

**THE CREATION OF IRISH-AMERICAN CULTURE THROUGH IRISH  
ETHNIC ENCLAVES WITHIN NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY**

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## Chapter I: Introduction

Human geography teaches us that in order for a folk or local culture to remain completely and totally intact, it must try to keep any elements of outside influence at bay. *Human Geography: People, Place, and Culture* claims that “the idea is that folk culture is small, incorporates a homogeneous population, is typically rural, and is cohesive in cultural traits.”<sup>1</sup> The push factors related to the migration of the Irish from Ireland to the United States of America at the height of the Famine would seem to have made it quite difficult for the Irish to maintain their folk culture once in America. Therefore the appearance of the shedding of the Irish folk culture in order to create a new Irish-American culture and a yearning to assimilate seems to be somewhat evident when studying the story of Irish Americans from the Famine era to the present day. Yet upon closer examination it is the creation of this Irish-American culture that in actuality allows the non-material cultural of the Irish to become part of the new identity in America. Additionally, the tenacious spirit of the Irish people, which is evident during the years of oppression at the hands of the British, undoubtedly played a supportive role in the retention of cultural values and ideals. “Although they experienced long years of political, legal, and military domination by the British, the Irish retained much of their own religion, folklore, and customs.”<sup>2</sup>

In order to gain a more concrete understanding of the importance of the folk culture to the Irish and the difficulties in maintaining this once in America, discussion of the

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<sup>1</sup>Harm J De Blij, Erin Hogan. Fouberg, Charles Fuller, and Alexander B. Murphy, *Human Geography: People, Place, and Culture*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2010. P. 114

<sup>2</sup> Barbara Cunningham and Sven G. Johansson. *The New Jersey ethnic experience*. Union City, NJ: Wise, 1977. P. 288

rural clachan or baile is needed. Irish historian and author Arthur Gibben paints a picture of rural life in Ireland as such:

On the eve of the Famine, social organization in the isolated uplands, blanket bogs, and shoreline settlements of the west of Ireland was influenced unambiguously by the rural clachan. The clachan-or baile- was a nucleated cluster of farmhouses within which holdings were organized communally...Life within these communities was underpinned precariously by a potato diet, lazy bed cultivation, and a scattering of rundale plots which allowed land of varying quality to be shared by the community on an egalitarian basis.<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, this folk culture provided the social life and social safety net (in the face of British oppression) for the Irish as “working in the tiny fields of Irish farms, men conversed with neighbors across ditches, hedges, and stone walls. A short evening stroll brought them to a neighbors’ cottage for visits that lasted long into the night.”<sup>4</sup> The American life that greeted these immigrants was vastly different from the agrarian communal life they knew in Ireland. The reliance and comfort with which the Irish found among their own in their rural Ireland was replaced by a startling contrast in the urban life they migrated to in America. Although many Irish in America had difficulty in adapting to city life, these immigrants began to replicate the familiar communal way of life and found each other living in the same ethnic neighborhoods in places like New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Chicago.<sup>5</sup> Most notably, the Irish relied on the Catholic Church, as well as the neighborhood pub, to be the centers of replication of the social model left behind in Ireland. Additionally, the newly arriving Irish had an innate understanding of the hard work they would need to endure in order to make their value

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<sup>3</sup> Arthus Gribben. *The Great Famine and the Irish Diaspora in America*. University of Massachusetts Press, 1999. P. 114.

<sup>4</sup> Lawrence John McCaffrey. *Textures of Irish America*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1992. P. 15.

<sup>5</sup> Kevin Kenny. *The American Irish: a history*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2016. P. 62.

seen in the growth of their adopted new homeland.<sup>6</sup> The farming life that was so familiar to the Irish was gone upon their arrival into the United States as most of these immigrants “became involved in the transportation and industrial economies and settled in towns and cities.”<sup>7</sup>

Although many Irish came to America having little experience with industrial work, they surely all came with a sense of hope in the economic opportunities and prospect of upward social mobility, a concept with little chance in Ireland.

Conceptions of America varied according to class and region, with strong farmers from eastern Ireland and Protestants from Ulster much more likely to see emigration as opportunity than Irish speaking peasants from the West, who composed only a very small minority of the overseas migration before the Famine. Prosperous middling and strong farmers among the Catholic emigrants, along with most Protestant farmers, were more likely to visualize their home-to-be in terms of individual liberation, family welfare and economic prosperity.<sup>8</sup>

Many of the Irish immigrants who came to America at the end the 1800s and the beginning of the 1900s continued to create a new Irish-American identity, many times embracing stereotypes imposed upon them by their new countrymen. Maureen Dezell author of *Irish America Coming into Clover: The Evolution of a People and a Culture*, speaks specifically of the role in theatre that the Irish were forced to take:

The Irishman onstage was Sambo with a shillelagh. Actor, producer, and writer Tyrone Power . . . made himself a star in the role of ‘paddy Power,’ a re-creation of a blabbing, blundering Irish peasant who was such a hit in London. The Paddy stage shtick called for Irish props-pigs in the parlor, whiskey,-almost always featured a fight that turned into a melee.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Kevin Kenny. *The American Irish: A History*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2016. P. 62

<sup>7</sup> Lawrence John McCaffrey. *Textures of Irish America*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1992. P. 14

<sup>8</sup> Kevin Kenny. *The American Irish: a history*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2016. P. 51

<sup>9</sup> Maureen Dezell. *Irish America: Coming into Clover: The Evolution of a People and a Culture*. New York: Doubleday, 2001. P. 19.

As these stereotypes grew in antagonism against the Irish some frustrated Irish seemed to validate the roles imposed upon them in America. “Wife battering and desertion were not uncommon male responses to hard times in the United States. Feeling defeated and degraded in America, both men and women reacted with antisocial behavior. The Irish seemed a gigantic human urban social blight as they filled jails, sanatoriums, hospitals, almshouses, and insane asylums.”<sup>10</sup> Yet some of the Irish immigrants in America, took their assigned roles in stride, all the while patiently waiting to prove themselves in their new homeland. Furthermore the contributions made to the development of the United States by the Irish are invaluable. Lawrence McCaffrey explains these contributions in his work entitled, *Ireland and Irish America: Connections and Disconnections*. McCaffrey writes, “Ireland’s loss was America’s gain, as each new wave of immigrants was better prepared to contribute to their new homeland.”<sup>11</sup> Additionally, the adherence to hard work and the desire to erase the stain of oppression through service is evident in the history of the Irish Americans. Historian Alan Delozier explains that “The multi-layered persona of building community and retaining traditions by the American Irish is typically fueled by a history of marginalization and proving ability.”<sup>12</sup> The Irish Americans who came to escape the anguish that was caused by the Famine, coupled with

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<sup>10</sup>Lawrence McCaffrey. 2004. “Ireland and Irish America: Connections and Disconnections”. *U.S. Catholic Historian* 22 (3). Catholic University of America Press: 1–18. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25154917>. P. 17.

<sup>11</sup>Lawrence McCaffrey. 2004. “Ireland and Irish America: Connections and Disconnections”. *U.S. Catholic Historian* 22 (3). Catholic University of America Press: 1–18. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25154917>. P. 3.

<sup>12</sup>Marta Mestrovic Deyrup. *The Irish-American experience in New Jersey and metropolitan New York: cultural identity, hybridity, and commemoration*. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2014. Pp. 98-99

the mistreatment at the hands of the British rulers, brought with them a folk culture which included “From generation to generation, a clannish sort of existence that remains in a sense termed *sinn fein*, Irish for “ourselves alone.”<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, the high number of Irish Americans who chose to serve in the police force and fire departments in the eastern cities of the United States during the nineteenth century was primarily due to the fact that “the Irish, tending to be a people of hard scrabble survival, were likely to acquire an aptitude for the physicality of police or fire work.”<sup>14</sup>

Yet as the value seen in the contributions made by the Irish is clearer today, the discrimination this ethnic group faced in America was apparent, thus “the throngs who fled Ireland’s Great Hunger and their children had little choice but to reinvent themselves.”<sup>15</sup> As much of the Irish folk culture was left behind in Ireland, this ethnic group began to make a name for themselves through hard work in industry and politics, but held tight to their religion as it seemed to be the glue that held the Irish together.

McCaffrey elaborates in the following manner:

The three main textures of Irish America-Catholicism, politics, and nationalism-defined, mobilized, and articulated Irish-American ethnicity. Of the three, Catholicism is the most important . . . Catholicism was the most precious possession the Irish brought to America, where it served and comforted them in adversity.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Marta Mestrovic Deyrup. *The Irish-American experience in New Jersey and metropolitan New York: cultural identity, hybridity, and commemoration*. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2014. P. 99

<sup>14</sup> Marta Mestrovic Deyrup. *The Irish-American experience in New Jersey and metropolitan New York: cultural identity, hybridity, and commemoration*. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2014. P. 99

<sup>15</sup> Maureen Dezell. *Irish America: Coming into Clover: The Evolution of a People and a Culture*. New York: Doubleday, 2001. P. 18.

<sup>16</sup> Lawrence John McCaffrey. *Textures of Irish America*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1992. P. 47.

As McCaffrey's words explain the struggle of the Irish to recreate themselves in their new homeland, the author provides us with a look into the resiliency of the Irish, "As Gaelic Ireland faded into the past, Catholicism became the essence of Irish culture and identity on both sides of the Atlantic."<sup>17</sup> Maureen Dezell adds:

Historians have noted an intense nostalgia in Irish American communities among Famine immigrants who were forced out of Ireland, and later arrivals, many of whom were economic refugees. The Irish, as James Carroll has written, came to regard the defeated land from which they came as a mythic motherland. 'They remembered a land of extraordinary beauty...the sod when it had been theirs and not the landlord's. They remembered an Ireland blessed with rare human virtues-the courage of the Irish patriots, the conviviality of pubs, the holiness of saints, and the friendliness of strangers were always featured.'<sup>18</sup>

The importance of the Catholic Church in the maintenance of Irish folk culture, as well as in the development of a new Irish-American culture cannot be over emphasized. The dominance of Irish Catholics over Protestants in immigration to the U.S. grew as a result of the Famine. "By the 1830s, Catholics exceeded Protestants in the transatlantic migration from Ireland for the first time since 1700. A mass emigration from Catholic Ireland got underway in the pre-famine era (1800-44).<sup>19</sup> Perhaps it is the Irish resiliency that explains the next phase in the shaping of Irish American identity. You see, something curious that began to happen to the Irish in America and perhaps it is the connection to the Catholic Church that caused the movement, but the Irish turned from playing the role of the stereotypical Irishman (or Woman) and began to claim a legitimate place in American culture. The role of the Catholic Church in the education of the Irish

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<sup>17</sup> Lawrence McCaffrey. 2004. "Ireland and Irish America: Connections and Disconnections". *U.S. Catholic Historian* 22 (3). Catholic University of America Press: 1-18. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25154917>. P. 4.

