-of-factly that “AIDS has arrived in Ireland”. The invisible boundaries created by ideals and perceptions of Irishness were just as pervious as political and geographical boundaries. The urgency of the ambulance, its sirens and the upward climb following Dr. Walsh’s observation suggests that in order to protect the general public from the spread of AIDS/HIV it is necessary to draw on the knowledge that exists within the gay community but that a need for urgency remained. Spokespersons for “Gay Health Action”, Donal Sheerin and Kierán Rose, both advised that through the provision of information the “disaster in America” can be avoided. They also suggest that the “gay hysteria” that had occurred there and which seemed an “added threat” to the challenged posed by AIDS could be lessened through the provision of information on AIDS. In providing a service that counteracted the usual top down structures that accompany health crises “Gay Health Action” mobilised medicalisation to empower a group that lay outside the “field ... of operations” that defined official structures and discourses.⁵¹¹ In one respect however, while this process may have created an ordered space for the

510 Gay Health Action, *Information AIDS Booklet* (Dublin: GHA, 1986).

511 Butler, Judith, *Undoing Gender* 32.

homosexual body within the dominant frameworks of society, it may also have created a space predisposed to further medicalisation. The advent of biomedicalisation may have reinforced this medicalisation in a way that pushed aspects of the queer body back towards the margins of the vexatious once more.

Before continuing with the analysis of *Today Tonight*, it is important to note that in the decades that followed the 1980s, the ongoing process of medicalisation was transformed globally by the clinical changes and innovations that lead to biomedicalisation. Following from these changes and innovations, came the advances in drugs used to treat HIV and AIDS and the success of some of these drugs has meant that living with HIV and living with AIDS became two separate phenomenon. People with HIV and AIDS may now live for longer periods of times than was previously possible and are more likely to die from associated illnesses rather than from the syndrome itself. Progress made in the development of AZT, drugs administered to people with HIV have transformed lifestyle expectations for those who can avail of them. People living with HIV may now do in a way that enables their participation in society in a way that was not possible during the 1980s. In a recent programme on Motor Neurone Disease (MND) profiling the life of well-known sports presenter Colum Murray, Professor Orla Hardiman noted “When I was a young doctor AIDS killed people. You got AIDS. you were dead. You know that was it. There was no hope. Now people who have AIDS have a normal life expectancy. That’s in the space of 30 years.”⁵¹² HIV and AIDS bodies we encounter today are conceptually and perceptually different to the AIDS body that emerged from an Irish context in the mid 1980s. Control exerted on the respective bodies through drugs and clinical innovations has also transformed them into different versions of HIV and AIDS bodies. Furthermore, the concept of HIV as a virus that largely affects men has also been discredited. While Farmer attributes this “mistaken” concept to “historical accident”, it is more precise to consider this change in perception as having been precipitated by a change in knowledge.⁵¹³ This chapter will consider the role of shifting cultural, political and social knowledges on the construction of the AIDS body that initially emerged in and from Irish society.

512 Rodgers, Anna, *MND: The Inside Track* (Dublin: Independent Pictures program for RTE, 2011) Broadcast on January 23rd 2012 on RTÉ.

513 Farmer, Paul, *Infections and Inequalities* 60.

The vexatious nature of the AIDS body that emerged in the 1980s was as much a result of the perception and conceptualisation of the syndrome as it was a construct of a particular culture during a time of transition for that culture. Indeed, the context from which AIDS emerged meant that in early narratives the HIV and AIDS body were conflated. Since differing agendas released different information into the public sphere, the distinction between the HIV and AIDS body was not distinguished consistently. In an analysis of a health education campaign run in Britain in 1986 Miller and Williams write that the conflict between competing agendas led to a series of advertisements that contained “text that was contradictory” and that contributed to public confusion about AIDS.⁵¹⁴ The type of knowledge required to make a discerning distinction between the two bodies was not available in the public sphere until the further research was conducted into the life of the virus and the development of the syndrome. By 1985 however, some distinctions had been made. At that point scientists had identified the difference between the early mutations of the virus in the body and a body which had entered a progressive stage of development. In this later stage the body was labelled as being in a state that gave rise to infection by other illnesses. Known as ARC, or the state in which the body is prone to develop an AIDS Related Complex of diseases, the body is represented in blue in a graphic presented in the aforementioned *Today, Tonight*.⁵¹⁵ The graphic is anchored by the text “20% develop ARC”, “70% do not progress” and “10% develop AIDS” in red font. The precision and clarity with which the information is related points to the categorisation and ordering of the AIDS body. However, the use of the colours red and blue reflect the shot of the climbing ambulance suggest that there is a continued need for urgency where AIDS is concerned. While the advisers from “Gay Health Action” seemed confident that the panic surrounding AIDS could be diminished and Dr. Walsh argued that there was “no need for the panic” that occurred in America to be replicated in Ireland, AIDS continued to be perceived as a vexatious entity and a cause for concern for the general public.

514 Miller, David and Kevin Williams, “The AIDS Public Education Campaign 1986-1990” in *Media Strategies, Representation and Audience Reception in the AIDS Crisis* Editors David Miller, Jenny Kitzinger, Kevin Williams and Peter Beharrell (London: Sage, 1998) 15.

515 Mullholland, Joe, *Today Tonight* RTÉ archive reference 97D00735 Recorded 9/10/ 1985.

Contradictions between calm and panic defined discussions of AIDS in Ireland over the following two years. Indeed, in other parts of the programme the continuation of the confusion and panic that initially defined AIDS is evident. The 1985 episode asks “Will there be a cure?” while, on screen, newspaper cutting after newspaper cutting, are laid on top of one another to create a cluttered montage of reports and headlines.⁵¹⁶ The paper cuttings placed on display represent the extent of coverage AIDS and HIV received in the print media during the mid 1980s. As one cutting overlaps the other it becomes clear that social, cultural and political discourses all contribute to the construction of the AIDS body and to the panic that surrounded the syndrome at the time, as well as to perpetuation of AIDS and HIV as news. In the course of the *Today Tonight* interview conducted with Dr. Walsh, it becomes clear that the AIDS test that was being used to identify those infected with HIV was unreliable and which caused a “Retesting (of) the test” to begin. Later, this test would become a major source of conflict when it was discovered that a number of people had received incorrect results and others received infected blood plasma transfusions. The confusion and inaccuracy of knowledge in the 1980s had detrimental effects which became clear in the course of a number of tribunals in the late 1990s and early twenty first-century. These tribunals examined the impact of this unreliable test on haemophiliacs and other people who had contracted HIV and hepatitis through state services that provided blood and plasma transfusions. The tribunals would not only perpetuate the medicalisation of the body but would create a juncture where AIDS body, the state, medicalisation and the judiciary would meet under a specific frame of reference.

Prior to this the AIDS body underwent a constant process of naming and acknowledgement. Categorisation of the AIDS body marked the initial steps in the recognition of that body’s difference. It no longer existed as an unnamed disrupting entity but as a biological interrupter that was entering into an ordering and controlling process administered by the spheres of medicine, society and the state. The capacity of these spheres to order the AIDS body was specific to the cultural, social and political context in which they operated and continue to operate. Medicalisation and official cultural narratives in Ireland during the 1980s were, in some respects, incompatible with each other and, consequently, produced incongruent bodies. However, medicalisation also offered official Ireland a discourse through which AIDS, the body and sexuality

⁵¹⁶ Mullholland, Joe, *Today Tonight* RTÉ archive reference 97D00735 Recorded 9/10/ 1985.

could be discussed. Limits transgressed by the HIV/AIDS body opened a channel through which the incongruent bodies of IV drug users, prostitutes, homosexuals, bisexuals and heterosexuals with multiple partners were pitched into the forefront of the public media sphere. Reaching a point at which these bodies could absorb each other, or somehow synthesise into a similar structure, was a vital part of the process that would attempt to bring order to the disorder visited upon official structures and discourses by this vexatious outburst.

Narrative constructions of these incongruent bodies were complicated further by the syndrome's failure to follow an exact pattern of deterioration for the infected body. Not only were these bodies not officially recognised but the processes set in motion by the virus within their bodies were unpredictable, adding to perception of high risk groups as being both chaotic and outside the usual parameters of normality. Suppressed immunity means that bodies may become infected by the viruses and bacteria it encounters and while within local regions patterns of contraction may occur, these same patterns may not be repeated elsewhere. As a result it seems that as AIDS develops, or becomes what is known as *full blown AIDS*, each infected body develops its own blueprint for deterioration through which the skin becomes broken and marked and the interior bodyscape is rendered unrecognisable as it breaks down and gradually becomes part of the outside. The patchy medical narrative that accompanied the emergence of AIDS meant that some of the behavioural patterns associated with the spread of the virus became increasingly drawn into medical narratives. In the public sphere AIDS became a syndrome associated with specific behaviour patterns and those patterns became more intricately intertwined with early medical narratives of AIDS. The AIDS body, as a result, became associated with patterns of behaviour that were already deemed vexatious, disrupting and were unrecognised.

People deemed likely to contract HIV were divided into high risk groups. The group to which people were assigned was determined according to their participation in specific behaviours. This created an early narrative of AIDS that operated on a hierarchical basis influenced and textured by traditional moral positions set out by the conservative ethos and habitus of official Ireland. Within that early narrative some bodies were deemed more predisposed to infection than other bodies. Bodies deemed predisposed to

infection were already perceived as possible contaminants in what otherwise was considered a healthy society. The taboo bodies were consequently catapulted as vexatious bodies from their silent existence beyond a recognised “field of ... operation” into foreground of the public sphere.⁵¹⁷ Nuances of their existence were ignored as statistical data became associated with the umbrella term of high risk groups. *Today Tonight*’s report provided statistics on the number of IV drug users who were tested randomly at Jervis Street Drug Clinic.⁵¹⁸ 28% of those tested presented antibodies in their blood that suggested they had been exposed to the virus. This statistic suggests that almost one third of intravenous drug users in Dublin were carrying HIV with the possibility of passing on the infection. This may have contributed to a fear of drug users in the city and created a sense of concentrated urban centers as being unsafe. An unnuanced or reductive use of statistics, an incomplete medical knowledge of AIDS and the life of the virus, coupled with the manipulation of pre-existing taboo status forged an early narrative of AIDS as a “ravishing disease” whose “toll” was “rising”.⁵¹⁹ Narratives constructed around the AIDS body attempted to neutralise its vexatious characteristics and to bring a sense of order while also stressing the need for urgency in resisting the disease. In some respects, the body was broken down into parts as an invisible virus is described as “invading” and hiding within T cells to “smoulder away” until T cells become “AIDS virus factories”.⁵²⁰ The body as a “mechanism” is interrupted at the level of both discourse and as a biological unit.⁵²¹ As a result, incongruent cultural and medical narratives merged within the AIDS body in a way that assisted the hegemonic induction of the AIDS body into official discourse. Official structures were undermined by vexatious events and entities were also characterised by the persistence of the nation-state’s conservative ethos and its supporting networks. The emergence of AIDS in Ireland was one of these vexatious occurrences.

517 Butler, Judith, *Undoing Gender* 32.

518 Mullholland, Joe, *Today Tonight* RTÉ archive reference 97D00735 Recorded 9/10/ 1985

519 Mullholland, Joe, *Today Tonight* RTÉ archive reference 97D00735 Recorded 9/10/ 1985

520 Mullholland, Joe, *Today Tonight* RTÉ archive reference 97D00735 Recorded 9/10/ 1985

521 Colebrook, Claire, *Gilles Deleuze* 56.

Media representation of AIDS occupied a tense space between official discourses, the prevailing national ethos and the construction of narratives in a changing society. Rather than considering it as part of the emergence of a global disease, interactions with and thinking about the AIDS body were conducted through previously established frameworks such as nationhood and national identity. In aforementioned episode of *Today Tonight* presenter Pat Kenny refers to the “Irish fight against this twentieth century killer” implying that Irishness was being challenged by disruptions associated with life in the twentieth-century.⁵²² In the episode AIDS, as an emerging syndrome, was compared to the Bubonic plague suggesting the re-surfacing of a terror of the destructive capacities of disease that existed prior to the type of medicalisation associated with modernisation. Evidence has emerged in recent research to suggest that repeated patterns of AIDS occur along global socio-economic tracks associated with poverty and the movement of migrant workers.⁵²³ If this is the case, then the social conditions in which infection occurs may contribute even further to the perception of the AIDS body as a vexatious one. In Ireland, as elsewhere, those conditions came to be associated with the unrecognised or already rejected elements of society such as IV drug user, urban poverty, prostitution and homosexuality. Later, biomedicalisation facilitated the distinction between the sexual practices associated with, but not necessarily confined to, these groups. Gradually the capacity of action to cause infection was given a more significant position in the discussion of the spread of HIV. Considerations of the universality of risk and the universality of bodies forged a space within the discourse of AIDS and HIV for this position until the knowledge necessary to construct that narrative however, moral panic and confusion characterised the medicalised HIV and AIDS bodies in Irish society.

