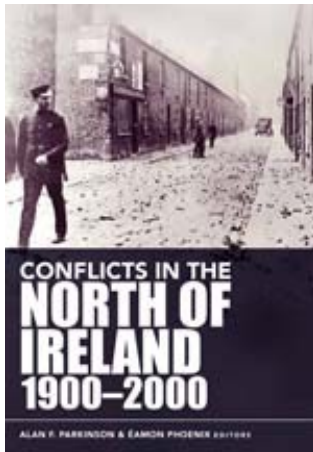


St Mary's University College

Research Newsletter

BOOK CHAPTER PUBLISHED

Dr Peter Collins, a lecturer in the History Department, contributed a chapter titled "1932: a case-study in polarization and conflict" to a recent book published by Four Courts Press, Ireland. The book, "Conflicts in the North of Ireland, 1900-2000" was edited by A.F. Parkinson and E. Phoenix and was published in October 2010. Peter's chapter focuses on important and controversial issues associated with the year 1932, revealing the relationships of the two main



communities, as well as the two parts of the island of Ireland. These major issues concentrate on Eamon de Valera's first electoral victory, the religious contention associated with the 1,500th anniversary of St. Patrick's mission, and the response from the government to the Depression—including the Outdoor Relief Riots. The chapter also comments on the celebrations among the two main communities, stemming from the opening of Stormont and the Eucharistic congress. This chapter, and indeed book, is particularly useful for scholars, researchers and students of Irish History, but may also be of interest to the layperson.

RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTATION

Ms Louise Long, a senior lecturer from the Education Department, presented a research paper at a research conference in Dublin in September 2010. The research conference, titled "Collaborative Voices" was hosted by the Church of Ireland College of Education and was organised by the Colleges of Education Research Consortium. The conference provided a rich and varied programme allowing for interesting conversations, possible future collaborations as well as exchanges of research and ideas. Louise's paper, "Connections and Considerations in Cross-Cultural Collaborative Research: Voices from Uganda and Ireland" was presented in collaboration with Florence Aguti (Junior Minister for Education and Sports) from Uganda. In 2008, the Centre for Global Development through Education received funding from Irish Aid to develop the research capacity of Ugandan and Irish teacher educators to explore the implementation of the Thematic Curriculum for Lower Primary classes in Uganda (aged 6-9 years). The research paper presented by Louise used introspective and autoethnographic techniques to explore the inherent issues and positive outcomes that emerged in the conducting of collaborative policy research. The narratives of one Ugandan researcher and one Irish researcher highlighted aspects of the writers' personal and professional growth as well as the need for sensitive researchers to be self-aware, rational and culturally responsive.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Book chapter published.....	1
Research paper presentation...	1
Directors of teaching practice research.....	2
Open sustainability in education resource.....	2
PAM-INA project.....	3
MOBLANG project.....	4
Staff profile.....	4

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Research section of College website - <http://www.stmarys-belfast.ac.uk/academic/research/default.asp>
- Academic research journal produced by the College - "Taighde agus Teagasc"
- Dr Margaret Keane produces new book - "Thinking European(s): new geographies of place, cultures and identities", published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing



DIRECTORS OF TEACHING PRACTICE RESEARCH

Mrs Claire Connolly, the Schools Coordinator, was successful recently in achieving seed funding from the Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS) for a project titled “Directors of Teaching Practice Research Group: continuing professional development for teaching practice supervisors”. It is directed by Claire in collaboration with Séamie Ó Néill from Froebel College Dublin. Achieving consistency in the supervision of student teachers by a range of tutors who come to teaching practice with a variety of backgrounds and agendas, is a challenging issue for those who organise and co-ordinate this essential aspect of

the B.Ed. Degree. The project aims to consider a number of important aspects of supervision and to develop an outline programme of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for any party involved in the supervision of student teachers in schools. Through a series of cross border exchanges the project seeks to explore the following: the expectations which supervisors bring to the supervision of students; the setting of standard expectations; ways of developing a more coherent, consistent approach; and the development of a programme of CPD in this area.