<sup>18</sup> Maureen Dezell. *Irish America: Coming into Clover: The Evolution of a People and a Culture*. New York: Doubleday, 2001. P. 23.

<sup>19</sup> Kevin Kenny. *The American Irish: a history*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2016. P. 45



cannot be discounted as “By the close of the nineteenth century nearly all Irish immigrants could read and write. In fact, the literacy level in Ireland was higher than in the United States, and the impact of the Devolution Revolution<sup>20</sup> on the Church in the United States, American public and religious education, and the strict mores of parish communities raised the conduct of American-born Irish.”<sup>21</sup>

Many historians build on the role of the church and the slow but steady rise in acceptance as the Irish became increasingly involved in American politics. In *Textures of Irish America* McCaffrey makes the connection between Catholicism and the Irish American rise in politics perfectly,

Slowly but surely the Irish took charge of their own neighborhoods, building mini-organizations within the general party structure, and rose from precinct or ward captains to aldermen without surrendering direction of local units. In their drive for power, Irish politicians exploited Catholic solidarity and used saloons as political clubs and police and fire department appointments and city jobs as patronage sources to recruit campaign workers and voters.<sup>22</sup>

Although the Catholic Church, as well as acceptance into American culture via the pathway of politics, were undoubtedly the push the Irish immigrants needed for acceptance, their involvement in both have diminished in recent years as Irish Americans are provided opportunity across the spectrum in American culture. “Once politics, like the church, was a route to power denied talented Irish in other areas. Now opportunities in business and the professions are abundant and attract Irish ambition and ability . . .

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<sup>20</sup> Emmet Larkin, “The Devolution Revolution in Ireland,” in *The Historical Dimensions of Irish Catholicism* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1997), 57-58 (originally published in the *American Historical Review* 77, no. 3 [June 1972]).

<sup>21</sup> Lawrence McCaffrey. 2004. “Ireland and Irish America: Connections and Disconnections”. *U.S. Catholic Historian* 22 (3). Catholic University of America Press: 1–18. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25154917>.

<sup>22</sup> Lawrence John McCaffrey. *Textures of Irish America*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1992. P. 94.

Today, the best and the brightest Irish Americans are neither in the church nor in politics.”<sup>23</sup> The Irish seem to have come full circle in their cyclical journey as immigrants vying for a chance of attaining the American dream via full assimilation to a strong ethnic group that is now an integral part of the American cultural landscape. One need only look to the plethora of St. Patrick’s Day celebration in the weeks leading up to and following March 17. The once discriminated Irish in the early days of St. Patrick’s Day celebrations have evolved to a place of admiration for those who have no claims to an Irish lineage.

The ‘New Irish’ influence has lent great vitality to Irish America culture...In the eighties and nineties New York bars and cafes ‘like Sin-e and An Beal Bocht became amazingly rich centers for young Irish people, said writer Helena Mulkerns. “The sheer numbers of New Irish in America-not just in New York and Boston, but in San Francisco, Chicago, New Orleans, Philadelphia, Miami, and Los Angeles-made it hard for them not to have some kind of impact.”<sup>24</sup>

Nevertheless, it was not until not until March 17, 1997 that the Irish American heritage of suffering was given its due recognition.

On March 17, 1997, the New York St. Patrick’s Day parade paused for a moment of silence to honor the memory of those who died during Ireland’s Great Famine. For the first time on record, the oldest, largest Irish American ritual paid homage to the disaster in which one-quarter of Ireland’s population died from starvation, disease, or neglect, and more than one million fled for their lives.<sup>25</sup>

Yet a review of the hardships many of the Irish endured and the connections to the enclaves in which they settled once in America is needed. The tattered conditions in which the Irish arrived in the United States were also a result of the horrific voyage

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<sup>23</sup> Lawrence John McCaffrey. *Textures of Irish America*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1992. P. 124.

<sup>24</sup> Maureen Dezell. *Irish America: coming into clover*. New York: Anchor Books, 2001. pp. 216-217

<sup>25</sup> Maureen Dezell. *Irish America: Coming into Clover*. New York: Anchor Books, 2001. p. 211

endured. “Conditions aboard the ships were wretched, and the immigrants disgorged into the ports of the United States were often weakened by the misery of famine conditions compounded by weeks of overcrowded, disease-ridden, semi-starvation conditions enroute.”<sup>26</sup> In spite of this, the ethnic group endured.

Once they had disembarked, usually at New York’s Castle Garden, the Irish took whatever menial labor they could find. Those who came to New Jersey tended to settle in the cities. They formed Irish neighborhoods in such districts as Trenton’s Fourth Ward, Jersey City’s Horseshoe, and Newark’s Ironbound section. Community activity centered around the family, the church, the saloon, and the street.<sup>27</sup>

The role of alcohol, as well as the stereotypical picture of the Irish Americans as perpetual drunks, is one that indeed has some validity to it, yet the role of drink in the lives of Irish Americans need not be viewed upon as a social evil in its entirety, as research explains that “Spending much of their spare time in bars in an effort to duplicate the social camaraderie they had enjoyed in Ireland, the immigrants drank every bit as much as members of the established community.”<sup>28</sup> The solace the Irish Americans found in the pubs of their adoptive homeland cannot be overlooked, or underestimated. Social historians tell us that “In Irish America, drinking is more than retreat, more than recreation, more than release. Since the late nineteenth century, it has been an ethnic identity.”<sup>29</sup> The connection between the folk culture of drinking in Ireland and that of the Irish immigrant to America does indeed differ in stark ways. However, the role of alcohol in many tradition Irish rites of passages seems to remain a constant. Most

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<sup>26</sup> Barbara Cunningham and Sven G. Johansson. *The New Jersey ethnic experience*. Union City, NJ: Wise, 1977. P. 271

<sup>27</sup> Barbara Cunningham and Sven G. Johansson. *The New Jersey ethnic experience*. Union City, NJ: Wise, 1977. P. 271

<sup>28</sup> Kevin Kenny. *The American Irish: a history*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2016. p. 231

<sup>29</sup> Maureen Dezell. *Irish America: coming into clover*. New York: Anchor Books, 2001. p. 118

notably is the role of the pub within some father/son relationships as many Irish sons testify to having “their first real conversations with their fathers while they’re standing at a bar.”<sup>30</sup>

Nevertheless, the image of Irish Americans as happy, jovial drinkers seems to be a concrete part of the Irish American identity. It is this identity that is simultaneously reviled by some, yet admired by others that had led to an attempt to recapture the quaint look and feel of the local Irish Pub worldwide. This can be seen in the creation of the Irish Pub Company which has capitalized on the folk cultural landscape of the Irish pub is testimony to the acceptance of the Irish, not only in America but worldwide, “The Guinness Brewing Company of Dublin, Ireland created a business plan nearly 20 years ago aimed at capitalizing on the global mystique of the traditional Irish pub.”<sup>31</sup> It is this commodification of the old Irish pub that is now part of pop culture in America, as well as the world. With locations in London, Dubai, Russia, and in the United States the success of the Irish Pub Company is confirmation that the Irish culture is one of great appeal.<sup>32</sup> The human geography text, *Human Geography: People, Place, and Culture*, elaborates on this in the following passage,

The search for ‘authentic’ local cultures an effort to identify peoples who are seemingly untouched by change or external influence. However, all local cultures...are dynamic, and all have been touched by external influences throughout their existence...Members of local cultures are constantly renegotiating their place in

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<sup>30</sup> Maureen Dezell. *Irish America: coming into clover*. New York: Anchor Books, 2001. p. 118

<sup>31</sup> Harm J. De Blij, Erin Hogan. Fouberg, Charles Fuller, and Alexander B. Murphy, *Human Geography: People, Place, and Culture*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2010. P. 123.

<sup>32</sup> The Irish Pub Company, founded in 1990 by Mel McNally makes pubs in Ireland then the pubs are shipped to locales around the world. The Irish Pub Company also send trained Irish bartenders along with antique looking items to give an authentic Irish feel.

this world and making sense of who they are in the midst of the popular culture onslaught.<sup>33</sup>

Perhaps it is the role of the Irish pub as a place of community that others are determined to replicate. The Irish pubs found in the United States, particularly on the east coast were historically, places of community as they still remain.

In old Irish urban neighborhoods like Dorchester in Boston and Sunnyside in Queens, New York, New Irish communities sprang up around extended families, immigration organizations, and pubs that were more than neighborhood bars with shamrocks in the windows. They were center of communities, said contactor Paul McGonagle, who moved to Boston in the late 1980s to work for a while in the building trade. 'People say Irish people spend a lot of time in bars-the bar was an employment agency, a bank, a social place. If you needed your car fixed, it was where you found a mechanic. It was a place to meet people.'<sup>34</sup>

The written and oral history of the Irish immigrant coming to the United States and assimilating into the mainstream culture of America is without dispute. However it is the manner in which the Irish immigrant helped to define and shape the American culture which needs elaboration. Within the pages of Kevin Kenny's work on Irish America, many examples in which the Irish immigrants influenced the overall development of the United States as the sheer numbers are highlighted and explained:

As many as seven million Irish men, women and children have crossed the Atlantic for North America since the foundation of the first English colonies there in the early seventeenth century. Almost five million of them went to the United States between 1820 and 1920 alone. This vast movement of people was of great historical significance on both sides of the Atlantic. It played a fundamental role in the shaping of modern Ireland, and it determined in no small measure the economic, political and cultural development of the United States, where some 45 million people today (one-seventh of the population) claim some degree of Irish ancestry.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Harm J., De Blij, Erin Hogan. Fouberg, Charles Fuller, and Alexander B. Murphy, *Human Geography: People, Place, and Culture*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2010. P. 126.