The moral panic that surrounded the vexatious AIDS body in Ireland in the mid 1980s was also a reaction to the threat posed by a type of terrific poverty and disease that

522 Mullholland, Joe, *Today Tonight* RTÉ archive reference 97D00735 Recorded 9/10/ 1985

523 Paul Farmer argues that the spread of HIV infection both in and out of Haiti follows “the contours of a transnational socioeconomic order” and the “steep gradients of inequality, which are also the paths of labour migration and sexual commerce.” Farmer also argues that the re-emergence of TB in the late 20th century occurs along similar lines of inequality. TB has resurfaced in urban areas where migrant workers have taken up residence and within urban areas populated by those in a socioeconomic grouping where TB was never fully eradicated. Worsening conditions have resulted in as resurgence of TB in these areas. Paul, *Infections and Inequalities: The Modern Plagues* (London: University of California Press, 2001) 37-59.

resembled or were considered to recall the conditions that gave rise to the spread of the Bubonic plague. The plague, spread via fleas carried on the backs of rodents who moved from one landmass to another via trade routes, recalls the spread of HIV through sex tourism on particular travel routes which featured prominently in early narratives of AIDS. Suppressed immunity, bodies that existed beyond recognition and rejected elements created a channel through which a virus allowed a fear of a disintegrating and uncontrollable body associated with rodents, fleas and the movement of both goods and migrants around the world. It seems that when confronted with AIDS, official narratives were disabled by the fear the syndrome inspired. Disrupting and unsettling, AIDS undermined dominant discourses so that, by the middle of the 1980s, the AIDS body posed a destabilising threat to the constituent knowledges of official discourses. *Today Tonight* poses the question “AIDS: Will Ireland cope?” suggesting that AIDS had the potential to un-do Ireland or at least the constructed ideal of Irishness expressed through official structures and discourses.⁵²⁴ That is, mechanisms of the State, the relationship between the Church and State, and the cultural relationship between the dominant national ethos and the prevailing habitus were all upset and pressurised the emergence of AIDS. In this respect, the partial medicalisation of the body within the official national narrative offered a solution to the challenges the emergence of AIDS posed for concepts of Irishness. However, the hegemonic acceptance of that medicalisation presented another set of consequences which official Ireland would have to accommodate; that is the modernising force which medicalisation initiates and draws on, as well as further displacement of traditional framing narratives of morality. These consequences were to effect concepts of the family, problems associated with urban living and poverty and sexuality and had a long term impact on arguments that surrounded abortion and contraception.

Breaking a combination of taboos, the AIDS body challenged the parameters of dominant discourse. These challenges were then addressed through attempts to construct a new discourse of the body. The limitations of prevailing discourses restricted discussion of illness directly related to sexuality, sexual health and intravenous drug use. Previously excluded from recognition by the national “blind

⁵²⁴ Mullholland, Joe, *Today Tonight* RTÉ archive reference 97D00735 Recorded 9/10/ 1985.

spot”, these issues were pitched into the foreground of public perception.⁵²⁵ Language which described AIDS as a “killer disease without a cure” associated with “promiscuous homosexuals” and as a “fatal disease” contributed to the sense of threat AIDS posed to the general health of the population.⁵²⁶ While the urgency of address was undeniable, the difficulties concerned groups would encounter communicating information about AIDS quickly became clear. People with AIDS were perceived as “doomed AIDS victims” aligned with what were considered immoral and detrimental sexual practices.⁵²⁷ This type of narrative is similar to the narrative that had developed around AIDS in other countries earlier in the 1980s and is now recognised as being bound up with the cultural specificity of the context in which AIDS occurs.⁵²⁸ However, health promotion campaigns in Ireland would have to overcome the prejudices with which AIDS was met in other countries, as well as “Catholic social teaching” on sexuality and sexual practices that had been “engrained in Irish law” and society, in order to ensure their health messages reached the public.⁵²⁹ The success of health communications regarding AIDS and infection by HIV in Ireland was dependent on the nation’s confrontation with its “invisible blind spot” and the changes initiated by that confrontation. Communication about AIDS between official structures and the general public necessitated the shedding of limitations defined by official discourses, or, if the gap between the ill and healthy body was to remain defined, then at least some of those limitations would have to diminish in their significance.

Medicalisation, modernisation and the national ethos continued to draw on discourses that constituted the stereotypes associated with high risk groups. The 1985 episode of *Today Tonight* closes with a short in-studio discussion between presenter Pat Kenny and Professor Peto from the Institute of Cancer Research in London. Peto observes that the “heterosexual epidemic” which was already taking place in Africa could be a “sign of

525 Foucault, Michel, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1980) 4.

526 Mullholland, Joe, *Today Tonight* RTÉ archive reference 97D00735 Recorded 9/10/ 1985.

527Mullholland, Joe, *Today Tonight* RTÉ archive reference 97D00735 Recorded 9/10/ 1985.

528 Schiller Glick, Nina, “What’s Wrong with this Picture? The Hegemonic Construction of Culture in AIDS Research in the United States” in *Medical Anthropology Quarterly, New Series* 6.3(Sep 1992) 237.

529 Morash, Christopher, *A History of Irish Theatre 1601-2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) 219.

what we will see in the west in 10 to 15 years”.⁵³⁰ His observations reinforce remarks made in a report on the *RTÉ News* in the same year that AIDS was “not just a gay problem but a human problem”⁵³¹ and on the same episode of *Today Tonight* by American doctor Dr. G. E. Mayo who described the syndrome as being “everyone’s problem”.⁵³² The contradictions inherent in these statements are apparent when the stress placed on high risk groups is taken into account. On the one hand, each advisor is emphasising the universality of AIDS however, Dr. Peto also undermines gay identity and indeed suggests the recognition being afforded to AIDS was a result of its capacity to infect humans rather than simply gay people. The implications of this undermine suggestions of universality, as gay people are not recognised as human or, at least, what Dr. Peto considers to be human. This commentary follows the close of the recorded section of *Today Tonight* which featured interviews with members of “Gay Health Action” and Dr Walsh. Dr. Walsh’s final comments observe that “dealing with AIDS brings out our attitudes on sexuality and indeed on death” while the reporter, Joe Carroll, remarks that homeless people, homosexuals and drug users are on the “frontline of the AIDS epidemic” indicating that while on the one hand, parts of the *Today Tonight* report attempted to portray AIDS as a universal problem that could disrupt the workings of any body. On the other hand elements of the report continue to emphasise and differentiate between bodies.

Carroll’s closing comments are heard while night shots of Dublin’s city centre focus on a block of city toilets. The series of shots and the voiceover interprets AIDS as being a result of the meetings of groups of people in what the reporter calls the “underworld” of the city. While these meetings occur in a transitory way, they produce temporary “concretions” or knots of activity across the lateral networks of unofficial, rejected Ireland.⁵³³ Those “concretions” are part of the “frontline” and constitute the first knots of activity through which HIV is perceived to be passed on from one person to another. Despite an increase in the medicalisation of what lay outside the official discourse of

530 Mullholland, Joe, *Today Tonight* RTÉ archive reference 97D00735 Recorded 9/10/ 1985.

531 *RTÉ News* in RTÉ Archive BN85/248. Broadcast on 5/01/1985.

532 Mullholland, Joe, *Today Tonight* RTÉ archive reference 97D00735 Recorded 9/10/ 1985.

533 Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari *A thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* 7.

Irishness, AIDS continued to be perceived as part of an “underworld” that threatened to spill over into the official structures of Irish society and instilled fear that Ireland, as part of the western world, would eventually experience an AIDS epidemic of the same proportion as the epidemic in Africa. The programme closes with Professor Peto’s recommendation that “all gays should be tested” which served to reinforce idea that AIDS was related to specifically to high risk groups rather than to high risk practices. Once again attempts to communicate the potential of the virus to effect anyone is undermined by a fall back into stereotypical concerns associated with what were seen as high risk groups. The gap that lay between official and unofficial discourse was beginning to be addressed by medicalisation and its discourse. However, the confusion and contradictions that existed in Irish broadcasting in the mid-1980s is also evident. The use of traditional stereotypes seemed to inhibit the development of a vocabulary of AIDS that addressed the virus and the syndrome rather than the idea of high risk groups.

Tensions between the counteracting discourses that competed to construct the emerging AIDS body may be traced through representations of AIDS outside of this particular episode. These tensions, as the rest of this chapter will show, drew on the narratives that had already been constructed around issues of the body, the family, abortion and contraception, drug users as a rejected urban problem, homosexuality, women and prostitution. Teased out by the interplay between the perlocutionary and illocutionary aspects of media discourse, those tensions continued to build between 1985 and 1987 when the government released an AIDS information booklet published by the Health Education Bureau. The information booklet and accompanying advertisements caused such consternation that a whole episode of *The Late Late Show* was devoted to addressing the concerns of the public. While the perlocutionary aspects of media discourse sought to provide information and report the news, the perlocutionary aspects of those reports forged a new semantic space for the AIDS body. This was achieved through the media’s use of language released into the public sphere through medicalisation word by word and phrase by phrase while also drawing on pre-existing discourses. By approaching official discourse as being constituted by a collage of knowledges this research will examine the tensions that built up between the illocutionary and perlocutionary aspects of official discourses of the body during the emergence of AIDS as well as considering medicalisation as one of the conduits that

developed within official structures that facilitated the hegemonic accommodations of its vexatious emergence.

An initial reading of early communications on AIDS suggests that they were defined by their perfunctory qualities as well as by their failure to refer to the situation relating to AIDS in Ireland. For instance, when the AIDS virus was isolated in 1984 *The Irish Times* was the only national broadsheet to publish a report on the scientific breakthrough. The report however, was brief and referred to AIDS as a syndrome that had become “common among promiscuous homosexuals in New York and San Francisco”.⁵³⁴ The report went on to assert that “there is no cure in the pipeline – there is no vaccine in the pipeline” which suggests that scientific discoveries and developments usually occur in a streamlined way but have been interrupted by the emergence of AIDS. The report also clearly communicates the fact that there is no vaccine available to the general public. In some respects, what appears as the interruption of scientific development also points to the edge of processes of modernisation and medicalisation which would be partially overcome by the arrival of biomedicalisation, biotechnology and globalisation and the epistemic shift they induced. In the meantime, the construction of a narrative of AIDS continued to reinforce stereotypical representations, prejudices and the overall dominant framework of morality while also forging a new space through which medicalisation could induce adjustments within acceptable rubrics of Irishness and its relationship with the body.

Like the *Today Tonight* report, elements of this 1984 newspaper report can be considered both illocutionary and perlocutionary. While they draw on the discourse of medicalisation, both reports recourse to pre-existing narratives of the body in order to situate the need for medicalisation of official discourse and to contextualise the use of scientific/medical language. The re-constitution of official discourse through the introduction of new knowledges was being introduced into the public sphere at a gradual pace. Not purposefully because neither the institutions of the media nor its readership were prepared for a radical shift in discourse. A radical shift would have created an inaccessible discourse. Despite this, a new vocabulary of the body was

534 Anon, “US team isolates AIDS virus” in *The Irish Times* 19 April 1984, 4.

gradually introduced using the language of medicalisation. As we have seen from *Today Tonight* acronyms such as AIDS, HIV and ARC amongst others were becoming part of daily language usage. The presence of the AIDS and HIV infected bodies during primetime television broadcasting also points to the gradual expansion of discourses of the body and the creation of an AIDS vocabulary compatible with official discourse.