<sup>34</sup> Maureen Dezell. *Irish America: coming into clover*. New York: Anchor Books, 2001. pp. 191-192

<sup>35</sup> Kevin Kenny. *The American Irish: a history*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2016. p. xi

Unfortunately, it was until quite recently that the discipline of American studies, more specifically Irish American studies seemed to have ignored the Irish American struggle assuming that most have simply been assimilated; that is until scholars began to take notice of this hole in the mosaic of United States history. The 1994 article, *Portraying Irish America: Trans-Atlantic Revisions* written by Dennis Clark states the following, “Indeed some would contend that the Irish in the United States are no longer a cultural minority, so easily have they adapted to mainstream America. Nobody who has attended a *ceili`* in a major city or dealt with the audiences of the Irish American Cultural Institute could countenance such simplicity.”<sup>36</sup> Further investigation into Irish American ethnic identity rely on works of historians such as Kirby Miller and his in-depth research of Irish Americans published in *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* written in 1985. Once again it is Dennis Clark’s examination of various works, including Miller’s, that pinpoints the Irish Americans ethnic identity discussed throughout this work. “It surpasses the older categories of writing in that it penetrates to the question of Irish American identity, the sense of self and group destiny that profoundly conditioned behavior in religion, politics, and nationalist striving.”<sup>37</sup> Despite the overall evidence in support of the Irish contribution to the United States development as a whole, a much more narrowed inspection of parts of New York and New Jersey is sufficient to create a clear picture of this ethnic group’s impact in America. Whether we are discussing the focus of labor in parts of the Bronx, the work of the Irish

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<sup>36</sup> Dennis Clark. “Portraying Irish America: Trans-Atlantic Revisions.” *History Ireland* 2.4 (1994): 48-54. *JSTOR*. Wordwell Ltd. Web, 24 Sept. 2016. P. 48.

<sup>37</sup> Dennis Clark. “Portraying Irish America: Trans-Atlantic Revisions.” *History Ireland* 2.4 (1994): 48-54. *JSTOR*. Wordwell Ltd. Web, 24 Sept. 2016. P. 50.

in infrastructural improvements such as canal construction gained momentum, or the labor contributions on the docks of Brooklyn, the Irish must be included in the story of American history. Furthermore, the strong bond created between the Catholic Church in the United States and the Irish immigrant can be seen once again in the communities of New York and New Jersey as the social fabric of religion weaves its way into the heart of Irish Americans as the institution fulfills the need of familiarity left behind in Ireland.

Completing the story of the Irish Americans presents itself with the challenge in support of the Irish pub and neighborhood bar in parts of New York and New Jersey as places in which the Irish gather to feel a connection to the folk culture lost during the migration process. An examination of the sheer number of Irish themed gathering places in locales such as Woodlawn Heights, New York, the Red Hook section of Brooklyn and Belleville, New Jersey begin to build a detailed body of historical evidence testifying to the importance of the Irish in the United States cultural development. It is this creation of Irish-American culture through Irish ethnic enclaves within New York and New Jersey that will be discussed throughout the remainder of this work.

## Chapter II: Embracing a New Identity-Assimilation through Hard Work

Within the pages of Tom Fox's *Hidden History of the Irish in New Jersey* the author speaks of the newly found as well as written history of the interaction between the Irish and their new homeland as follows, "More than half the people born in Ireland between 1815 and 1915 died somewhere other than their homeland. Where the Irish went, how they arrived at their destinations and what they found upon arrival has become a genre all its own."<sup>38</sup> Most importantly is the work that was found when the Irish first landed on the shores of America, for this is where the Irish-American identity is born.

Research has unveiled evidence to support the contributions the Irish made in the enhancement of the United States' infrastructure, most notably in the building of the canals, and in the working in the factories of New York and New Jersey during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. When speaking of the Irish contribution in the construction of two of America's most important canals in terms of transportation "Irish labor was largely responsible for the building of the Morris Canal in the 1820s and the D&R Canal in the 1830s."<sup>39</sup> In fact, "The Irish comprised most of the workforce on canal-building projects of that era . . . The Erie Canal had set the pattern for canal building: contractors, surveyors, 'armies of laborers, mostly Irish. Next appeared shanty

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<sup>38</sup> Thomas Fox. *Hidden History of the Irish of New Jersey*. Charleston, SC: History Press, 2011. P. 91

<sup>39</sup> Thomas Fox. *Hidden History of the Irish of New Jersey*. Charleston, SC: History Press, 2011. P. 91



villages, springing up overnight.”<sup>40</sup> Further support in the development of Irish ethnic enclaves within New York and New Jersey is as follows, “It was in such places that the navies<sup>41</sup>, pole men, lock supervisors and their families would congregate as they have for centuries, both here and in Ireland”<sup>42</sup> thus demonstrating the formation of Irish ethnic enclaves in both states.

However, what written history is available in support of the Irish contributions to the region is buried within the pages of New Jersey’s history. “In the *Encyclopedia of New Jersey*, there is not a mention of the Irish in entries of either canal, and in the entry for the Irish. . .”<sup>43</sup> This point makes research into the development of an Irish-American identity somewhat challenging. One such challenge is seen in the story of Belleville, New Jersey.

The city of Belleville, formally gained her independence from Bloomfield in 1839, and was originally part of Newark until 1812, and is one of New Jersey’s oldest Irish enclaves, yet to date, not much in-depth documentation of the contributions made by the Irish who lived here is readily available.<sup>44</sup> Some primary support in discussing the history of the Irish in the town comes from obscure sources such as Belleville’s 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Highlights pamphlet published in 1991, yet even within this source the

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<sup>40</sup> Marta Mestrovic Deyrup. *The Irish-American experience in New Jersey and metropolitan New York: cultural identity, hybridity, and commemoration*. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2014.

<sup>41</sup> "Navvy" was the more general nickname, and the enormous contribution made by this "special breed of men" to the British economy is highlighted in an extensive work of research by Ultan Cowley. The term "navvy" is an abbreviation of "navigators" - the colloquial term for the excavators of the commercial canal system laid out in Britain two centuries ago

<sup>42</sup> Thomas Fox. *Hidden History of the Irish of New Jersey*. Charleston, SC: History Press, 2011. P. 91

<sup>43</sup> Thomas Fox. *Hidden History of the Irish of New Jersey*. Charleston, SC: History Press, 2011. P. 91

<sup>44</sup> Robert B. Burnett. *Belleville: 150th-anniversary historical highlights: 1839-1989*.

mentions of the Irish are limited or totally absent altogether. As the pamphlet addresses the growth of the city and the connection to the Morris Canal, no mention is given to the Irish laborers as is seen in the following written passage, “Belleville’s growth was aided by the coming of the Morris Canal during the decade of the 1830’s.”<sup>45</sup> Other sources elaborate on the development of an Irish-American identity via the enclaves that arose in response to those Irish who contributed to the growth and continuation of America’s development, explaining that “They all lived in various little Irelands. . . As these clusters grew, so they carried into the new country a sharp memory of the country left behind.”<sup>46</sup> Two such little Ireland’s are located in specific neighborhoods within Brooklyn known as the Red Hook section, and the Bronx known as Woodlawn Heights, or simply Woodlawn.

There is quite a shortage of written history documenting the contributions of the Irish in the Red Hook section of Brooklyn. A New York Times article from 2001 describing life and real estate in Red Hook provides vague information in terms of Irish history. “At its height, Red Hook was largely populated by Italian and Irish dock and factory workers and their families. A few institutions hark back to those days, including the local Roman Catholic church, Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the R. M. Amendola Italian-American Grocery, which has stood on Van Brunt Street for 41 years.”<sup>47</sup> A bit more information can be found within oral histories of Irish decedents. One such account came

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<sup>45</sup> Robert B. Burnett. Belleville: 150th-anniversary historical highlights: 1839-1989. P. 17

<sup>46</sup> Dermot Quinn. *The Irish in New Jersey: Four Centuries of American Life*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2006.

<sup>47</sup> Aaron Donovan . "If You're Thinking of Living in Red Hook; Isolated Section of Brooklyn Starts to Awaken." The New York Times (New York), June 10, 2001. <http://www.nytimes.com/2001/06/10/realestate/if-you-re-thinking-of-living-in-red-hook-isolated-brooklyn-area-starts-to-awaken.html>.

from the history of the Dunn-Hanley family as told by Rita Fitzmaurice. The oral history dictated by Ms. Fitzmaurice verifies the idea of an Irish enclave, as well as the work the Irish did while in Red Hook as follows:

I think I'm ready to talk about the Hanley's. Uh, that's mom's family. Daniel Hanley married; I think either Katherine or Mary Carney. I never did know what her first name was, Nell always referred to her as grandma Hanley and they lived, uh they were married on April 18, 1860. When they came to the US is unknown. They settled in the Red Hook section of Brooklyn, which I believe was in an Irish neighborhood. . . I wish I knew where Grandpa Dunn and Grandma Hanley were buried, I have no idea, I'm guessing somewhere in Brooklyn. I don't know where grandma Dunn and Grandpa Dunn lived but, I know that uh, Grandpa Hanley and Grandma Hanley lived in the Red Hook section of Brooklyn. Uh, they all worked for the navy in the Navy shipping yard there, in fact uh, Uncle Tommy, mom told me that Uncle Tommy had an accident there and that somehow his head was injured and that he had a plate put in his head and he suffered terribly from headaches and he hadn't worked in years so after he served in the government somehow, some way or another managing his lifestyle. Uh, Uncle Danny and Uncle Tom and Uncle Eddie all worked on the Brooklyn navy yard.<sup>48</sup>

Fortunately, a bit more is written in connection to the Irish-enclave of Woodlawn Heights in the Bronx. According to the New York State Parks history the Irish were instrumental in the digging of the Old Croton Aqueduct which provided clean drinking water for the residents.

During the 1830s New York City was in dire need of a fresh water supply to combat the steady rise of disease and to fight numerous fires that often engulfed large tracts of businesses and homes. After numerous proposals and an abandoned plan two years into its production, construction of an unprecedented magnitude began in 1837 under the expertise of John Bloomfield Jervis. The proposed plan called for a 41 mile aqueduct and dam to be built in order to run water from the Croton River to New York City. Three to four thousand workers, mostly Irish immigrants earning up to \$1.00 per day, completed the masonry marvel in just five years.<sup>49</sup>

Additionally, the Irish of Woodlawn Heights, having found an adequate place to reside in the United States, settled and stayed in the Bronx neighborhood, continuing to provide

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<sup>48</sup> Rita Fitzmaurice . "Dunn Family History." Interview.