Closing the gap between dominant discourses and vexatious elements of society involves confronting society's "invisible blind spot" as was noted earlier.⁵³⁵ Medicalisation created a conduit through which the vexatious could be approached obliquely. Previously Irish society had elided its "blind spot" by applying structural pressures that created categories of legitimacy that consigned the illegitimate to an invisible space beyond the recognised "field of ... operation".⁵³⁶ The pressures of "majoritarianism" and what was considered the "natural law" reinforced those structural pressures. They were also used to "justify the positive legislation relative to sexual morality" making the introduction of change on an official level very difficult.⁵³⁷ The need to protect the majority from the effects of AIDS and the perceived need to control what came to be seen as high risk groups on the one hand undid the rules surrounding sexuality that had condoned "majoritarianism" while also preventing the complete collapse between the national habitus, ethos and the vexatious. The tensions that grew during the delicate interplay between dominant discourses which were, in some respects, portrayed as atavistic and emerging discourses may be traced through the perlocutionary and illocutionary aspects of media discourse.

Perlocutionary acts of representation confined the agency of discourse to the general framework of moral consensus that had developed over time. However, when media representations became media events, as certain episodes of *The Spike* did, the extent to which perlocutionary acts can become removed from their illocutionary elements illustrates the limits of dominant discourse more clearly. Media events like *The Spike*

535 Foucault, Michel, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* 4.

536 Butler, Judith, *Undoing Gender* 32.

537 Hug, Chrystel, *The Politics of Sexual Morality in Ireland* Consultant Editor Jo Campling (New York: Palgrave, 1999) 3.

also illustrate how much pressure may be applied to official structures before official institutions move to control that act. Untangling what was seen as the “natural law” and the drive of “majoritarianism”⁵³⁸ from the “conflated”⁵³⁹ relationship between the church and state, in order to assert the rights of the individual, involved confronting that “blind spot”.⁵⁴⁰ As a result, tensions between what was perceived as legitimate and what was considered contrary to the ethos that moulded that legitimacy were heightened, initiating a shift in discourse that gave dominant discourses a kaleidoscopic quality. That is, dominant discourses focus on the elements of perlocutionary acts that may be accommodated within official structures. While facilitating inclusion, that kaleidoscopic quality reflects the primary concerns of dominant discourses. In short, that self-reflecting kaleidoscopic quality denotes a hegemonic accommodation of the vexatious within dominant discourses. It results in a selective inclusion of vexatious elements rendering them benign, and, partially included. In the case of AIDS that kaleidoscopic inclusion enabled discourses of medicalisation to facilitate both discussion of the syndrome and interaction with the lateral knots of activity that were bringing knowledge and the vexatious together. It also built on the effects of perlocutionary speech acts that had contributed to the expansion of discourses of Irishness during the preceding decades.

Despite adjustments to the constituent parts of official discourse and knowledge, the contradictions inherent in Irish society became increasingly apparent with the emergence of AIDS. Not only was the vexatious brought to the fore in the media and, hence, public consciousness, but it quickly became clear that AIDS would not be retreating from that position in the near future. Cultural, social and political discourses were being challenged and exposure to new language and ideas were pressurising these aspects of the national habitus and ethos into an accelerated modernisation. However, these structures and discourses had been undermined by a number of different phenomena for some time. Programmes like *The Spike* point to the splintering of the national narrative in the late 1970s and the gradual erosion of tightly knit structures and networks that had formed the “mechanistic” space of the body in Irish society.

538 Hug, Chrystel, *The Politics of Sexual Morality in Ireland* 3.

539 O’Brien, Eugene, “‘The boat that moved’: The Catholic Church, Conflations and the Need for Critique” 92.

540 Foucault, Michel, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* 4.

Discourses of Irishness were robust and had become deeply rooted in Irish society. However, they had also been undergoing considerable challenges and expansion over a number of decades. National structures of ethos and habitus were splintering gradually and giving way to the pressures being applied to them. Despite this splintering, the emergence of AIDS still caused shock waves, initially felt as a quiver, until the urgency of the situation sent strong reverberations through social sectors which previously seemed unaltered by the changes taking place. A significant recalibration of the vectors that defined the space of the body in Irish society, and particularly within the Irish media, was taking place. The role played by the media and in particular by *The Late, Late Show* in bringing attention to matters of contraception surrounding HIV, indicates a fracturing of the relationship between the language mobilised by the media and the vocabulary of official structures, the national ethos and habitus and the difficulties many people had with the recalibration that was taking place.

When confronted by AIDS the gradual splintering of the national ethos and habitus seemed to point to an inevitable acceleration of that fracturing. The re-calibration that took place however, was part of a process that had been at work for some time and facilitated the creation of a medicalised space within dominant discourse. Sexuality and drug use had been partially addressed during the 1960s and 1970s. The government had established a Health Education Bureau in 1968 which, amongst other services, provided information on the dangers of drug abuse. In counteracting official discourses on contraception, a group of volunteers established the Irish Family Planning Association in 1969 bringing people together across networks and class structures to create knots of activity that placed upward pressure on official structures and discourses. Since then, the IFPA has developed into a charity that provides information on a number of aspects of sexual health, pointing to the expansion of discourses of the body in Irish society to include more detailed discourses of the biological body than had previously existed. However, during the period from 1960 to the emergence of AIDS in the 1980s, the impact of emerging discourses of drug abuse and sexuality was uneven, and, failed to influence all sectors of Irish society in the same way. Some sectors had already engaged with discourses like that of the Women's Movement and campaigns for equality for members of the gay community which challenged traditional ideals of official Ireland. Channels required to address complications of the traditional body were already in place

within those movements. However, as previously stated the same cannot be said of all sectors of Irish society.

Perlocutionary acts are limited by the context in which they occur. The uneven effect of discourse bears testimony to the limits of perlocution. Those limits were more pronounced where dominant discourses were enforced by lived practices. Rather than utilising medical and/or scientific terms to discuss the body, discourses of conservative Catholic morality and middle class respectability had addressed sexuality and drug use through a moral lens that perpetuated indirect, descriptive language. As a result, the thick web of language that upheld official discourse was more difficult to undermine. Limitations may be transgressed, leading the perlocution of an act to become a media event which has an effect larger and more unsettling than intended or anticipated. However, the limits of those acts may also be inhibited by the depth of resistance they encounter in a culture or part of a culture whose defining characteristics are embedded as scaffolding for a network of communities, a whole habitus and ethos. Many of the political and civil movements of the 1960s and 1970s were organised by an emerging educated middle class. The activism and protest discourses adopted by those movements did not impact upon those outside of that sphere in the same way. Consequently, the discourses necessary to speak directly about issues of sexual health and drug use were in some regards under-developed, and incapable of reacting to complications being experienced by the traditional body and to the growing use of intravenous drugs in Ireland as problems of a modernised nation.

Discourses of Irishness had embraced change in other respects and had also readily facilitated the inclusion of economic discourses of modernisation. There was an enthusiasm for change that was considered a route to the end of emigration and a growth in employment in the late 1950s and 1960s when The Program for Economic expansion - more commonly known as the Whitaker report - sought to prompt economic modernisation. Entry into the EEC was also welcomed although not by all sectors. Overall however, attempts to instigate more direct social change were met with resistance and suspicion. The campaign to introduce changes to laws surrounding contraception found it very difficult to find a place on government agendas. Changes and proposed changes in relation to the family and the management of reproduction

perpetuated the tension between the official and emergent cultures in Ireland in the 1970s. The introduction of an unmarried mother's allowance into the social welfare system in 1973 may be considered one of these changes. After 1973, however, succeeding governments resisted making changes to welfare law and the constitution that would induce the integration of the needs of the family into the social welfare system.⁵⁴¹ Proposed changes to the law surrounding contraception were also rejected in 1979. Later the pressures of social change forced official state structures to partially address the fragmentation of what were perceived as markers of Irishness, including the role of the traditional family unit. Despite social and some constitutional changes incurred between the 1960s and 1980s incidents, such as the 'Kerry Babies Case' and the death of Ann Lovett, shocked Irish society. Indicative of what were seen as illegitimate behaviour, both cases brought the vexatious into the limelight. Each of these events challenged ideals surrounding sexuality and the family in Irish society and as result undermined official discourse.

Both events indicate that despite some social and constitutional changes deep contradictions continued to exist in Irish society. If, as Dr. Walsh suggested on *Today Tonight*, AIDS highlighted attitudes towards death and sexuality, then so too did the "Kerry Babies Case" and the death of Ann Lovett. In her critique of the state's provision of information on AIDS, columnist and novelist Nuala O' Faolain observes that AIDS was upsetting normal behavioural expectations. She remarks "Everyone is behaving wildly. Poor Rory O'Hanlon (TD) has to break the habit of a lifetime and say condom hundreds of times a day".⁵⁴² Later that week the episode of *The Late Late Show* mentioned earlier confronted the habitus and ethos of individuals within a society that had partially moved away from the prudery fostered by social control during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. However, one shocked audience member referred to condoms as "French Letters" and voiced his disgust at RTÉ's demonstration and discussion of condom use. The use of the phrase "French letters", an archaic name for condoms, rather than the contemporary name for that type of contraception suggests a linguistic resistance against the new modes of language being introduced as a result of the emergence of AIDS. As part of this episode of the Saturday night chat show the

541 Ferriter, Diarmaid, *The Transformation of Ireland 1979-2000* (London: Profile Books, 2005) 666.

542 O' Faolain, Nuala, "AIDS Campaign Short on Street Credibility" in *The Irish Times* 11 May 1987, 12.

presenter, Gay Byrne, chaired a discussion of the impact of AIDS on Irish society and demonstrated how a condom should be used correctly in order to prevent the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.⁵⁴³ The episode will be analysed in more depth later, however, for the moment, the archaic language and the shock expressed by audience member points to the gaps that existed within both language and knowledge at the time as well as between traditional Ireland and the partially modernised Ireland.

In a perlocutionary analysis the use of the name “French letter” implies an inability, within certain groups and by some individuals, to confront contemporary issues through contemporary language. As a result, the use of an archaic term like “French letters” presents the resistant elements of official Ireland as archaic and suggests that the past is revisiting the present just, as Pat Kenny’s reference to the Bubonic plague on *Today Tonight* recalled the past or suggested a clash of the past with the present. Similarly, the past seemed to haunt the present in *The Spike*. Oblique language encapsulates an attitude to sexuality that was difficult to sustain when confronted with AIDS in a world where sexual activity was being openly acknowledged. The *Late Late Show* did not simply provide a perfunctory demonstration of condom usage; it also opened up a number of channels through which audience and panel members could express their opinions and ask questions. A more long term perlocutionary effect however is evident in the newspaper articles published in the ensuing days. The following week *The Irish Times* printed an article in which Reverend Paul Lavelle, the pastoral care co-ordinator on the National Task Force on AIDS, supported the demonstration on condom use on *The Late Late Show*. Reverend Lavelle went on to suggest that a similar type of demonstration should have been “on page one of the Government leaflet, not page nine” of the pamphlet published by the Health Education Bureau.⁵⁴⁴

Reverend Lavelle’s critique of government approaches to AIDS may seem unorthodox when read in relation to his position within the church. However, a number of articles critiquing the interaction between the state and the general public on issues relating to AIDS and contraception were published from other sectors of Irish society. For

543 Gay, Byrne, *The Late, Late Show* RTÉ archive 96D00773. Recorded 15/05/1987.

544 Yeates, Padraig, “AIDS Campaign Not Explicit Enough” in *The Irish Times* 18 May 1987, 9.

instance, in 1986 the Irish Family Planning Association announced their frustration over the government's failure to address AIDS adequately. Christine Donaghy, the IFPA's information officer voiced the association's concern at the government's failure to advocate the use of condoms in preventing the spread of HIV and anticipated that the planned 1987 education campaign would not do so either.⁵⁴⁵ Furthermore, when the campaign was released it was criticised for advocating fidelity over condom use as the IFPA had anticipated. The campaign advocated "personal responsibility" and did not "recommend condoms as an effective defence against AIDS".⁵⁴⁶ The emphasis placed on fidelity suggests recourse to the absolute rules bound up with marriage and the family. What may seem like an atavistic re-surfacing of traditional attitudes may also be interpreted as a mistrust of condoms as part of a modernised technology of the body. Following from this, condoms may be perceived as a weak defence between accelerated modernisation, the limits of modernisation and the possible overwhelming of the present by a virus that is considered similar to diseases that defined the great plagues of the times. In some respects the AIDS information campaign released by the government on the first day of May in 1987 had a perlocutionary effect that distracted from the illocutionary aims of the campaign. That is, the reaction to the campaign overshadowed the information being relayed and led to the devotion of the aforementioned episode of *The Late Late Show* to the discussion of AIDS in a way that aimed to quell public anger and confusion that had surfaced in society.

When Irish society arrived at the point where ignoring AIDS was no longer possible the discourse that emerged in the mainstream media reflected issues that had been discussed for the previous decade. The question of contraception was central to the discussion of AIDS and in some respects by 1987, it had overwhelmed the discussion of solutions in relation to preventing the spread of HIV amongst intravenous drug users. In 1986 a protest held by prisoners at Arbour Hill highlighted the needs of intravenous drug users and the extreme pressure that was being placed on official structures from both within and without. This incident will be discussed later in relation to the spread of heroin use in Dublin. For the moment however, it serves to illustrate the overwhelming concentration on issues of contraception by both the public and the media as AIDS

545 Pollak, Andy, "IFPA plans own AIDS Campaign" in *The Irish Times* 11 December 1986, 9.

546 Armstrong, John, "Fidelity Central to Government AIDS Campaign" in *The Irish Times* 2 May 1987, 1.

discourse developed. While contraception was treated as a contentious issue on *The Late Late Show*, it had been approached elsewhere through humour and irony. Prior to the eruption of public moralism in reaction to AIDS and the associated advocated use of condoms, contraception had been treated with an ironic touch. A cartoon that appeared in the satirical magazine *The Phoenix* in 1984 implies that the shock expressed by the audience member was confined to some sectors of society. Anchored by the caption “Irish Shop Keeper Prepares for Tourist Season”, *The Phoenix* cartoon, shows an elderly woman standing behind a shop counter. One of the signs advertising “Hand Woven Irish Tweed Condoms” implies that the condoms were part of the commodification of traditional ideas of Irishness that were being repackaged to fit into a cultural map of contemporary times.⁵⁴⁷ There is also a suggestion that resisting modernisation is, in some ways, both ill-advised in biological terms but also impossible. The presence of contraceptives in Irish society, that is of a technology of the body associated with modernisation, was being acknowledged in an oblique manner. A quaint, oblique approach to condoms was, it seems, one of the few ways accommodations within the national narrative could be achieved. Such gaps may continue to exist. However, neither the type of knowledge nor the language required to discuss AIDS, the body and sexuality were part of the prevailing habitus of Irish society at that time. The contradictions which the emergence of AIDS forced into the public sphere have been partially recognised during the 1970s when members of the Women’s Movement brought contraceptives across the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.



⁵⁴⁷ Anon, “Irish Shop Keeper Prepares for Tourist Season” in *The Phoenix* 25.10 (1984) 22.

Contraceptives were being imported by both mail order and other means for a number of decades. In fact eight years before the Health Act, in 1971, members of the Irish Women's Liberation Movement (IWLM) and others had travelled to Northern Ireland on what has come to be known as the "Contraceptive Train" and returned into the Republic with a consignment of birth control pills which were banned under the 1935 Criminal law Amendment Act. The "Contraceptive Train" and other protests organised by the Women's Movement throughout the 1970s pressurised the government to pay attention to changes taking place in the national ethos and habitus. A group of young, motivated and educated women had emerged from the grass roots movements of the 1960s. They were media-savvy and used that knowledge to influence and mobilise the mass media and other social institutions around their cause. As Connolly and O' Toole argue the Women's Movement was successful at "mobilising the energy of young educated women; creating a forum for consciousness raising; influencing the mass media; and developing a new radical politics in Ireland."⁵⁴⁸ The Women's Movement transferred media skills acquired when working within alternative media to the mainstream media. Cristina Murphy in *The Irish Times* acknowledges the mobilisation of the mass media by the Women's Movement. In "The New Feminism" Murphy writes that women have "gone on television to talk about being single mothers, admitted publicly to being battered, deserted and sexually frustrated; they've even talked to Gay Byrne on the radio."⁵⁴⁹ The call for the legalisation of contraceptives gathered momentum as a result of the Women's Movement and the pressure it applied to the official structures of Irish society. Gradually, that pressure began to close the gap that had developed between modernisation and the unrecognised and rejected elements of Irish society.

The "Contraceptive Trains" incident has been widely documented elsewhere, but for the purpose of this research, that train trip is significant for two reasons. First of all the trip demonstrated the ease with which birth control pills were brought into the Republic and the pervious nature of political, cultural and social borders.⁵⁵⁰ It also points to the double standards that existed within Irish society. Those standards facilitated the prescribing of contraceptives by GPs across the country despite their illegal status. In 1978 David

⁵⁴⁸ Connolly, Linda and Tina O'Toole *Documenting Irish Feminisms* 27,

⁵⁴⁹ Murphy, Christina "The New Feminism" in *The Irish Times* 9 January, 1978, 10.

Nowlan wrote in *The Irish Times* that there was a “fairly widespread use of the pill in Ireland”.⁵⁵¹ The ideals which surrounded concepts of the traditional family in Irish society were also characterised by their silent flexibility. Despite the silent flexibility of the family in Irish society, the relationship between the body, contraception, intravenous drug use and AIDS was to pitch that flexibility into the open. The relationship of mothers who contracted HIV through prostitution and intravenous drug use to these issues brought another complication to the emerging narrative of AIDS in Ireland. This complication will be considered through an analysis of a second episode of *Today Tonight* later in this chapter.

In a broader consideration, the attention that contraception received in the discussion of the 1979 Health Act may be looked upon as a touchstone for the movement towards an emergent politics of the individual and the place that individual occupied within discourses of the body. The 1979 Health Act can also be considered an attempt by the State to address the pressure placed on it by active groups who sought a de-regulation of family planning laws. This pressure points to the active concerns emanating from emergent “concretions” and the knots of activity they were generating throughout the nineteen sixties, seventies and nineteen eighties.⁵⁵² Contraception had received continuous media attention throughout the 1970s, mainly as a result of the mobilisation of the Women’s Movement. The 1979 Health Act, revoked Section 17 of the 1935 Criminal Law Act which banned the importation, sale or advertising of contraceptives. Campaigners hoped that the new Health Act would be more liberal. However, after intense public debate, the Act continued to confine the legal use of contraceptives to married couples for medical reasons only, or, to those with family planning as a genuine intent. As a title, The Family Planning Act, as it came to be known, suggests the use of technologies of the body to both undo traditional attitudes to sex and families as well as to maintain the structures of the family. In short, a more liberated attitude to sex and the freedoms contraception was considered to bring was being discussed through the discourse of the family. In treating contraception as an issue that concerned only families the Act failed to address issues surrounding the freedoms of the individual was

551 Nowlan, David, “7 brands of pill ‘should be banned’” in *The Irish Times* 14 February 1978, 1.

552 Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* Translated by Brian Massumi 7.

also avoided. Once again this oblique approach to sexuality suggests a resistance to modernisation and to what was perceived as a negative effect of modernity.

The 1979 Health Act caused significant conflict and debate within the media and the Dáil, much of which arose from the government's reluctance to interfere with the structures and laws of the nation state that had developed out of the "conflation" of the Church and the State.⁵⁵³ This reluctance is of particular relevance to the government's approach to the role and space of the family in Irish society. Marital privacy, and what was seen as the integrity of the traditional family unit, continued to be dominated by the discourses of a conservative Catholic ethos which the state was hesitant to challenge. Reluctance to engage with emerging discourses of the body was no longer possible to sustain once AIDS became part of public life in Ireland. Not only that but official discourse and structures could no longer ignore the "bulbs" and "tubers" that had been gathering in and across unofficial networks and which were also reaching upwards with more influence than ever before.⁵⁵⁴ The promotion of the rights and freedoms of the individual were also becoming impossible to ignore. Confronting AIDS also meant that the sexual practices of unrecognised groups and individuals would have to be prioritised over the traditional attitudes surrounding ideals of the family that were bound up with perceptions of Irishness.

By the time the 1979 Health Act reached the statute books some sectors of Irish media and society were treating the gap between the official and the unrecognised with an ironic awareness. Indeed, the 1979 Health Act, which came to be known as the Family Planning Act, was also dubbed the "Haughey Pill Bill" after the then Minister for Health, Charles Haughey, indicating a jovial familiarity with the subject of contraception, despite its illegal status.⁵⁵⁵ An article in *Hot press* that commented on the proposed bill is headed by the quip "Happy Couples Ain't No Friends of Charlie's".⁵⁵⁶

553 O'Brien, Eugene, "The boat that moved": The Catholic Church, Conflations and the Need for Critique" 92.

554 Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* Translated by Brian Massumi 7.

555 Slang name for the 1979 Health Act is quoted in an article from *Magill*. Trench, Brian, The Knights of the Long Knives Against Contraception in *Magill* January 4 (1979) 17.

556 Anon, "Happy Couples Ain't No Friends of Charlie's" in *Hot press* 3. 3 (1978) 7.

The accompanying graphics show two couples, possibly television couples, embracing each other suggesting that romance and sexual behaviour is commonplace. However, the illegal status of contraceptives and the government's reluctance to legalise them suggests the State's continued support of a conservative Catholic ethos. The headline suggests that the government were unlikely to introduce radical changes that could be perceived as supporting a liberal agenda.



The unifying “gaze”⁵⁵⁷ of surveillance and self-discipline was undergoing slight adjustments and while this was not acknowledged on an official level some moves made towards change indicate that the government was aware of the need to attend to those changes. In Irish society the locus of the family functioned in a similar way to what Foucault terms the “medical gaze”. Narratives that structured both the family and the “mechanistic” body radiated from a centralised network of institutions and relationships that perpetuated discipline and surveillance. On a macro level that nexus of discourses, interconnections and relationships radiated outwards and influenced the national habitus and shared national ethos. The first Family Planning Clinic, established in 1963 within the National Maternity Hospital at Holles Street in Dublin city, can be considered an example of this outward radiation of networks that was contributing to a slight reconstitution of the family through a medicalised “gaze”. The clinic was permitted to provide information on natural approaches to family planning permissible within a Catholic ethos. The provision of information aimed particularly at women was a significant move towards the empowerment of women and the recognition of their right to information. By 1969 a Family Planning Rights group was established and, as documented by Connolly and O’Toole, a Fertility Guidance Clinic was opened in Dublin. Amongst other programmes and associations, the Contraceptive Action Programme was set up in 1971 and, while condoms were not made legally available until the 1985, a channel opened through which information and contraceptives could be

557 Foucault, Michel, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception* (London: Tavistock Publication, 1976) 29.

distributed. Controversial Well Woman Centers were also opened in Dublin in the late 1970s; while the opening met with considerable protest, by 1984 the Minister for Health, Mr. Desmond, performed the official opening ceremony of a Well Woman Center in the capital indicating a change in government attitudes towards the centers.

The more liberal sectors of the media continued to acknowledge the widespread availability of contraceptives in Irish society. The ease with which students at University College Dublin (UCD) could obtain contraceptive caused a degree of shock in 1978.⁵⁵⁸ A year later, however, *In Dublin* published a cartoon that made light of the availability of condoms to students of Irish universities and in particular to students of UCD indicating that a generation of young people were availing of contraceptives and counteracting official structures and discourses.⁵⁵⁹ However, in the same month *The Irish Times* reported that the Eastern Health Board (EHB) had made a decision to establish structures that would ensure it was involved with provision of information on family planning.⁵⁶⁰ While the EHB did not have the jurisdiction to provide contraceptives, it seems it was willing to break away from the legal expectation that an official structure should not accommodate the un-recognised elements of society. The dominant “field of ... operations” was gradually expanding. The accumulated pressures applied to the official structures of the state brought about the 1979 Health Act. Following from this, the Health Act may, in some respects, be viewed as an attempt to regulate and acknowledge the hidden sexual behaviours of a great number of people and their partially concealed management of reproduction. And, although it was unsuccessful, it may also be considered as an attempt to close the gap between official and unofficial structures of society.