<sup>49</sup> "Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation." Old Croton Aqueduct State Historic Park. Accessed May 01, 2017. <https://parks.ny.gov/parks/96/details.aspx>.

work to improve the infrastructure. Research indicates that the rise in Irish population in the region has been steady since the original builders of the aqueduct. According to the United States Census Bureau, 44 percent of the residents in 2009 claim Irish heritage.<sup>50</sup> However, the lack of documentation in early history of the Irish in early Irish as many began to take a more prominent role in civil service and political leadership.

Assisting in the continual development of the Irish-American identity, many of the Irish begin to take ownership for their role in the Irish-American story. The awakening of the Irish-American consciousness that seems to have come with the joining of the fire New York and New Jersey is somewhat made up for in the sons and daughters of these departments and police departments in New York and New Jersey indicates that finally the Irish were ready to prove themselves beyond manual labor.

In broad terms, the Irish from homeland to new world by profession type were mainly farmers, bar keeps, grocery store operators, and crafters or sellers if they did not have to dig, lift or haul in the trenches to scratch out an honest living. . . Having status in the neighborhood and among peers along with the support of a 'familiar face' led to a wish of attaining respected status. . . Thus, the initial appeal of a service post such as affiliation with a police or fire department . . . and the aura of power from all sides does have historical precedent among the Irish in America.<sup>51</sup>

Evidence indicates that the rise in Irish civil service participation in the United States is seen in the middle of the nineteenth century and continues to climb throughout the century and beyond. Although 17 percent of police officers in the major cities of New York and New Jersey at the time were Irish born, this number "would only spiral upward

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<sup>50</sup> Macaulay. "Woodlawn: From the Peopling of New York City: Irish Communities." <https://macaulay.cuny.edu/seminars/gardner-irish/articles/w/o/o/Woodlawn.html>. Accessed April 19, 2017. <https://macaulay.cuny.edu/seminars/gardner-irish/articles/w/o/o/Woodlawn.html>.

<sup>51</sup> Marta Mestrovic Deyrup. *The Irish-American experience in New Jersey and metropolitan New York: cultural identity, hybridity, and commemoration*. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2014. pp. 94-95

over the next several decades,” providing evidence in support of the rise in status.<sup>52</sup> Public records from the City of Newark’s archives support the saturation of Irish in the police department, as well as the fire department. As is seen in the fire ledger (found within this paper’s appendix) from the year 1903, half of those listed as serving in Engine Companies seven and eight were of Irish ancestry<sup>53</sup>. Furthermore, the majority of those names found on the Annual Report (also found in the appendix), Roster and-Distribution of the Force, published by the Newark Police Headquarters for the year 1900 are of Irish heritage as well.<sup>54</sup> “A more concrete example can be found in the Annual Report of the Board of Police Commissioners for the City of Trenton, New Jersey, for 1895, where out of nearly eighty patrolmen, twenty five of them featured Irish surnames or were born in Ireland.” Continuing, Belleville policeman Patrick J. Finn was living on Union Avenue with his Irish-born wife and three children, all born in New Jersey. Patrick had immigrated in 1884, and his wife in 1872.

One of the ways the Irish kept their identity as Irish, and also helped that land of their birth or ancestry, was to participate in organizations that celebrated their heritage, or helped the people of their homeland. While citizens of Belleville most likely participated in every Irish-American organization that came into existence over the years, records of who actually belonged to these organizations has been difficult to find.<sup>55</sup>

Historical support highlighting the Irish in the fire departments and police departments of New York and New Jersey reminds us of the subsequent formations of Irish-police

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<sup>52</sup> Marta Mestrovic Deyrup. *The Irish-American experience in New Jersey and metropolitan New York: cultural identity, hybridity, and commemoration*. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2014.p. 104

<sup>53</sup> Newark Fire Department Annual Ledger 1903 . April 1903. Police Ledger for the City of Newark, New Jersey, Newark Public Library, Newark, New Jersey.

<sup>54</sup> Newark Police Department Annual Report 1900 . April 1900. Police Ledger for the City of Newark, New Jersey, Newark Public Library, Newark, New Jersey.

<sup>55</sup> Augustine Curley. *The Irish of Belleville, New Jersey*. January 01, 1970. Accessed April 18, 2017. <http://irishofbelleville.blogspot.com/p.> 1.

benevolent societies, as well as Emerald Societies within both New York and New Jersey which provided the Irish support within the ethnic enclaves of the two states. “By the second half of the nineteenth century New Jersey’s Irish belonged to a variety of organizations ranging from the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick and the Ancient Order of Hibernians to mutual aid societies, church clubs and volunteer fire companies.”<sup>56</sup> More specifically, as stated by the New Jersey Emerald Society, these organizations were formed to:

unite all professional public safety personnel of Irish Heritage, to preserve the Irish culture and promote the contributions of our ancestors. The Society is comprised of active and retired Irish American Law Enforcement Officers and Firefighters. The purpose of our Society is to perpetuate the Irish culture, to develop a spirit of fraternalism and to recognize the accomplishments of the Irish-Americans in Law Enforcement and Firefighting Professions.<sup>57</sup>

Yet, police and fire department involvement, as well as membership in benevolent organizations, did not provide the Irish-Americans with the entirety of cultural advancement; this advancement will be bolstered as the Irish gained political clout in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The development of Irish-American politics within the ethnic enclaves of New York and New Jersey has had a profound impact on the shaping of an Irish-American identity. The ease in which some Irish immigrants transitioned to American politics is mainly attributed to a sense of familiarity as the ethnic enclaves of New Jersey were

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<sup>56</sup> Barbara Cunningham and Sven G. Johansson. *The New Jersey ethnic experience*. Union City, NJ: Wise, 1977. P. 272.

<sup>57</sup> Marta Mestrovic Deyrup. *The Irish-American experience in New Jersey and metropolitan New York: cultural identity, hybridity, and commemoration*. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2014.p. 113

modeled on those communities left behind.<sup>58</sup> Dermot Quinn explains the political connections by invoking the contribution of Daniel O’Connell in Ireland, “The Great issue of Irish politics in the early 1840s, for example, was repeal of the Act of Union. This mass movement of Catholic peasants-the first in Irish history-demanded self-government within the British imperial system. O’Connell’s efforts were followed closely throughout New Jersey.”<sup>59</sup> Perhaps it is the strong connection between those Irish who worked in the police and fire departments within New York and New Jersey and the political bosses, most often those of the Democratic Party, which allowed for the rise in Irish-American political participation. Referred to as “ethnic politics . . . Irish laborers and policemen depended for their jobs on Democrat control of City Hall and at election time did not forget it.”<sup>60</sup> The influence of the Irish in Democratic political involvement within United States political history continued to grow and crescendo with the election of the first Irish-Catholic president in 1960, highlighting the importance of the Irish-American identity in the continual growth of United States culture. It is the role of religion and that of the importance of work within the development of the Irish enclave that created such an identity. In other words:

The culture that we recognize today that can be simplistically boiled down to blue collar city workers materialized and remained in the consciousness of the culture because if Irish concentration and numbers in the cities where they settled in the

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<sup>58</sup> Dermot Quinn. *The Irish in New Jersey: four centuries of American life*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2006. P. 62.

<sup>59</sup> Dermot Quinn. *The Irish in New Jersey: Four Centuries of American Life*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2006.p. 62.

<sup>60</sup> Dermot Quinn. *The Irish in New Jersey: Four Centuries of American Life*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2006.p. 106

middle of the nineteenth century and because they built and maintained parish-based communities that remained constant for decades.<sup>61</sup>

The trend of Irish immigration to the United States continued into the twentieth century. The economic hardships faced by the Irish who remained in Ireland in the 1950s and 1960s gave way to a resurgence in Irish emigrating from Ireland. “Of the 70, 000 Irish who came to the United States, many settled in New York City. They entered communities that were still the parish-centered built in the wake of the Famine, but in 1950s New York, the Archdiocese, like most of the rest of the country was in a building frenzy.”<sup>62</sup> This post World War II wave of immigration readily found work and quickly connected with their fellow Irish in New York as “On Sunday they travelled to Gaelic Park in the Bronx to play on a hurling team or to cheer their favorite athletes.”<sup>63</sup> The constant connection for many Irish immigrants in the ethnic neighborhoods of New York and New Jersey is religion. This binding force of religion provided the Irish in America with a reputation that perhaps was less than flattering for some. According to Patrick McNamara who writes for the *Catholic University of American Press*:

In his 1950 study of Brooklyn’s ethnic groups, Ralph Foster Weld discussed Brooklynites ‘whose consciousness of their Irishness is acute and ever-present.’ Dorothy Day complained about the Brooklyn Irish ‘who went around with a chip on their shoulder being ‘militant Catholics.’” Father William J. Smith, S.J., who directed

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<sup>61</sup> Marta Mestrovic Deyrup. *The Irish-American experience in New Jersey and metropolitan New York: cultural identity, hybridity, and commemoration*. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2014.p. 78.

<sup>62</sup> Marta Mestrovic Deyrup. *The Irish-American experience in New Jersey and metropolitan New York: cultural identity, hybridity, and commemoration*. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2014.p. 84.

<sup>63</sup> Marta Mestrovic Deyrup. *The Irish-American experience in New Jersey and metropolitan New York: cultural identity, hybridity, and commemoration*. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2014.p. 85.



a Brooklyn labor school from 1938 to 1952, described the Brooklyn Irish as ‘belligerent’ and ‘willing to fight at the drop of a hat.’”<sup>64</sup>

Research indicates that the creation of the Irish-American ethnic identity is one which is fluid. Recent strengthening of the Irish-American ethnic neighborhood in the McLean Avenue section nestled between Yonkers and the Bronx is representative of this. An August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011 New York Times article speaks of this road as “it winds and dips like an Irish country road, it is lined with so many pubs and other Irish businesses that one feels transported to Cork or Limerick.”<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, “by 2000, the bars and sidewalks were teeming with young Irish people who had come for the jobs and the craic, the Gaelic word for fun. The community seized claim to the unofficial title of Ireland’s 33<sup>rd</sup> county.”<sup>66</sup> The role within the community in which these relatively new Irish have settled has followed a similar path as that of their predecessors in American history. “Liam McLaughlin, who represents the area in the Yonkers City Council, said the community had developed strong political clout. Many of the Irish here are influential in the trade unions, he said, and the bar owners wield power in the larger business community.”<sup>67</sup> However, before we continue with the strengthening of the Irish-American identity as is discussed in the previously mentioned examples, a more refined examination of religion and Irish-Americans is needed.