558 Walsh, J, “Revealed – how U.C.D. students got contraceptives ...free!” in *The Irish Independent* 16 March 1978, 9.

559 Anon, “Durex Large” in *In Dublin* 71 (1979) 17.

560 Anon, “Family Planning” in *The Irish Times* 3 March 1978, 1.

**Revealed —
how U.C.D.
students
got 800
contraceptives
... free!**



To some, it may have seemed that the singularity of the traditional family unit was under attack. A number of groups concerned with the morality of the nation and, in particular, with the protection of the traditional family unit emerged in the 1970s. Later, in support of the 1983 referendum on abortion, some of the groups such as the Council of Social Concern, the League of Decency and the Irish Family League amalgamated under the umbrella organisation the Pro Life Amendment Campaign (PLAC).⁵⁶¹ Active morality groups had existed in Ireland prior to the 1970s and indeed they were not unique to Ireland. A number of concerned morality groups existed in Britain, and in fact, in 1980 a branch of the Responsible Society, which had been established in Britain in 1971, was set up in Ireland by Bernadette Bonar. Earlier in the century other morality groups had campaigned in support of censorship and, as mentioned in chapter three, these groups were vocal in their critique of the material supplied by cinema proprietors for viewing in Irish cinemas.⁵⁶² The rise of groups that supported conservative Catholic morality in the 1970s is indicative of a vociferous response to the challenges that were being posed to the traditional structures of the state and consequently to the parameters of the “field of ... operation” that facilitated the recognition of permissible identities, ideals and the habitus associated with them.⁵⁶³ These groups grew across the structural

⁵⁶¹ See Ferriter, Diarmaid *Occasions of Sin* 465

⁵⁶² See Denis Condon’s research on early Irish cinemas for further development of this point as indicated in the previous chapter. Condon, Dennis, *Early Irish Cinema 1895-1921* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2008) 211-267.

⁵⁶³ Butler, Judith, *Undoing Gender* 32.

surface of society and, in this case, the knots of activity they generated served to uphold rather than subvert official structures. In their reinforcement they also sealed their approach to the body, sex and sexuality in traditional attitudes formed from conservative Catholic morality and middle class respectability. Changes occurring elsewhere in society were encountered with resistance within those groups. Their position on abortion and contraception remained intact if not immovable. Consequently, the outburst of the vexatious AIDS and the recalibration of knowledge it caused posed a significant challenge to the ideals around which these groups had grown.

The AIDS body emerged from a nexus of discourses that could no longer be contained by the discourses traditionally held as dominant in Irish society. Susan Sontag described the discourses that surrounded AIDS elsewhere as being characterised by narratives of hyper-sexuality and isolation.⁵⁶⁴ Similar narratives surrounded the AIDS body in the Irish context however, the containing capacities of dominating discourses meant that the language available to discuss hyper-sexuality was intertwined with narratives of morality and class respectability and was, as a result, dependent on a code or register that seemed, to some, redundant and, even, atavistic. One example of this may be found in the aforementioned reference to “French Letters” on the *Late Late Show*. To many, the dominant monoglotic lens of perception structured conservative respectability and positioned the body within that limited perception. As a result the measure of what constituted hypersexuality varied across society. Nonetheless, the conflation of hypersexuality with the AIDS body was presented across the media as a constant threat to familiar structures. Representations of AIDS presented the syndromes as an entity that cut across concrete and abstract structures, to undermine what was seen as the core element of Irish society, the family.

AIDS had a significant impact on the concept of the family as well as on actual families. The family controlled and contained sex and sexuality within very specific terms and behaviours. A syndrome associated with hyper-sexuality and drug use undermined those ideals. The significance of this focus on the family in this research lies in its disintegration and the disintegration of accompanying narratives which were being

⁵⁶⁴ Sontag, Susan, *AIDS and its Metaphors* (London: Penguin Classics, 1990) 11.

disrupted from within. Ideals associated with official Ireland and its dominant discourses, such as the family were seen to be fragmenting. On the *Late Late Show* Dr. Derek Freedman pointed out that it is the “practice abroad to offer abortion” to women who are HIV positive and become pregnant, a point borne out by an episode of *Today Tonight*. In the first of two special episodes of *Today Tonight* broadcast in May 1987 Dr Mok, an expert on AIDS in Edinburgh, informed her interviewer that fifty percent of women who had AIDS antibodies in their systems could expect to pass the virus on to their child should they become pregnant.⁵⁶⁵ She also informed *Today Tonight* that each pregnant woman who exhibited AIDS anti-bodies was advised to have an abortion.⁵⁶⁶ During an interview conducted with Scottish woman living with AIDS in Scotland the interviewee described her baby was an “innocent by-stander” and she described both baby and herself as “ticking time bombs”. In Ireland abortion remained illegal which forced many women who were HIV positive to continue with their pregnancies. At that point Ireland exhibited the highest birth-rate of paediatric AIDS in Europe. While the 1985 legalisation of contraceptives may have alleviated the further spread of AIDS, a widespread culture that advocated the use of condoms had not yet been established in Ireland. The absence of that culture as well as the difficulties women encountered travelling to England to avail of abortion services contributed to this high birth rate. In protecting the family it seems it was also being eroded from within and the link between mother and baby enshrined in the Irish constitution was being undermined. Biological and cultural links were becoming increasingly complicated and unsettled by the presence of AIDS in Ireland.

Women in Irish society, and in particular mothers, were perceived as “desexualised, quasi divine” and it was through these standards that mothers perpetuated high moral standards.⁵⁶⁷ Narratives of motherhood in Ireland ensured that their bodies were sealed within a “mechanistic” space and while the death of Ann Lovett can be seen as symptomatic of the fragmentation of the traditional ideal of the family, representation of that fragmentation was, temporarily, held at bay. In *The Spike*, fractures in the

⁵⁶⁵ She also stresses that these statistics are only borne out by the presence of babies who are known to have contracted AIDS from their mothers. There could also be babies who have either not yet presented with the symptoms or have been misdiagnosed.

⁵⁶⁶ Heney, Michael, *Today Tonight* IRTE Archive 97D01625 Recorded 13/05/1987

⁵⁶⁷ Inglis, Tom, *Truth, Power and Lies: Irish Society and the Case of the Kerry Babies* (Dublin: UCD Press, 2003) 9.

traditional family unit played a central role in the portrayal of the tensions in Irish society between official and unofficial Ireland. The emergence of AIDS however, placed further pressure on the family and, in particular, on urban families. The ‘X Case’ which broke in 1992 would eventually crack those fractures open completely and facilitate “a crisis in national identity”.⁵⁶⁸ However, until then, the vexatious AIDS body placed continuous pressure on traditional structures. AIDS seemed to present an attack on the family as well as upon the limits that had held the vexatious at bay.

What had previously been pushed beyond the limiting lens that defined dominant discourses had emerged with an unsettling force that was set to remain in the public forum. The questions, confusion and fear that generated around AIDS may be identified in a news bulletin broadcast in 1987 detailing the effects of AIDS on blood transfusion services in Ireland. A spokesperson who appeared in the bulletin on behalf of the Blood Transfusion board remarked that 10 to 15% of inquires made to the board in relation to AIDS were “the gay calls” or made by gay people. Other calls also included inquiries made by “mothers of gay sons” and “wives who know their husbands are gay”.⁵⁶⁹ A previously unacknowledged and unspoken awareness of sexual behaviours was being forced into the public forum. In the long term, the provision of information was opening up channels through which the State, concerned groups and the medical world could communicate with the general public. However, the development of a space in which AIDS information could be aimed at everyone in society also contributed to the panic surrounding AIDS. In the two years between 1985 and 1987 emphasis had shifted from homosexual communities to the general public. A universal approach was being taken towards the spread of HIV. In one respect it was this shift that caused the *Late Late Show* to run a sober and informative programme on AIDS. It reached into homes of families all across Ireland where previously AIDS was largely associated with the silent, unrecognised behaviours and individuals.

⁵⁶⁸ Smyth, Lisa, “Narratives of Irishness and the Problem of Abortion: The X case 1992” in *Feminist Review* 60 *Feminist Ethics and the Politics of Love* (1998) 66.

⁵⁶⁹ *RTÉ News* in RTÉ Archive reference BN87/085. Broadcast on the 26/3/1987.

The spread of HIV between heterosexuals was becoming increasingly alarming in both Ireland and abroad. The *Today Tonight* special report also emphasised the spread of HIV between heterosexual partners. When interviewing Dr. William Harris of St. Mary's Medical School in London the programme focused its initial questions on how seven women had contracted HIV through their partners who, it transpired, had been in sexual contact with other partners. The report emphasises that in each case the third party involved was a prostitute. While the report acknowledges the prevalence of male prostitution later in the programme, there is an assumption implied that the prostitutes referred to were women and that the partners acting outside of marriage were male. Dr. Harris pointed out that these men belong to a "group who were terribly difficult to identify in society" because they rarely told their spouses that they had been involved with another sexual partner.⁵⁷⁰ It seems that the invisible threat which AIDS posed to society initially was becoming a more complex threat. Where AIDS had been associated with the gay community it was now becoming clear to the public that the virus affected all peoples regardless of their sexual orientation. All bodies as biological entities were vulnerable consequently; so too was the institution of the family.

The emphasis on the destruction of the family through exposure to AIDS continued in the second episode on the crisis.⁵⁷¹ Frances, a former drug user who tested HIV positive, tells her interviewer that she had given her children to her sister. In her interview she expresses concern for her children. However, her decision to send them to live with her sister was motivated by the knowledge that her death was inevitable. While the interviewer's approach takes on a more conservative approach and exhibits concern about the legal implication of her death in relation to her children Frances emphasises her concern and insists "I'd never like me children to see me dying to tell you the truth."⁵⁷² Like the Scottish woman interviewed in the other part of this special report both women exhibit love and concern for their children.⁵⁷³ However, the usual link between mother and child has been subverted. Indeed the "quasi divine" qualities Inglis referred to are somewhat de-sacralised by the frank interviews with mothers

⁵⁷⁰ Heney, Michael, *Today Tonight* IRTE Archive 97D01625 Recorded 13/05/1987.

⁵⁷¹ Mulholland, Joe, *Today Tonight* 2 RTÉ Archive 97D01611 Recorded 12/05/1987.

⁵⁷² Mulholland, Joe, *Today Tonight* 2 RTÉ Archive 97D01611 Recorded 12/05/ 1987.

⁵⁷³ Heney, Michael, *Today Tonight* IRTE Archive 97D01625 Recorded 13/5/1987.

conducted on both of these 1987 episodes of *Today Tonight* and were being partially replaced by a medicalisation of the relationship between HIV positive mothers and their children.

The ideals of motherhood associated with the emergence of Ireland as an emerging modern nation and with the family as a core institution of that nation were being cracked open by the public exposure. In some way the constructed ideal was undergoing a certain flattening out through the destruction of its traditional narrative suggesting that the constructed ideal could no longer be supported by the needs of a nation caught between accelerated medicalisation and biomedicalisation. Changes incurred within the Irish mediascape during the 1970s and 1980s facilitated this broadening out of discourse. The death of Ann Lovett and “The Kerry Babies Case” also challenged these ideals. The narrative and the representation of Ann Lovett’s death in the media emphasises the iconic aspects of her final moments and the dreadful irony of her death at the foot of a Marian shrine. While neither Ann’s death nor the representation of it caused a radical shift in the recognisable “field of ... operations” it had an unsettling effect on the dominant discourses of the Irish nation-state, of its habitus and of the national ethos. Indeed, in his analysis of the media’s documentation of Ann Lovett’s death in 1984 historian Diarmaid Ferriter writes that the discussion and its content was indicative of the opening up of taboo in the Irish media. He argues that the discussion of the events at Granard “began a process whereby there was virtually nothing that could not be discussed in an intimate way on Irish radio.”⁵⁷⁴

This research suggests that that process was on going and had been slowly unpicking ideals of Irishness, the national ethos and habitus for some time. The significance of AIDS within this process is the acceleration it placed upon the adoption of medicalisation and the recalibration of the position of the body within official discourse as a result of medicalisation and its discourse. A number of vexatious elements which had been irritating and unsettling official discourses of the body for some time were drawn into one space through the discussion of AIDS. Where society had previously recourse to tradition in the face of crisis, when challenged by the universal spread of

⁵⁷⁴ Ferriter, Diarmaid, *The Transformation of Ireland 1900 -2000* 715.

AIDS this type of recourse was no longer possible. Similarly, intravenous drug use could no longer be ignored or ejected as an element of urban life that effected a small number in areas of concentrated urban living. The heroin epidemic that had impacted upon Dublin's city center and suburbs during the late 1970s and 1980s was also complicated further by the emergence of AIDS.

Dominant discourses of Irishness were gradually being prised away from the seams and structures of Irish society. The pressures of urban poverty, intravenous drug use and the unavailability of information on the spread of HIV that led to multiple infections with HIV occurring within a single family seemed to be contributing to this fragmentation. Needle sharing within groups, and within families, meant that the very blood and injecting instrument that had formed a bond between individuals was also the blood that caused the spread of infection through those networks. Infection seemed to come from within the structures and networks that had formerly brought coherence to families and communities. In 1986 a number of Arbor Hill's prisoners staged a protest which saw them take to the roof of the prison. While the prisoners were protesting against the inadequacy of facilities at the Dublin prison, especially in relation to intravenous drug users, the protest was also a reaction to the death of prisoner Paul Kenna, a drug user, who was reported to have been found, "hanged in his cell".⁵⁷⁵ The reasons for Paul Kenna's suicide remain unclear. However, discussion of his death became associated with inadequacy of facilities in Irish prisons. The protest staged at Arbor Hill indicates a loss of control whereby lateral knots of activity and resistance were building up within official structures. When speaking to RTÉ news from the roof top one of the protesting prisoners roared down to the reporter "we are getting treated like lepers" implying that a complex code of representation and narrative had grown up around drug users.⁵⁷⁶ While the protesting prisoners remained on prison property, they had also broken through the defences that had previously contained them within cells and the main areas. They came to occupy a liminal space between their place of incarceration and the outside worlds. Their position on the roof suggested a position of power but conversely it was a position that was defined by the prison walls. Likewise, their status as "lepers" indicated a luminal position in society where they were being ignored and consigned to

⁵⁷⁵ RTÉ News RTÉ Archive BN86/025. Broadcast 25/1/ 1986.

⁵⁷⁶ RTÉ News RTÉ Archive BN86/70.

a zone of non-recognition where conditions breed outburst of the vexatious. In comparing their treatment to that of people considered to have leprosy, the prisoners imply that they are regarded as infectious and as existing outside of society. Intravenous drug users had either been ignored in Irish society or treated as part of a power relationship that involved the shunning of what were referred to in a dehumanising way as “junkies”.

If, as implied in this thesis, there were gaps in the language used to discuss sexuality, then, there were also gaps in the language and knowledge used by official discourses to discuss IV drug users. The semantic limits of the national ethos worked to contain bodies as sealed “mechanisms”, which ensured the exclusion of inappropriate bodies. The body of the IV drug user was one such excluded body. The introduction of narcotics into that body in a way that aimed to induce an altered state of consciousness lay outside the “field of ... operations” recognised by and limited to prevailing discourses.⁵⁷⁷ Drug users were seen as people who had been contaminated by outside influences or who returned from Britain having been exposed to a corrupting culture and the lifestyle that it promoted. By the 1980s however, heroin use in Ireland and particularly in Dublin had become endemic. In May 1981 the popular culture magazine *In Dublin* reported that Ireland was “thought to have one of the world’s youngest population of heroin addicts”.⁵⁷⁸ In 1984 the headline on the cover of the same magazine read “Dún Laoghaire. Heroin Hits Kingstown”.⁵⁷⁹ The use of the contemporary Irish spelling of Dun Laoghaire, and the town’s former colonial name, implies that being British, or Irish, or, being from a wealthy suburb, such as Dun Laoghaire, does not prevent people from becoming involved in the use of Class A drugs.

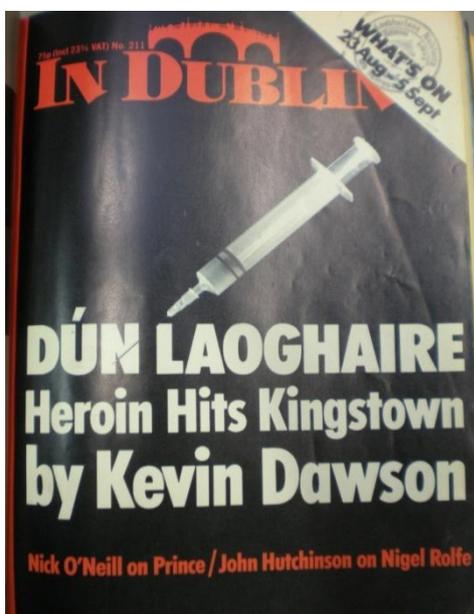
The title of the magazine is printed in red and below it lies a picture of a syringe poised above and pointing into the words Dún Laoghaire printed in white, suggesting that the wealthy suburb is about to be corrupted or contaminated by the contents of the syringe.

⁵⁷⁷ Butler, Judith, *Undoing Gender* (London: Routledge, 2004) 32.

⁵⁷⁸ Rafferty, Mary, “Heroin: The Sweet Dream of Death” in *In Dublin* 14-27 May (1981), 18.

⁵⁷⁹ Anon, “Heroin Hits Kingstown” in *In Dublin* 211 (1984) cover.

The apparent collapse of socio-economic boundaries is implied in an article within the issue which remarks that York Road in Dun Laoghaire “soon had a name for Smack dealing like Moore Street has for apples and pears”.⁵⁸⁰ Intravenous drug use had been a problem in Dublin for some time. Indeed, 1986 saw the death of well known Irish rock star Phil Lynott. The cover of the first edition of *Hot press* in 1986 reported “Phil Lynott dies of heroin overdose”.⁵⁸¹ Heroin use was encroaching on the public sphere and was continue to do so throughout 1986. Earlier narratives of intravenous drug users as a social concern were gradually being exposed to discourses of medicalisation. Drug users were becoming an issue for official structures and the emergence of AIDS pressurised these structures and their institutions even further.



In July 1986 *Hot press* ran a story entitled “‘I wasn’t told I had AIDS’ Victim Slams Irish Hospitals”.⁵⁸³ The story accompanying this caption relays the details of a HIV positive diagnosis which was never related to the patient. Throughout the report the patient, named as Frank, criticises a number of hospitals in which he was treated for

580 Anon, “Pushers Out” in *In Dublin* 211 (1984) 15.

581 Anon, “Phil Lynott dies of Heroin Overdose” in *Hot press* 10.1(1986) cover.

582 Anon, “Heroin Hits Kingstown” in *In Dublin* 211 (1984) cover.

583 Anon, “I Wasn’t Told I Had AIDS” in *Hot press* 10.13 (1986) cover.

body ulcers and a variety of infections. According to the report Frank was first hospitalised in 1981 with Hepatitis B. While this infection cleared he was re-hospitalised in 1985, “this time suffering a whole plethora of illness. Bilateral groin abscesses were treated in Baggot Street, ilio femoral thrombosis in St. Vincent’s, and anorexia and nausea in Our Lady’s Hospital in Navan.”⁵⁸⁴ Frank, an intravenous drug user became dependent on hospitals as institutions of care and as an extension of the state as well as on the discourses of medicalisation through which they categorised patients and communicated with them. As an intravenous drug user Frank belonged to a group of people who had formerly been invisible within society but who had also formed temporary groups on the street and in parts of the city with which official discourses or structures rarely interacted. When interaction did occur, the clash of resistance caused consternation for both the gathered drug users and representatives of official Ireland. Those temporary groups were perceived as ones to be feared where intravenous drug users posed a threat to each other. As they passed “the works” to each other their addiction increased their chance of infection by numerous diseases including HIV. Frank observes that “whatever one person had, everyone else would normally get – hepatitis would do the rounds, shingles would do the rounds, scabies would do the rounds ...”.⁵⁸⁵ In the following year, 1987, on one of the special episodes of *Today Tonight* dealing with AIDS, Michael, a HIV positive drug user, remarked in an interview “I don’t care once I get the gear ... and bang it into me”. He also emphasised the others “didn’t mind me” sharing needles. The dependency of addiction created a dialectical structure between the body and heroin that could potentially destroy not only one drug user but also the different transient networks with which he/she engaged. The passing of infection through those illegal, transient knots of activity meant that outsiders like Michael and Frank were becoming more visible in hospitals and official institutions. Official institutions were being placed under pressure to react and could no longer ignore the vexatious disintegrating body of the drug user.

Through intravenous drug use bodies touched bodies, viruses passed, invisibly, via an injecting instrument from one organic body into another organic body. As infection spread silently, nature seemed to disturb nature. The suggestion of nature disturbing

584 Anon, “I wasn’t told I had AIDS” in *Hot press* 10.13 (1986) 11.

585 Anon, “I wasn’t told I had AIDS” in *Hot press* 10.13 (1986) 12.

nature in this way indicates the end of the body with organs and a movement towards a “body without organs”, to borrow a term from Deleuze and Guattari, and a movement towards the disintegrating AIDS body as a mark of the collapse of the body’s stratified order.⁵⁸⁶ The illustration accompanying the *Hot press* report “I wasn’t told I had AIDS” shows a man as though he is being viewed through a wide angled lens giving a disorientating effect. A bony victim looks up into the imagined camera behind his sparse hospital bed. Looking forlorn his left hand grips his shirt while his right is held weakly in the air with a tube inserted into it. His hooked finger recalls the calling sign of the grim reaper. In the background stands a masked faceless nurse. He is wearing black recalling death and the uncleanliness of infection within the hospital environment. Here the term “body without organs” has a number of implications. It may be seen as the body whose order has collapsed leaving the structures of the body ruptured so that, as the organs break down, the usual “flows” of the body are distorted into one flow. In the article which relays Frank’s story he is described as having “no veins in his arms”.⁵⁸⁷ Destroyed through injecting and the disintegrating processes initiate by AIDS, the body of the AIDS victim and the IV drug user become conflated and collapse into one another just as the veins that carry blood and infection around his system collapse into that very system. Frank, the outsider, is slowly losing his body and his identity to AIDS as infection, consequently, gives way to infection. Gradually, the barrier between the body and the outside world provided by the immune system dissolves. The “body without organs” may also be considered here as the cultural narrative of the body and the cultural, political and social space it occupies. This is, as we have seen, a space that is structured by the concrete and abstract institutions of the nation-state, the conscious collectivity of the national ethos and its habits and is organised around the collectivity of the type of “gaze” to which Foucault refers.⁵⁸⁸ That “gaze” was now faced with the challenges posed by AIDS and the body of the intravenous drug.

586 Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari, *Thousand Plateaus : Capitalism and Schizophrenia* 43. The “body without organs” is described by the authors as the “unformed, unorganised, non-stratified or de-stratified body and all its flows.”