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<sup>64</sup> Patrick Mcnamara. ““Catholic Journalism With Its Sleeves Rolled Up”: Patrick F. Scanlan and the Brooklyn Tablet, 1917-1968.” U.S. Catholic Historian 25, no. 3 (2007): 87-107. doi:10.1353/cht.2007.0023. p. 87.

<sup>65</sup> Corey Kilgannon. “Dublin on the Thruway.” The New York Times, August 25, 2002. <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/08/25/nyregion/dublin-on-the-thruway.html>. p. 1.

<sup>66</sup> Corey Kilgannon. “Dublin on the Thruway.” The New York Times, August 25, 2002. <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/08/25/nyregion/dublin-on-the-thruway.html>. p. 2.

<sup>67</sup> Corey Kilgannon. “Dublin on the Thruway.” The New York Times, August 25, 2002. <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/08/25/nyregion/dublin-on-the-thruway.html>. p. 3

### **Chapter III: The Role of the Catholic Church**

To concentrate on the role of religion in connection to the Irish-American identity one must differentiate between the Irish Christian sects. For those immigrants struggling to create an Irish-American identity the main contributor to this was that of the Catholic Church. As was previously stated the communal element that was part of parish life both in Ireland and in the United States is the binding force of support of the creation of this identity. Therefore examination of the changing trends in terms of Irish Catholicism and immigration into the United States is needed.

Studies show that “By the 1830s, Catholics exceeded Protestants in the transatlantic migration from Ireland for the first time since 1700 . . . It is the story, firstly, of the ongoing formation of ethnic identity among the predominantly Catholic Irish immigrants in the United States.”<sup>68</sup> This change in demographics provided the Irish-Catholics in America with a vehicle through which to create a voice in their adopted homeland. Not only did the numbers reflect the trend in Catholic dominance in terms of immigration, but the newly emboldened Irish Catholic immigrants appeared to take control of their destiny. Interestingly enough, the clear division between the Protestant Irish and the Catholic Irish is one that seems to have been natural in the United States, thus mirroring the division that was found at home in Ireland. Evidence highlights this noting that “Not only did Catholic nationalists in both Ireland and America exclude Protestants from their definition of Irishness, Protestant Irish Americans from the 1830s onwards eagerly

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<sup>68</sup> Kevin Kenny. *The American Irish: a history*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2016. P. 45.

embraced the term ‘Scotch-Irish’ as a way to distinguish themselves.”<sup>69</sup> It seems that the identification Irish-Americans had with the Catholic Church was the most solid form of true ethnic expression provided to this immigrant group. This acknowledgement should not be of any surprise as religion has been and will continue to be a key form of any folk or local cultures’ main form of maintaining elements of the original culture.

Additionally, the strength of the Catholic Church in the United States and the manner in which this strength emboldened Irish Catholic Americans was most readily visible in the formation of catholic charities. Many of these charities were formed not only in response to the rising needs of the impoverished Irish Catholics in America, but also in the out- right rejection of the protestant stronghold over the Irish Catholics.

The Catholicism of the immigrants was itself seen as a major cause of their poverty and alcoholism. The reformers’ solution, whenever possible, was to take the poor Catholic children away from their families and place them in ‘Christian’ families, typically Protestant homes far removed from the vices of the city . . . Irish Catholic charities fought back with considerable success in the late nineteenth century. When Protestant reformers secured the passage of a law in New York state in 1875, making the sheltering of children in poorhouses illegal, a group called the Catholic Union successfully lobbied the state legislature for the addition of a ‘religion clause’ stipulating that any institutions into which children were henceforth placed would be controlled by people of the same religion as the children’s parents.<sup>70</sup>

Furthermore, the rise in such Irish ethnic organizations continued within the late nineteenth century as well as into the twentieth century in America. “Among the most prominent national Irish-American organizations were the Irish Catholic Benevolent Union (1859), the Ancient Order of Hibernians (1871), the catholic Total Abstinence

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<sup>69</sup> Kevin Kenny. *The American Irish: a history*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2016.p. 3.

<sup>70</sup> Kevin Kenny. *The American Irish: a history*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2016. Pp. 146-147.

Union (1872), and the Knights of Columbus (1881).<sup>71</sup> However, the development of an Irish-American identity seems to be a blending of folk culture and even more so, a newly formed identity in which evolved once the Irish were within the United States. Rooted in the center of the firm hold the Irish had on the retention of the folk culture is that of religion.

According to human geographers “A local culture is a group of people in a particular place who see themselves as a collective or a community, who share experiences, customs or traits and who work to preserve those traits and customs in order to claim uniqueness and to distinguish themselves from others.”<sup>72</sup> Catholicism in the United States provided the Irish with a place to congregate and fostered a collective Irish Catholic folk identity. The comfort and familiarity in which the Irish felt when in the Catholic Church in the United States was similar to that in which they felt under the oppressive conditions in Ireland. “Catholicism was the only meaningful symbol and expression of identity, the only real consolation for the common folk. It brought some beauty into wretched lives, some hope in desperate situations.”<sup>73</sup> Thus, the need for Catholic churches throughout both New York and New Jersey stemmed from those Irish workers’ desire for that “expression of identity” that was familiar to them. “The need for a Roman Catholic Church in Belleville arose in the 1830s when Irish Catholic laborers came to dig the

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<sup>71</sup> Kevin Kenny. *The American Irish: a history*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2016. Pp. 147-148.

<sup>72</sup> Harm J., De Blij, Erin Hogan. Fouberg, Charles Fuller, and Alexander B. Murphy, *Human Geography: People, Place, and Culture*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2010. P. 114

<sup>73</sup> Lawrence John McCaffrey. *Textures of Irish America*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1992. P. 51.

Morris Canal . . . Saint Peter's Church opened on William Street, between Bridge and Dow streets, in 1838 . . . A brick school in the shape of a cross went up in 1890.”<sup>74</sup>

Clear documentation of Irish Catholic influence in the formation of Irish ethnic enclaves on the east coast of the United States is more readily available as the churches were more inclined to keep records indicating that the Catholic Irish community was in fully involved at every level in the Catholic Church during the second half of the nineteenth century. “In religion New Jersey's Irish were establishing solid foundations for leadership not only within their own group but within the larger Catholic community augmented by the huge wave of migration . . . which began in the 1800's.”<sup>75</sup> These foundations were most apparent in the Irish Catholic influence in education. As was noted previously when speaking of Belleville's Saint Peter's addition of a school in 1890, the Irish solidified the ethnic experience by making the church the main focal point of influence in each enclave.

It is impossible to measure the extent of Irish leadership in formulating the early patterns of the Catholic Church in New Jersey. By the turn of the century, however, there were some 150 parochial schools in the state-all providing a viable alternative to government-sponsored education. The role of the Irish-American nuns and priests and parents in providing the impetus for this educational system may be one of the most important legacies of the Irish in New Jersey.<sup>76</sup>

The role of the Catholic Church in the ethnic enclaves of the United States cannot be emphasized enough as the church leaders often provided a clear sense of comfort and

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<sup>74</sup> Robert B. Burnett. Belleville: 150th-anniversary historical highlights: 1839-1989. Belleville, NJ: Belleville 150th-Anniversary Committee, 1991.p. 13.

<sup>75</sup> Barbara Cunningham and Sven G. Johansson. The New Jersey ethnic experience. Union City, NJ: Wise, 1977. P. 272.

<sup>76</sup> Barbara Cunningham and Sven G. Johansson. The New Jersey ethnic experience. Union City, NJ: Wise, 1977. P. 273.

community for the Irish in America. Community was fostered in the Irish Catholic parishes as “the Catholic parish provided a haven of shared values and rituals for those Irish seeking refuge from the Trauma of the melting pot. In a sense, the parish represented the Ireland that immigrants left behind.”<sup>77</sup> Furthermore, the parish priest was seemingly the moral voice for those living in the ethnic enclaves of New York and New Jersey. Without the parish priest within such enclaves, a true shaping of an Irish-American identity would have been less than ideal as the Irish Catholics “Believing them to be learned as well as divinely inspired, people visited the rectory to seek help on a multitude of problems: wayward children; delinquent adolescents; drunken, abusive, or philandering husbands; unfaithful wives; quarrels with neighbors; poverty; unemployment; and sickness. The priest did more than listen. He lectured and counseled parishioners...”<sup>78</sup>

Within works of fiction, the role of the Catholic parish and that of the parish priest is emphasized as one in which the Irish immigrants must connect with, as this religious leader became the main pillar of hope for those new arrivals. The novel, *Brooklyn*, written by Colm Toibin in 2009, portrays this reality as Father Flood (Irish parish priest), helps the main character, Eilis, find a job and a place to live. The importance of the parish and priest in helping the immigrants cannot be easily exaggerated. In one memorable part of the novel this is portrayed as:

Brooklyn offers Eilis the gift of an ideal Irish ritual when Father Flood enlists her to serve Christmas dinner in the parish hall to ‘leftover Irishmen,’ men who ‘built the tunnels and the bridges and the highways’. . . When a man who reminds Eilis of her

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<sup>77</sup> Terry Golway. "The Parish: The Building of Community." *The Irish Americans*: 98-105.p. 98

<sup>78</sup> Lawrence John McCaffrey. *Textures of Irish America*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1992.

father takes her hand and sings, in Irish, ‘If you’re mine, treasure of my heart,’ it is as though her lost Ireland has been magically restored.<sup>79</sup>

The story continues to emphasize the immigrant-priest relationship as “Father Flood--a version of the 1950s cheery, secular, Bing Crosby priest of the film fame-enrolls her in bookkeeping and accountancy classes in Brooklyn College, so Eilis puts aside Irish things and begins to create her identity an Irish American.”<sup>80</sup> The role of the Catholic Church in the education of the Irish cannot be discounted as

By the close of the nineteenth century nearly all Irish immigrants could read and write. In fact, the literacy level in Ireland was higher than in the United States, and the impact of the Devotion Revolution on the Church in the United States, American public and religious education, and the strict mores of parish communities raised the conduct of American-born Irish.<sup>81</sup>

The ethnic enclaves found in places such as the Woodlawn Heights section of New York City, today still boast of having predominantly Irish demographics. Recent articles on Woodlawn Heights tell the readers that “the main social establishments are the pubs and the large Catholic Church that the majority of the neighborhood frequent, St. Barnabas.”<sup>82</sup> In fact when speaking of schools found in this community, after discussing the public school, the article states that “St. Barnabas, has a similar but catholic school that many children in the area also attend and has an all girl high school parents send

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<sup>79</sup> Shaun O’Connell (2013) “Home and Away: Imagining Ireland Imagining America,” *New England Journal of Public Policy*: Vol. 25: Iss. 1, Article 10.p. 4

<sup>80</sup> Shaun O’Connell (2013) “Home and Away: Imagining Ireland Imagining America,” *New England Journal of Public Policy*: Vol. 25: Iss. 1, Article 10.p. 4

<sup>81</sup> Lawrence McCaffrey. 2004. “Ireland and Irish America: Connections and Disconnections”. *U.S. Catholic Historian* 22 (3). Catholic University of America Press: 1–18. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25154917>.

<sup>82</sup> Macaulay. "Woodlawn: From the Peopling of New York City: Irish Communities." <https://macaulay.cuny.edu/seminars/gardner-irish/articles/w/o/o/Woodlawn.html>. Accessed April 19, 2017. <https://macaulay.cuny.edu/seminars/gardner-irish/articles/w/o/o/Woodlawn.html>.

their children to.”<sup>83</sup> The story of Woodlawn Heights supports the theory that “Couples typically sent their children to the parochial school in their parish, supported the Church organizations and attended Mass regularly.”<sup>84</sup> The importance of education in the fostering of an Irish-American identity is evident as the Catholic Church assumed much of the responsibility in fulfilling the role of educating the Irish in most of the enclaves in New York and New Jersey.

Interestingly enough, some Irish-American historians feel that although the role of the Catholic Church was a firm adhesive which undoubtedly held the Irish-American enclaves together within New York and New Jersey, thus strengthening the creation of an Irish-American identity, these same historians point to the shedding of some rural aspects of the Irish homeland culture in the formation of the new Irish-American identity. Suspicion of the Irish, new to America, came as many questioned their allegiance to the new land, when the strong Irish homeland connection was quite visible. “Nonetheless, a strong argument can be made that most immigrant groups have not only discovered their ‘ethnicity’ in America, but that the development of some form of ethnic identity has been an integral part of the process through which immigrants have normally become America.”<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Macaulay. "Woodlawn: From the Peopling of New York City: Irish Communities." <https://macaulay.cuny.edu/seminars/gardner-irish/articles/w/o/o/Woodlawn.html>. Accessed April 19, 2017. <https://macaulay.cuny.edu/seminars/gardner-irish/articles/w/o/o/Woodlawn.html>.

<sup>84</sup> Marta Mestrovic Deyrup and Maura Grace, Harrington. *The Irish-American Experience in New Jersey and Metropolitan New York: Cultural Identity, Hybridity and Commemoration*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014. P. 85.

<sup>85</sup> Kevin Kenny. *The American Irish: a history*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2016. P. 148.



Furthermore, “The majority of Catholic immigrants from nineteenth-century Ireland appear to have lacked any well-defined sense of national, as distinct from regional or local identity . . . Their formation of this new sense of ethnic identity was captured in the hybrid term ‘Irish-American’ . . . Acquiring an ethnic identity, in other words, was the first prerequisite for Irish assimilation.”<sup>86</sup> Within the Irish ethnic enclave of McLean Avenue in Yonkers, New York, Tom Riordan a McLean Avenue resident explains, “It’s actually tighter here than across the sea . . . The Irish are clannish. At home, a Kerry man might help another Kerry man before a Donegal man. But here, Irish is Irish.”<sup>87</sup> Further evidence of this point can be found in the pubs of many enclaves. As has been stated previously, in addition to the Catholic Church, the local pub was and still is in many ways the central focal point of the Irish enclaves in both New York and New Jersey. However, a brief examination of the racial stereotypes attributed to the Irish-Americans is needed.

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<sup>86</sup> Kevin Kenny. *The American Irish: a history*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2016. P.p. 148-149.

<sup>87</sup> Corey Kilgannon. "Dublin on the Thruway." *The New York Times*, August 25, 2002. <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/08/25/nyregion/dublin-on-the-thruway.html>.p. 6.

## **Chapter IV: Pubs and Parades: Irish Connectivity and Strength in Unification**

American history is a narrative of immigrant stories which have shaped the culture by combining a multitude of cultural practices from many peoples. Therefore, the analysis of each immigrant group's experience within the confines of the mainstream culture is imperative. Such studies undoubtedly shed light on the overall treatment of these peoples, most notably are the examples of racism toward these immigrant groups mainly sparked by nativists within the United States. Records indicate that Irish-Americans are among those that suffered racial prejudice at the hands of their fellow citizens throughout much of United States history. Although there are strong indications that much of the racial prejudice is based on the class differentials between the Protestants and the Catholics, the manifestation of this is highlighted in the stereotyping of the Irish as alcoholic, unrefined, fighting louts. Within the edited work of Arthur Gribben's *The Great Famine and the Irish Diaspora in America* is the idea that the labeling of the Irish Americans as "Irish 'Paddy,' a drunken, childlike, often truculent oaf, was a creation of early Victorian imagination."<sup>88</sup>

The rites of passage that the Irish rely upon within their culture are most often associated with the consumption of alcohol, as are the basic human connections found among this immigrant group grappling with the harsh conditions of a new home land is perhaps less than welcoming. For example, "the Irish in Newark settled in what was a Puritan stronghold, so they, along with the Germans, had to fight the authorities in order

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<sup>88</sup> Arthur Gribben. *The Great Famine and the Irish Diaspora in America*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 1999. P. 230

to be allowed to drink liquor on Sundays, and often just for the privilege to drink at all.”<sup>89</sup> Perhaps it was this point in history that began the stereotyping of the Irish-Americans as drunks and heathens.

Throughout much of the early history of the Irish in America, stereotypes prevailed, yet closer examination indicates that the Irish-Americans relied on pubs as places within the ethnic enclaves in New York and New Jersey in which this “out-group” could feel a sense of community and belonging. Written accounts of the Irish-Americans and the connections to pubs and taverns indicate that “the saloon was taking on an important role in the Irish community. It was a place for socializing, as well as a place for political activity. The Horseshoe section of Jersey City (the birthplace of “Boss” Frank Hague), which had the greatest concentration of Irish in all of New Jersey, had forty saloons.”<sup>90</sup> Furthermore, for those Irish working to build the canals and roads of their adoptive homeland, the down time provided within each pub was of the utmost importance. The Irish imprint on the cultural landscape along the canals of New Jersey is still seen by many. “In Irish conclaves, both past and present, the visitor can find along the route of the canal pubs where known and unknown Irish spent precious time. Wharton, Paterson,

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<sup>89</sup> Marta Mestrovic Deyrup. *The Irish-American experience in New Jersey and metropolitan New York: cultural identity, hybridity, and commemoration*. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2014. P. 19.

<sup>90</sup> Marta Mestrovic Deyrup. *The Irish-American experience in New Jersey and metropolitan New York: cultural identity, hybridity, and commemoration*. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2014. Pp. 19-20.

Newark and Jersey City all had Irish pubs along the Morris Canal, and Trenton, Princeton and New Brunswick pulled many a pint.”<sup>91</sup>

Within this Irish community historically found in the many pubs, taverns, and saloons in New York and New Jersey, are gender stereotypes as well. Stereotypes in which the Irish male is expected to consume alcohol in demonstration of his manliness. “Irish-American manhood, in particular, came to be associated with heavy drinking, as distinct from drunkenness; a man who could hold his liquor was truly a man, and truly Irish. All-male drinking was the norm, an expression of pride in ethnicity.”<sup>92</sup>

The reliance on the connection between “manly” behaviors and the consumption of alcohol still seems to guide the cultural behaviors in Irish American society as is touched upon in sociologist Albert D. Ullman’s article entitled *Sociocultural Backgrounds of Alcoholism*. Ullman’s work explains the strong reliance on alcohol consumption within the Irish community in these terms, “We may suppose that the Irish American has more frequent contact with alcoholism due to its relatively frequent appearance among friends, members of the family and of the families of contemporaries.”<sup>93</sup> Adding to this, are the remedies used by some within the Irish culture in terms of the medicinal benefits of alcohol consumption, especial in the youth within the Irish culture. Once again documentation highlighting the cultural use of alcohol among the Irish-Americans is

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<sup>91</sup> Thomas Fox. *Hidden History of the Irish of New Jersey*. Charleston, SC: History Press, 2011.pp. 91-92.

<sup>92</sup> Kevin Kenny. *The American Irish: a history*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2016. P. 201.

<sup>93</sup> Albert D. Ullman. "Sociocultural Backgrounds of Alcoholism." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 315 (1958): 48-54. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1031667>. P. 53.

found within the words from his Irish-American's childhood recollection, as a Dr. Garrett O'Connor recalls the treatment given to him for tuberculosis:

An attack of tuberculosis when I was 12 was treated at home with bed rest for eight months and up to three pints a day of Guinness' Stout. At first, I hated the taste of the bitter black liquid and would often throw it down the toilet. But gradually I developed cravings for the relaxing effect of the alcohol – so much so that I took to searching the house for places where I thought my mother might have concealed her clandestine bottles of cheap South African sherry. This uniquely Irish treatment for TB launched me on the path to hard drinking by the age of 18, and to full-blown alcoholism by the time I was 27 or 28.<sup>94</sup>

Author Pete Hamill also writes his memoir as a recovering alcoholic and supports what O'Connor recognizes as the culture of drink among the Irish, but does so with an air of nostalgia for the closeness felt within the atmosphere of celebration. Hamill struggles, throughout much of his book, with his feelings toward his own father, a man who taught him to consume alcohol as a measurement of manliness at a young age. Some of the first memories of young Hamill however, demonstrate the feeling of cultural connection that must have helped provide great comfort for those within the Irish immigrant world:

Through the door came Uncle Tommy...Aunt Louie...Uncle David...Aunt Nellie...Behind them came other men...They all wore hats and smoked cigarettes and laughed loudly and drank beer from tall glasses...After a while, one of them began to sing, a sad mournful song. When he was finished my father rose and started singing too. His song was funny. His eyes danced, he smiled...For a long time, I sat on the floor near the window, watching this magic show.<sup>95</sup>

Additionally, Hamill connects the transformation from that of Irish immigrant to Irish American within his work, also surrounded by drinking and the comfort of friends. It is at these points within Hamill's book that the lines blur between the role of alcohol as a

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<sup>94</sup> Dr. Garrett O'Connor. Irish America, "Breaking the Code of Silence: the Irish and Drink." Accessed May 12, 2013. <http://irishamerica.com/2012/01/breaking-the-code-of-silence-the-irish-and-drink/>. P. 5.