587 Anon, “I wasn’t told I had AIDS” in *Hot press* 10.13 (1986) 12.

588 Foucault, Michel, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception* 29.



Drawing elements of different knowledges together the construction of that “gaze” was epitomised in the concentration of discourses and institutions. Those discourses and institutions created centralised spaces through which modern power operates. However AIDS and the problems presented by IV drug users to the smooth and invisible operation of power forced institutions and discourse to their physical and semantic limits. Modern power, encapsulated in official structures, was being challenged by lateral knots of activity and by the very limits it placed on technology and medicalisation. In relation to discourses of AIDS only a radical shift in clinical innovation and a turn from the limits of medicalisation and hence towards biomedicalisation could lift discourses of the body from the ends of traditionalism. The reconstitution of knowledge had the capacity to alleviate prejudices surrounding the AIDS body and as a result re-constitute the perception and position of AIDS within Irish society. While discourse and perception had undergone certain expansions in other respects changes in perception were smothered by the limits of medical knowledge and hence of medicalisation. AIDS victim Frank describes how his treatment team “wore masks, goggles, full body suits and two pairs of gloves before they’d come anywhere near me. They treated me like I was a space man.”⁵⁹⁰ Preventing contact with the AIDS body characterised early treatment of AIDS patients and not in Ireland alone. In an article in 1987 Fr. Bernard Lynch, an Irish Catholic priest who was working with people with AIDS in New York City described the prejudices that surrounded AIDS in the

589 Anon, “I wasn’t told I had AIDS” in *Hot press* 10.13 (1986) 11.

590 Anon, “I wasn’t told I had AIDS” in *Hot press* 10.13 (1986) 11.

United States. Isolation also characterised the treatment of patients there with hospitals having to seek out lay volunteers to hold children with AIDS. Lynch remarked “In hospitals we could not get staff to hold children with AIDS. We had to get people to hold them”.⁵⁹¹

In 1985 *Today Tonight* had compared AIDS to the Bubonic plague. That program had ended with Professor Peto warning of potential for an “heterosexual epidemic” to develop. Peto recommended that “all gays should be tested” for HIV but emphasised that if the correct preventative measures were not put in place that HIV could spread to the heterosexual population. Africa, he warned could be a “sign of what we will see in the west in ten to fifteen years”.⁵⁹² Two years later the same current affairs program described the potential for a crisis epidemic in the working class suburb of Ballymun as a “potentially calamitous Africa style situation” caused by a high number of intravenous drug users contracting HIV through using infected needles and engaging in unprotected sex.⁵⁹³ AIDS was becoming associated not only with the distant past but also with images of the developing world in a way that positioned the body of the IV drug user within a contradictory space. The IV drug user was becoming increasingly visible and was participating in official structures. However, because those official discourse continued to be steered by the discourses of official Ireland they could not fully provide for the pressures of a sudden acceleration in modernisation. Ironically the pressure of accelerated modernisation was perceived to have emerged from a situation that recalled the medieval body and the body of the developing world. Concepts of the past and underdevelopment encroaching on the contemporary world were, it seems, threatening enough to motivate a push towards the limits of medicalisation in the widespread advocacy of the use of contraception and the supply of clean needles to drug users by the state on the *Late Late Show* in 1987.

591 Yeates, Padraig, “Priest Shares the Suffering of AIDS Victims” in *The Irish Times* 4 April, 1987, 2.

592 Mulholland, Joe, *Today Tonight* RTÉ Archive 97D00955 Recorded 09/10/1985.

593 Mullholland, Joe, *Today Tonight* RTÉ Archive 97D01611 Recorded 12/05/1987.

However, in relation to discourses of the body in Ireland the limits of medicalisation were being compounded by resistance within certain sectors of society towards the use of contraception. While contraception was available by 1985, it continued to exist in a veiled taboo space that inhibited people's access to it. The 1987 episode of *The Late Late Show* in which panel member Annmarie Hourihan declared "you are not a whore, you are not a hardman, an unfortunate turn of phrase, if you carry a condom" was necessary in breaking the boundaries that surrounded condom use in Irish society so the Irish society on a whole could utilise medicalisation to prevent the spread of AIDS.⁵⁹⁴ Dr. Derek Freedman advocated the provision of clean needles as a way to attract "people (drug users) into a stable environment" where official structures and institutions could provide care in a centralised way. Annmarie Hourihan's remark "we have seen this country bury its head in the sand about the people we don't approve of" emphasises the history of rejection of the vexatious that had existed in Ireland. Those people could no longer be ignored or regarded as temporary inhabitants of official Ireland. The vexatious had become a permanent part of Irish society and was demanding a space within official discourse, structures and institutions. That is the AIDS body had become an "enabling disruption"⁵⁹⁵ that broke through the sealed "mechanism"⁵⁹⁶ of the official body to induce an expansion in official discourse that would facilitate its partial inclusion. By confronting society's "invisible blind spot" the conduits required to facilitate the discussion of AIDS were created.

The final taboo was broken on *The Late Late Show* in 1987 when presenter Gay Byrne unrolled a condom on national television. A short animated demonstration then played to provide instructions on how to use a condom. For many in the live audience and watching at home this demonstration offended and overwhelmed their sense of what Inglis calls Irish "prudery". As the demonstration played and moved from image to image, Ireland was hurled into the discourse of medicalisation. Layers and layer of moral discourse that had developed over two centuries and which formed the scaffolding of an ideal identity, ethos and habitus was displaced. Ireland was reaching the limits of discourses of modernisation. Not only did it confront its "invisible blind

594 Byrne, Gay, *The Late Late Show Extra* RTÉ archive reference 96D00773 Recorded 15/05/1987.

595 Butler, Judith, *Bodies that Matter* (London: Routledge, 1993) 23.

596 Colebrook, Claire, *Gilles Deleuze* 56.

spot” but a new space was created where the limits of medicalisation could eventually be replaced by biomedicalisation in the 1990s. Medicalisation had facilitated a discussion of the vexatious that had previously proved impossible. The canvas had turned in a way that could not become undone once more.

Conclusion

Turning the Body Inside Out

This thesis argues that the official structures and discourses of Irishness that developed between the start of the nineteenth century and the closing decades of the twentieth century were continuously challenged by vexatious entities. These entities were formed by the containing mechanisms of a cultural, social and political system that was dependent on the inconsistent teleology of modernisation in Ireland. Pressures placed on those systems by the vexatious contributed to a marked shift in official discourses. This shift is detectable through a move from the discussion of the body through a thick web of moral discourse towards discourses of medicalisation which was facilitated by outbursts of the vexatious during the 1980s.

Episodic outbursts of the vexatious punctuated the 1980s. During these outbursts official structures were overwhelmed. The murdered corpse of an infant, an increase in the deaths of intravenous drug users and the emergence of the AIDS body constitute a small number of these episodic outbursts. These troublesome or vexatious bodies and entities disrupted the discourses of what was considered official Ireland. Partial modernisation and the emergence of a dominant discourse of Irishness established the space of the body within official structures as one that followed the contours of a conservative Catholic culture and the behavioural expectations delineated by middle class respectability. Consequently, incompatible elements were pushed beyond the boundaries of official discourse in a way that ensured the vexatious remained unrecognised within official discourses and structures. The permeability of the language that defined that space always allows seepage to occur between the silent and unrecognised whereby official discourses will temporarily seem threatened by the rejected elements of society. Subversion, or the threat of it, is however temporary and usually the vexatious will return to its place beyond recognition. Since each episodic outburst of the vexatious functions as a signifier for which no referent exists within the structures and discourses of official Ireland, its return to a place beyond recognition releases dominant discourses from the temporary chaos this unanchored signifier produces. Social change in the 1970s and 1980s prised open the sealed space of the body facilitating a surging movement of the vexatious. Repetitive outbursts were compounded by the increased emphasis placed on the visibility of vexatious bodies and entities by the media, and forced a shift in discourse and perception that acted as a conduit for accelerated modernisation.

Previously infanticide had reported in newspapers, however, full acknowledgement of either the act or the conditions that gave rise to it were pushed into places beyond the layers of official discourse. The resurfacing on White Strand of the body of an infant stabbed to death in 1984 forced official Ireland to acknowledge the practice of infanticide. However, in doing so tensions surrounding “illegitimacy” and sex outside marriage came to fill the space opened up within official discourses by the infant’s corpse. The absence of a referent for infanticide within dominant structures and discourses created a signifier of “constant recurring absence”.⁵⁹⁷ That signifier could only be accommodated within official narratives through the appropriation of blame onto Joanne Hayes, a local single mother, who had recently suffered a miscarriage and in a state of panic, hid the body of her baby in a “water hole” on the family farm.⁵⁹⁸ A woman who had already transgressed sacred limits that surrounded the ideas of woman and motherhood in Ireland came to bear the weight of the state, social and cultural behavioural expectations. However, this was not the first time a problematic body had been the focus of exchanges of power in Irish society.

As well as infanticide, the tubercular body had irritated official discourses of Irishness during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Both had troubled the point where discourses of the state, culture and society intersect. Each in their different way became associated with poverty and social exclusion. In making the transition from being a healthy body the TB body became associated with a breakdown of the biological system. Through acts of self-consumption the tubercular body emits itself through bloody coughs and sneezes. As well as this, febrile peaks and troughs of energy and deep wheezing gasps lead to its expansion of itself. No longer a functioning body, the tubercular body becomes exhausted and, not only completely destroys the systems of the healthy body, but also overwhelms itself. Self-cannibalising, the TB body overpowered the structures that had created the sealed “mechanism” of the healthy

⁵⁹⁷ Foucault, Michel, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* Trans. A.M Sheridan (Bristol: Tavistock Publications, 1976) 25.

⁵⁹⁸ Anon, “Dead Baby in Waterhole” in *The Irish Independent* 4 May 1984, 7.

body.⁵⁹⁹ Advances in technology and the establishment of sanatoria in Ireland facilitated the management of the TB body into an ordered disciplined and medicalised space.

Increased medicalisation and technological innovation facilitated the photographing of the inside of the body allowing us to see through the body to the specific site of infection. X-rays rendered the body opaque and made infectious diseases like TB, previously detectable from spots of blood coughed onto a handkerchief, visible against a bright backlight. Mary Morrissy's novel *Mother of Pearl* set in Ireland in the 1950s describes the X-ray of the main character's TB infected lung as a "clouded blue picture of her lungs" showing "the flowery clumps of infection."⁶⁰⁰ The main character, Irene Rivers interprets the "shadow" on her lung as a "shadow on her life". The X-ray confirms her body's infection with TB as well as the lifelong social stigmatism that came with that infection and which transformed her "mechanistic" body from one housing a healthy biological system into a vexatious one whose sealed "mechanistic" boundaries are transgressed and which acts as a social agitator.⁶⁰¹ While the X-ray provides a graphic of the lung by producing the inside on the outside, stigmatisation is associated with the perception of Irene Rivers as the embodiment of infection. By rendering her lung readable to the outside world, the system of knowledge that constituted modern medicine opened Irene Rivers up to a life of isolation and loneliness that continued to link her with the embodiment of infection. In spreading itself through infection TB multiplied the surfaces of itself and, as the body broke down, the former system of connected organs collapsed into an endless flow of surfaces, blood and body fluids that brought chaos to established perceptions of the body and to the body itself. The TB body was one a chaotic one and hence one to be feared; that is until medicalisation refined it and created a specific space for it within official discourses.

Similarly, acts of infanticide brought chaos to the sealed "mechanism" of the body within official structures. Usually committed by women as a result of poverty, poor

⁵⁹⁹ Colebrook describes the type of mechanisms to which Deleuze and Guattari refer as a "closed machine with a specific function". Colebrook, Claire, *Gilles Deleuze* (London: Routledge, 2002) 56.

⁶⁰⁰ Morrissy, Mary, *Mother of Pearl* (London: Vintage, 1997) 5.

⁶⁰¹ Colebrook describes the type of mechanisms to which Deleuze and Guattari refer as a "closed machine with a specific function". Colebrook, Claire, *Gilles Deleuze* (London: Routledge, 2002) 56.

mental health or a combination of both, infanticide disrupts the assumed social bonds between mother and baby and subverts ideals of motherhood. The immediate association of infanticide with women led to the association of the body of an infant on a beach in County Kerry with a female suspect. Furthermore, that association facilitated the gathering of tensions surrounding subverted ideals of motherhood around Joanne Hayes without considering that Hayes and her lover Jeremiah Locke, both being blood type “O”, could not have given birth to a baby whose blood type was “A” as the baby on the beach had been. By ignoring discourses of medicalisation, the structures of official power counteracted the threat the infant’s corpse posed as an unanchored signifier. The infant’s body as a disrupted biological system interrupted the official structural flows and interconnections of the State, the Church, the dominant habitus and ethos. It acts like Deleuze and Guattari’s war machine which appears from without and disrupts the State.⁶⁰² The convergence of tensions surrounding divorce, abortion and the role of women in Irish society all gathered in a way that established what was assumed was a broken link between Joanne Hayes and the body of the infant. In this sense the infant’s body functions as undomesticated “force” that threatened to undo official structures by pulling the tightly sealed structures of official Ireland asunder and creating new possibilities.⁶⁰³ In stifling that “force”, that is the “force” of the vexatious, official discourses truncated the potential for chaos which the infant presented. In doing so, a habitus and an ethos supported by the official structures of the state that had provided coherence across society terminated that chaos in the body of Joanne Hayes. Her body came to be seen as a site of criminality and a metaphor for all that was considered to oppose sacred notions of woman and motherhood that had been sealed within the dominant discourses of official Ireland.