<sup>95</sup> Pete Hamill. A drinking life: a memoir. Boston: Back Bay Books, 1997.p. 18.

curse or of that of comfort. Perhaps it is this blending of alcohol's role within the Irish culture that makes the diagnosis of alcoholic or social drinker so difficult to pinpoint.

Hamill recalls learning of the assassination of John F. Kennedy while on a return trip to Ireland with his father:

My father stood up, his face a ruin. We held each other tight, saying nothing, and then the bar was packed and we drank whiskey. 'The Star-Spangled Banner' played on the sound track. And then the whole bar crowd was standing, old men and young, men with hard whiskey-raw Belfast faces, and all of them were saluting and so was my father and so was I. That night in Belfast, we both discovered how much we were American.<sup>96</sup>

Maybe the learned practice of drinking within the Irish American culture needs not to be labeled a curse, for what drink has provide Irish Americans may be deemed destructive in certain cases, however, evidence points to its role within the culture as one of great benefit. Alcohol in Irish American life, from celebrating the birth of a child to celebrating a life passed at a wake, is just that, part of the Irish American life.

Furthermore, the acceptance of the Irish Pub as part of the cultural landscape in ethnic enclaves such as McLean Avenue in Yonkers, New York indicates that the racial stereotype of the drunken Irish are fading well into the past. The sheer number of establishments with the many Irish names and the fond manner in which they are described, screams of this acceptance.

The area's picturesque pubs have names that could be set to a lively Irish reel. For starters, you have Mulligan's McGinn's, McGillan's, and McKeon's. Then there is the Well, the Lark's Nest, the Quay's and the Snug. Add to that: Arthur Daly's, Ned Devine's, Burke's, Behan's, Bodhran's, Fagan's, Fiona's, Cornyn's, Tara and

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<sup>96</sup> Pete Hamill. *A drinking life: a memoir*. Boston: Back Bay Books, 1997.p. 323.

Granuaile. For good measure, throw in: P.J. Clark's, J.J. Mannion's, the heritage, the Hibernian, the Leinster House and the Malt House.<sup>97</sup>

As part of the fostering of the Irish-American cultural identity, the growth of St. Patrick's Day celebrations cannot be overlooked. The sheer volume of parades in celebration of this mainly Irish-American day within New Jersey alone bolsters the connection between Irish-American ethnic enclaves and cultural identity. Many accounts state that "the State of New Jersey" is "currently home to at least twenty-six St. Patrick's day parades."<sup>98</sup> Not surprising, the oldest of these parades are found within the Irish-American enclaves discussed throughout this work. "Actually, the first St. Patrick's Day Parade in New Jersey occurred not in Newark, but in Morristown."<sup>99</sup> Once again, the role of work in the development of the Irish-American enclaves is highlighted as "in the early nineteenth century Irish newcomers settled in Newark because of the growing number of manufacturing jobs available there-making it an obvious choice for many poor Irish immigrants hoping to create a new life."<sup>100</sup>

Many of the locales within New Jersey to boast the earliest parades did so in response to nativist sentiment as a means in which the Irish could feel pride in the face of adversity. The city of Newark went through a period in the latter part of the nineteenth

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<sup>97</sup> Corey Kilgannon. "Dublin on the Thruway." The New York Times, August 25, 2002. <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/08/25/nyregion/dublin-on-the-thruway.html>. P. 5.

<sup>98</sup> Marta Mestrovic Deyrup and Maura Grace, Harrington. *The Irish-American Experience in New Jersey and Metropolitan New York: Cultural Identity, Hybridity and Commemoration*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014. P.25.

<sup>99</sup> Marta Mestrovic Deyrup and Maura Grace, Harrington. *The Irish-American Experience in New Jersey and Metropolitan New York: Cultural Identity, Hybridity and Commemoration*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014. P. 25.

<sup>100</sup> Marta Mestrovic Deyrup and Maura Grace, Harrington. *The Irish-American Experience in New Jersey and Metropolitan New York: Cultural Identity, Hybridity and Commemoration*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014. P. 26.

century in which the St. Patrick's Day Parade ceased to exist. The temporary stoppage and then resurgence of the day's celebration is explained in connection to anti-Irish sentiment, but is further explained in connection to the rise in status of the Irish – Americans in New Jersey. “While St. Patrick's Day parades managed to regain momentum in many American states by the early 1900s, most of New Jersey's parades, including the Newark one, remained dormant. Ironically, to some extent this probably happened because of the improved status the Irish experienced in New Jersey at the turn of the century.”<sup>101</sup>

The St. Patrick's Day Parades of today found within places such as Newark, New Jersey include “statewide pipe bands and high school bands that played traditional music, soldiers, policemen and firemen, local Irish tavern association . . . Catholic clergy, and past grand marshals and deputy marshals.”<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Marta Mestrovic Deyrup and Maura Grace, Harrington. *The Irish-American Experience in New Jersey and Metropolitan New York: Cultural Identity, Hybridity and Commemoration*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014. P. 27.

<sup>102</sup> Marta Mestrovic Deyrup and Maura Grace, Harrington. *The Irish-American Experience in New Jersey and Metropolitan New York: Cultural Identity, Hybridity and Commemoration*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014. P. 39.



## **Chapter IV: Conclusion: Irish- American Identity in Today's America**

The role of the Irish in American history is no longer based in racial stereotypes as were seen in the earlier history of this immigrants group's story. Therefore, instead of condemning the behavior of the Irish, perhaps further discussion should be had in regard to their role as a prominent culture to identify with within America, or at least for one day of the year in March. As was touched upon in the previous chapter, the Irish-America identity is firmly connected to St. Patrick's Day celebrations as well as the reverence for the many Irish pubs in New York and New Jersey. Perhaps the most relevant of all in relevance to the creation of the Irish-American identity and St. Patrick's Day come from historian Mike Cronin as he writes, "St. Patrick's Day festivities abroad are no longer assertive markers of Irishness in often hostile host environments, but are instead self-congratulatory events that are both tolerated and actively embraced by non-Irish communities."<sup>103</sup>

Irish American historians often highlight the rise in St. Patrick's Day celebrations within the United States of America as the confirmation of complete Irish acceptance in American culture, as well as confirmation of the creation of an Irish-American identity. This idea certainly seems to be one of validity, as one would be hard-pressed to find a town in America leading up to March 17, as well as the weeks following this date, that does not recognize the holiday in some manner. Even as some aspects of the St. Patrick's Day celebrations have begun to take on a more commercialized feel, this commercial air

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<sup>103</sup> Mike Cronin and Daryl Adair. *The Wearing of the Green: A History of St. Patrick's Day*. London: Routledge, 2002. P.7.

seems to be more evidence in support of the evolution of the Irish-American identity.

Within *The Irish-American Experience in New Jersey and Metropolitan New York:*

*Cultural Identity, Hybridity, and Commemoration*, authors William B. Rogers and Nicole

Anderson tell us that:

a number of St. Patrick's Day Parade organizers have removed elements of Irish tradition from their events in order to attract a larger, more multicultural audience. Images of national and religious figures in some parades have taken a back seat to shamrocks, green face paint, and tacky jewelry, creating a less reverent commercial parade atmosphere.<sup>104</sup>

In spite of the fact that there seems to be an element of commercialization and a loss of true folk cultural traits within the St. Patrick Day Parade's in America, the inclusion of this Irish-American ethnic group into mainstream America is quite remarkable and heart-lifting. The manner in which America and the world has embraced the Irish-American culture in recent years is something that must be examined. The resurgence of interest in this group once displaced and without respect, is now one in which cultural appropriation<sup>105</sup> is part of the trend in conjunction with the Irish.

Additionally, the continual immigration of present day Irish to places like McLean Avenue in Yonkers, New York indicates that the creation of the Irish-American identity is one in which is not yet complete. The folk element of the Irish culture seems to be strong in almost all aspects of Irish-American life, as "Besides food, the Irish import another touch-stone of home: sports. The Gaelic Athletic Association runs hurling and

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<sup>104</sup> Marta Mestrovic Deyrup and Maura Grace, Harrington. *The Irish-American Experience in New Jersey and Metropolitan New York: Cultural Identity, Hybridity and Commemoration*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014. P. 38.

<sup>105</sup> Cultural appropriation is the adoption or use of elements of one culture by members of a different culture.

Gaelic football games on Sundays in Gaelic Park, in the Riverdale section of the Bronx.”<sup>106</sup> The acceptance of the Irish-American culture by those in the mainstream American culture is supported on McLean Avenue as “Not only Irish immigrants enjoy McLean Avenue. Others are drawn to the neighborhood by Irish music festivals, live bar bands and Irish culture classes in small private schools and community centers.”<sup>107</sup>

Moreover, all one needs to do for the ultimate confirmation of an Irish-American is to research Irish Studies degrees in higher education as well as Gaelic courses being taught nationwide. From Boston College, to New York University, to the University of Notre Dame to Drew University in Madison New Jersey the choices are almost limitless. Marion Casey, author of *Family, History, and Irish America* writes of the importance of including Irish Studies in the academics of America:

‘It’s Got to Be Irish American Studies,’ Danny Cassidy told Peter Quinn in an oral history done in the closing weeks of his life during the summer of 2008. ‘Ireland will take care of itself. My advice to students who are into Irish Studies, or into any Studies that look at America, and who want to come into an interesting field, and a field that will open up-you know, there are not a lot of discoveries being made in the Humanities these days, folks! You come into Irish American Studies and there’s a lot of them. They’re like big gold nuggets sittin’ on the ground so get out there, start pickin’ ‘em up.’<sup>108</sup>

Furthermore, the prominence of the Catholic Church in the lives of many Irish-Americans today has changed in vast ways. The solidification of the Irish-American identity for much of the nineteenth and twentieth century has waned in recent years.

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<sup>106</sup> Corey Kilgannon. "Dublin on the Thruway." The New York Times, August 25, 2002. <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/08/25/nyregion/dublin-on-the-thruway.html>. P. 7.

<sup>107</sup> Corey Kilgannon. "Dublin on the Thruway." The New York Times, August 25, 2002. <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/08/25/nyregion/dublin-on-the-thruway.html>. P. 7.

<sup>108</sup> Marion R. Casey. 2009. "Family, History, and Irish America". Journal of American Ethnic History 28 (4). University of Illinois Press: 110–17. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40543476>. P. 110.

Most of the rejection of the Catholic faith came during the 1960s and continued throughout the century. “By the mid-1900s a majority of American Catholics favored a married clergy, the ordination of women, religious remarriage of divorced people and premarital sex . . . Once obedient and devout, the Irish, its best educated and successful members, are now the Church’s leading critics.”<sup>109</sup> Even so, “Catholicism is still present in Irish American personalities. Warm memories of the spiritual solace and aesthetic appeal of Catholic liturgies remain, as well as an appreciation for the way the Church brings a person into, sees him or her through, and sends them out of the world.”<sup>110</sup>

Maureen Dezell explains that in spite of the affection and pride Irish-Americans feel for their culture and identity, they have met resistance from those who live in Ireland proper. Songs calling into question the true heritage of Irish-Americans are full of lyrics such as those often sung at Irish fairs throughout the United States:

You’re not Irish, you can’t be Irish  
 You don’t know “Danny Boy,”  
 Or “Too-ra-loo-ra-loo-ral”  
 Or even “Irish Eyeys,”  
 You’ve got a hell of a nerve  
 To say you come from Ireland  
 So cut out all this nonsense  
 And sing “McNamara’s Band.”<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Lawrence McCaffrey. 2004. “Ireland and Irish America: Connections and Disconnections”. U.S. Catholic Historian 22 (3). Catholic University of America Press: 1–18. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25154917>. P. 16.

<sup>110</sup> Lawrence McCaffrey. 2004. “Ireland and Irish America: Connections and Disconnections”. U.S. Catholic Historian 22 (3). Catholic University of America Press: 1–18. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25154917>. P. 17

<sup>111</sup> Maureen Dezell. *Irish America: coming into clover*. New York: Anchor Books, 2001. P. 189.

Yet, this point of view is not that of all who comment on Irish-American culture. The culture which has developed in those ethnic enclaves found in New York and New Jersey should be given their due as is confirmed in a comment given by Sean O' Huiginn, Irish Ambassador to the United States in 1996:

There has been a sense in Ireland that we owned the Irish heritage and that it was up to us to say what was good and what was bad, what you're allowed to do and what you aren't. I think one of the things you realize when you come to the States is that Irish heritage is not a monopoly we have in Ireland that we allow the Irish Americans to borrow or share in the flavor of from time to time. That in fact the Irish American may have created a lot of it. I think we need to be understanding that Irish America is a culture with its own entitlements.<sup>112</sup>

No greater validation can be stated. As Dezell closes her work on the evolution of the Irish culture in America, she does so in the following statement, "It is time to remember; to recognize; to render."<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> Maureen Dezell. *Irish America: coming into clover*. New York: Anchor Books, 2001. p. 206

<sup>113</sup> Maureen Dezell. *Irish America: coming into clover*. New York: Anchor Books, 2001. P. 220.

## Appendix

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### ANNUAL REPORT,

## Roster and-Distribution of the Force.

### POLICE HEADQUARTERS.

RANK.	NAME.	REMARKS.
<i>Chief</i> .....	Henry Hopper.....	
<i>Sergeant</i> .....	Ernest Astley.....	
" .....	John W. Prout.....	
" .....	Thomas Tracy.....	
<i>Captain of</i>		
<i>Detectives</i> ...	John F. Cosgrove .....	
<i>Detective Sergt.</i>	William A. Carroll.....	
" .....	Peter J. Christie ...	
" .....	Julius Jaegers.....	
" .....	Richard Lewis .....	
<i>Detective</i> .....	James Donovan.....	
" .....	Charles Glori.....	
" .....	Joseph Farrell.....	
" .....	August Jackes .....	
" .....	Michael T. Long .....	
" .....	Daniel Murphy .....	
" .....	John M. Tyler.....	
<i>Patrolman</i> ....	Benjamin S. Knapp ....	Detailed as Doorman.
" .....	Bernard J. Scanlon.....	" "

### FIRST PRECINCT.

RANK.	NAME.	REMARKS.
<i>Captain</i> .....	Michael Corbitt .....	
<i>Sergeant</i> .....	Louis Noll.....	
" .....	Michael J. Ryan.....	
" .....	Oscar Vogel .....	
<i>Roundsman</i> ...	Thomas F. Connell.....	
" .....	Jacob S. Lunger.....	
" .....	Charles McGovern.....	
<i>Detective</i> .....	Thomas Purcell.....	
<i>Truant Officer.</i>	Albert J. Haynes.....	
<i>Vet. Reserve</i> ..	David S. Clark.....	
" .....	Jacob W. Norris.....	
" .....	John Sickles.....	
" .....	Alfred C. Westerman.....	
<i>Patrolman</i> ....	James Burke.....	
" .....	Henry L. Baldwin.....	
" .....	Cornelius C. Benfer.....	
" .....	Herman Beyer.....	
" .....	Samuel Brown.....	

## NEWARK POLICE DEPARTMENT.

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RANK.	NAME.	REMARKS.
<i>Patrolman. ...</i>	Philip Corrigan.....	
"	James H. Collins.....	
"	Joseph Cordano.....	
"	John M. Coakley.....	
"	Dennis M. Cremen.....	
"	William T. Carson.....	
"	James Carson.....	
"	Thomas J. Corbally.....	
"	Anthony Danneberger.....	
"	Oscar H. Davidson.....	
"	M. Joseph Dauth.....	
"	James Dargin.....	
"	Louis Dauber.....	
"	William Douglas.....	
"	James J. Dowd.....	
"	Ferdinand A. David.....	
"	John Eckerlin.....	
"	Joseph K. Ebert.....	
"	John Farley.....	
"	Benhard Firner.....	
"	Michael J. Fox.....	
"	John Heller.....	
"	William C. Heller.....	
"	Patrick Hennessy.....	
"	David Johnson.....	
"	George A. Johnson.....	
"	Frederick J. Kuhn.....	
"	Edward A. Keogh.....	
"	Thomas M. Leffingwell.....	
"	John Leonard.....	
"	Oscar Lueddeke.....	
"	Charles A. Lindner.....	
"	Eugene O. Lovett.....	
"	Jacob A. Moffitt.....	
"	James Moore.....	
"	Julius Maier.....	
"	James F. Meehan.....	
"	Samuel Meyerowitz.....	
"	Patrick J. McTague.....	
"	Thomas McGrath.....	
"	Alexander McDonnell.....	
"	James A. McRell.....	
"	Cornelius O'Neill.....	
"	John O'Connor.....	
"	Martin O'Malley.....	
"	Christian Ross.....	
"	Patrick J. Ryan.....	
"	Jacob Sichler.....	
"	Jacob L. Staats.....	
"	Harry T. Stillman.....	
"	John Smith.....	
"	Jacob Scriba, Jr.....	



## ENGINE COMPANY No. 15.

Located at Fifth avenue, corner Sixth street. Second size Amoskeag Engine (three horse hitch), and two-horse Champion Babcock Combination Chemical Engine and Hose Wagon double Tank (35-gallon) both in good condition.

MEMBERS.	BADGE No.	POSITION.
Lewis M. Price.....		Captain....
John J. Towey.....		Lieutenant..
William Dillon.....	147	Engineer...
Andrew E. Newton.....	122	Fireman....
Victor Hermann.....	237	"
George W. Ackerman.....	249	"
William J. Reilly.....	255	"
William H. Netschert.....	172	"
George W. White.....	170	"
Robert J. Dunn.....	176	"

## ENGINE COMPANY No. 16.

Located at 554 Ferry street. Second size Amoskeag Engine (three horse hitch), and Champion Babcock Combination Chemical Engine, single Tank (60-gallon) and Hose Wagon, in good condition.

MEMBERS.	BADGE No.	POSITION.
Isaac W. Van Houten.....		Captain....
Thomas J. Hughes.....		Lieutenant..
Patrick Mahon.....	64	Engineer...
Thomas H. Donahue.....	214	Fireman....
James J. McEvoy.....	247	"
William F. O'Brien.....	238	"
George Herrscher.....	241	"
Joseph P. Lupton.....	234	"
Michael Fagan.....	266	"
Christopher Devine.....	281	"



## ENGINE COMPANY No. 7.

Located at Wallace place and Hudson street. This Engine is a second size double La France piston (three-horse hitch) with two-horse Hose Wagon, both in good condition. Engine equipped with Rubber Tires.

MEMBERS.	BADGE NO.	POSITION.
M. P. A. McDermit.....		Captain....
Patrick J. Donahue.....		Lieutenant..
Thomas O'Toole.....	101	Engineer...
John O'Toole.....	56	Firemen....
James McCarron..	121	"
Edward Leeden.....	153	"
James T. Leonard.....	141	"
Richard J. Lyons .....	209	"
Harry S. Benedict .....	158	"
George H. Smith.....	198	"

## ENGINE COMPANY No. 8.

Located at corner Ferry and Fillmore streets. This Engine is a second size double Amoskeag Engine (three-horse hitch), with two-horse Hose Wagon, both in good condition.

MEMBERS.	BADGE NO.	POSITION.
Michael J. Durkin.....		Captain..
A. M. Vanderstreet.....		Lieutenant..
M. T. Quigley .....	69	Engineer...
Bruno Clinchard.....	31	Fireman....
Thomas H. McEnroe.....	134	"
John J. Schoemer.....	194	"
Peter F. Cunningham.....	203	"
Martin L. Coleman.....	234	"
John A. Curran.....	265	"
Thomas Reilly.....	160	"

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