Official Ireland however, was an Ireland in transition. Its discourses had experienced a significant level of expansion as a result of the changes incurred during the 1970s. That expansion created channels through which official discourses could be undermined and the changes that had already been inscribed within the national habitus and ethos could be built upon. Out of that inscription grew connections through which the Women’s

602 Deleuze, Giles and Fleix Guattari *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* Translated by Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

603 Massumi, Brian, *A User’s Guide to Capitalism and Schizophrenia: Deviations from Deleuze and Guattari* (Cambridge: A Swerve Edition MIT Press, 1992) 6.

Movement placed pressure on the institutions of the state and the abstract cultural and social structures of official Ireland. The show of support given to Joanne Hayes illustrates the extent to which lateral connections had been established between women across Irish society. However, these connections were not enough to counteract the state's ignoring and manipulation of medical and forensic evidence that testified to Joanne Hayes' innocence. Pressures that were building around issues of sex and sexuality, morality and perceptions of Irishness were, however, becoming increasingly focused on debates which were negotiating the limits of the body within official structures and discourses of Irishness. Outbursts of the vexatious, of silent unrecognised problematic bodies, had been contributing to these pressures for some time. These outbursts were also being intensified by the focus a growing liberalism placed on them. Furthermore, a proliferation in media outlets during the 1970s and 1980s provided conservatism and liberalism with a growing number of media sites through which they could channel their ideas. Indeed, the successful mobilisation of the media by concerned and active interest groups became an integral factor in obtaining leverage within the many debates that were occurring and which were being played out by defending and attempting to re-draw the parameters of the body within official Ireland.

This mobilisation was not occurring within liberal sectors alone but was also utilised by the more conservative sectors of Irish society and the concerned interest groups that sought to represent them. One example of the mobilisation of the media around problematic bodies that threatened to impact upon the official space of the body within discourses of Irishness may be found in the reaction to *The Spike*. The controversy sparked by the television series *The Spike* in 1978 demonstrates how concerned interest groups used media outlets in order to flex their chords within mainstream culture. These groups, largely associated with the promotion of a type of Catholicism that was even more conservative than the conservative underpinnings of Catholicism in Ireland in the twentieth century, along with a number of individuals, placed pressure on official structures. Official structures reacted by removing the Director of Programming from his post within the national broadcaster, RTÉ, as well as bringing an end to *The Spike*. Letters printed in a number of newspapers describe the drama as "filthy" suggesting that sectors of Irish society considered life in a school within a small town as shown in *The Spike* as inaccurate and in opposition to their perception of the habitus and ethos of

society at that time.⁶⁰⁴ Offence caused by the appearance of a nude model during an art class however, points to heightened sensitivities in relation to the body and issues that moved around and converged within it. Social change occurring in Ireland triggered an analytical sensitivity towards what was considered by some as attempts to alter the parameters of the body and hence the national ethos and habitus that were so deeply rooted in Irish society and its perception of itself.

Problematic bodies continued to surface during the 1980s and the focus debates surrounding abortion, divorce, homosexuality and AIDS placed on the body indicate that the biopolitics of official Ireland was undergoing a significant re-negotiation. What had been prevented from entering mainstream society and had been sealed within our “invisible blind spot” seemed to be populating what was quickly becoming the most contentious site within official discourses of Irishness; the body. The vexatious bodies that were emerging from that “blind spot” created bursts of intensity that unsettled the sedimentary layers of official Ireland and forced it to consider what Irishness was in the 1980s. The bodies of intravenous drug users became particularly problematic during the 1980s as heroin use in Dublin underwent rapid growth. The body of the intravenous drug user, punctured by the thin needle of a syringe, created a mechanical connection between a biological system and a substance that flows through the body and alters the pace of its flows. It also transformed the body into one that posed a threat to the established systems and structures of daily life both inside and outside of the state’s institutions as prisoners began to die within the prison system. The growing visibility to intravenous drug users in both the city center and in the suburbs sparked a surge of panic in relation to drugs, drug culture and those who used drugs. The spread of HIV via intravenous drug use also placed added pressure on official structures to contain the threat posed by drug users.

The emergence of AIDS in Ireland acted as a catalyst for moral panic. The AIDS body was seen as a vexatious one that posed a universal threat but which was associated with specific “high risk groups”. The emergence of AIDS formed a body in which the

⁶⁰⁴ Anon, “Nudity adds to RTE controversy” in *The Irish Times* 25 February, 1978, 1.

anxieties attached to “high risk groups” gathered within one space. Concentrated in this way those accumulated anxieties formed a knot within what had been a carefully constructed smooth surface of ideal Irishness. That knot represented the elements which dominant discourses of Irishness had rejected. Consequently, the AIDS body provided a referent for the empty signifiers that had periodically revisited and upset the prevailing habitus in the form of the vexatious. Anxieties attached to sex, sexuality, rejected bodies and practices were now housed within a body infected with a virus that held the potential to develop into a syndrome for which there was no cure. A gathering of conditions and diseases within that body meant that each AIDS body was also different from the others. The knot which was disrupting ideals of Irishness was unpredictable, chaotic and upset the official structures of ethos and habitus that had grown around the scaffolding of two centuries of presented Irishness with a formation of its vexatious self. The confusion surrounding the syndrome contributed to the moral panic that was reaching its peak when an audience member on *The Late Late Show* in 1987 declared “This is Death”. The AIDS body occupied a space marked by the stigmatisms, fears and confusion that gathered within it. Furthermore, the absence of a cure means that the AIDS body would continue to exist within the dominant “field of ... operations”.⁶⁰⁵ The AIDS body as a referent for the rejected element of society was forcing official Ireland to face the “invisible blind spot” it had managed out of visibility for so long.⁶⁰⁶

In forcing official Ireland to face itself through the AIDS body, the vexatious instigated a process of hegemonic accommodation. This accommodation required a shift in the morphology of official discourses which was achieved through a turn towards medicalisation which opened a conduit for accelerated modernisation. The demonstration of correct condom use on *The Late Late Show* can be seen as a “brief linguistic moment”⁶⁰⁷ during which official discourses were temporarily suspended. The tensions that had been building throughout the 1970s and 1980s could no longer be ignored. During the brief moment between the demonstration and the analysis of that moment, official discourses of Irishness existed alongside the vexatious. It was being

605 Butler, Judith, *Undoing Gender* (London: Routledge, 2004) 32.

606 Foucault, Michel, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1980) 4.

607 Butler, Judith. ‘Revisiting Bodies and Pleasures’, *Theory, Culture and Society* 16.2 (1999) 11.

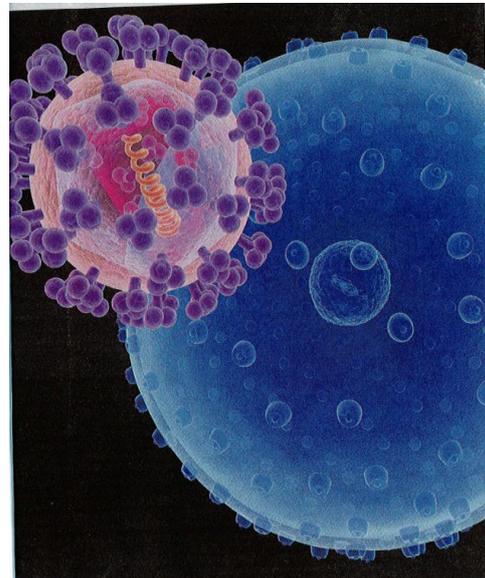
acknowledged in a way that created a position outside of the thick web of moral discourse that had helped to seal ideals of Irishness into a specific space. Through that confrontation and mutual acknowledgement the marked, vexatious AIDS body began the process of becoming the type of “unmarked” body Foucault called for at the end of his first volume of *The History of Sexuality*.⁶⁰⁸ By turning the canvas towards us to force a confrontation with out “invisible blind spot” the vexatious came to occupy a space of inclusive invisibility.

The type of “unmarked” body Foucault called for was one in which difference became undifferentiated and the body would be unshackled from the limits discourses placed on experience. The integration of the AIDS body into official discourses would suggest that bodies marked by difference were becoming “unmarked”. Medicalisation and the integration of its discourses into the structures and discourses of official Ireland enabled the endurance of dominant discourses by providing a way of talking about the body that elided the difficulties presented by a clash between traditional discourses and the vexatious. This shift does not end with the integration of discourses of medicalisation rather it facilitates further expansion of dominant discourses as Ireland’s participation in globalised cultural, political and social systems and in globalisation itself increased. In this respect the theoretical lens developed in this thesis may be developed further to consider changes in the space of the body during the 1990s and in the twenty-first century. By looking through the space of the body we can consider the impact of change in the systems that constitute our worlds.

This epistemological shift however, did not necessarily facilitate the liberation of sex, sexuality and bodies that Foucault called for, rather narratives of medicalisation and biomedicalisation have played a pivotal role in changing official discourses of the body. Contemporary narratives of the AIDS body include the types of representation shown here in the picture on the right hand side. Unlike the graphic on the left which accompanied an article on one man’s personal experience of AIDS in Ireland during the mid 1980s, the image on the right tells the story of biomedicine and its relationship with AIDS. The graphic on the right illustrates the capacity of biomedicine to reproduce nano

608 Foucault, Michel, *The Will To knowledge: The History of Sexuality Volume 1* Translated by Robert Hurley (London: Penguin Books, 1990) 157.

images of a once invisible and unnamed virus.⁶⁰⁹ The graphic on the left points to the limited capacities of medicalisation to interrupt the progress the same virus makes in consuming the body when it is unchecked.⁶¹⁰ Here the nexus of medicalisation, modernisation and AIDS maybe traced through embodiment and deterioration while the graphic of the right suggests that the biomedical gaze has developed the capacity to read beyond embodiment and to mine down into the nano workings of the biological system into its nano movements and the changes that occur within it. What now look like crude graphics used in the informative episodes of *Today Tonight* and *The Late Late Show* in the mid 1980s belong to an era when medicalisation could only focus on preventing the spread of the virus.



Biomedicalisation exerts a similar type of control over the body however; the system of knowledge that allows biomedicine to tunnel into the invisible folds of the body to render them visible, also facilitates the management of the HIV virus in a way that allows people with HIV and AIDS to choose their lifestyle rather than living a life marked by difference. Biomedicalisation does not so much make the HIV virus visible so much as it can turn the body inside out; it manages it, move images of it away from

609 O'Connell, Claire, "Tracking Dublin's HIV Scene" in *The Irish Times Health plus* 29 November 2011, 15.

610 Anon, "I wasn't told I had AIDS" in *Hot press* 10.13(1986) 12.

the ghostly illuminations offered by medicalisation and presents a graphic that seems to disassociate the body from social discourses of inclusion and stigmatisation.

In broader terms the exposure of the public to discourses of medicalisation and biomedicalisation provided a point of departure for concerned groups that could mobilise language and knowledge systems in different ways. By interacting with the legal system, the mechanics of the State, discourses of medicalisation and biomedicalisation the “bulbs and tubers” that stemmed formed newly formed “concretions” continued to challenge the previously sealed “mechanistic” space of the body. Repetitive outbursts of the vexatious created a need within dominant discourses to facilitate their inclusion. This served to prevent the overwhelming of the dominant discourses but also provided the linguistic shift necessary to allow recognition of the vexatious to occur. This recognition occurs through kaleidoscopic dominant discourses that illuminate elements of the vexatious which are compatible with, in this case, official Ireland. Traces of the vexatious will continue to lie outside the parameters of dominant discourse. In this sense the vexatious maintains its capacity to vex dominant discourses into processes of change ensuring a ceaseless process of becoming. Dominant discourses and the vexatious are thus, continually bound in a dialectic of ambivalent agency that force us to confront our “invisible blind spot” in an endless process of contraction and expansion. This process accommodates hegemonic inclusivity and the construction of new connections however, it may never fully capture the unrecognisable or what lies beyond language’s capacity to encapsulate certain elusive aspects of human experience.

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