“This project aims to consider a number of important aspects of supervision and to develop an outline programme of CPD”

TEACHER EDUCATION SEMINAR SERIES (TESS)

The programme for the Teacher Education Seminar Series in Semester 1 of the academic year 2010-2011 included:

Professor Laura Lundy & Mrs Leslie McEvoy, School of Education, Queen’s University Belfast
“Children’s Rights & Research: Assisting Children to an (In)formed View”.

Dr Tracey McKay & Dr Angela Vaupel, St Mary’s University College Belfast **“Connecting with Europe: An Exploration of European Identity & Citizenship in the Revised NI Curriculum at Key Stages 3 & 4”.** (In collaboration with the European Studies Research Seminars—ESRS)

Dr Gerard McCann, Mr Seán Mac Labhraí & Mr Padaí de Bléine, St Mary’s University College Belfast **“Moblang & St Mary’s University College”.**

2

OPEN SUSTAINABILITY IN EDUCATION RESOURCE

Dr Gerard McCann is the representative from the College involved in a project lead by the Education Subject Centre advancing learning and teaching in education (ESCalate) in collaboration with the University of Bristol, London South Bank University, Bangor University, Institute of Education, and the University of Strathclyde. The project received funding from the Higher Education Academy and the Joint Information Systems Committee.

The project aims to create a collection of open education resources for education practitioners to integrate education for sustainable development into their programmes and to promote this collection to ensure its use and sustained development. The objectives are:

- * to discover, review and revise (as appropriate) digital resources from a range of subjects within the overarching discipline of Education that focus on Education for Sustainable Development and to share them as open content;
- * to provide a trusted, sustainable community repository for these resources. In addition to the dedicated ESD repository, resources will also be submitted to JorumOpen, Slideshare and YouTube as appropriate;
- * to bring about a community of peers committed to sharing and reviewing online resources from a range of subject areas within Education;
- * to set in motion a culture of shared, open educational resources across the Education community developing an increased awareness of and commitment to sharing teaching resources.

Further details are available at the project’s website address: <http://escalate.ac.uk/osier>



Dr Tracey McKay & Dr Angela Vaupel at a meeting with partners on the PAM-INA project hosted by St Mary's University College Belfast.

PAM-INA: PERCEPTION, ATTITUDE, MOVEMENT—IDENTITY NEEDS ACTION

Two members of academic staff, Dr Tracey McKay and Dr Angela Vaupel, are members of a project team consisting of academics from seven other partner institutions, which include: the University of Education Freiburg; the University of Ljubljana; the University of the Aegean; the University of Lyon; the Pedagogical University Krakow; the European University Cyprus; and the Malardalen University. The project, known as “PAM-INA”, received funding from Comenius, under the framework of the European Union’s Lifelong Learning Programme.

The project involves research with partner schools using quantitative and qualitative surveys. There will be an examination and comparison of the curricula of the participating countries concerning “Europe”. The gathered data will show whether there is a connection between actual teaching of European issues in the classroom and syllabi goals. Based on the research results a Multilingual Tool Kit will be developed to help students to learn more about daily life in Europe. The key objective behind the toolkit is to help students develop critical intercultural understanding as a step towards more active European citizenship. The toolkit will consist of a workbook for students, a manual for teachers including lesson plans for various themes with learning objectives, teaching strategies/approaches and methods, two interactive DVD resources, and an e-based communication platform to encourage dialogue between participating students. At the end of the Tool Kit Unit pupils will produce a short DVD to communicate their understanding of European identity. The project will also manage a website which is intended to serve as an e-management centre for the project but also a collaborative forum for inter-cultural exchange on European identity.

In June 2010, their research was presented at the IASSEE (Irish Association for Social, Scientific & Environmental Education) conference hosted by the College. In September 2010, a presentation on the preliminary findings of research on post-primary pupils’ perceptions of and attitudes towards Europe, European identity and citizenship was made at a meeting in Sweden. There are also various publications due in 2011. Further details are available at the project’s website address: <http://geo-ellanikos.aegean.gr/pamina/>

RESEARCH REPORTS ON SCOTENS WEBSITE

Mr Martin Hagan and Mr Frank Quinn, along with three other academics from Coláiste Mhuire, Marino Institute of Education, Dublin, have produced a research report, funded by SCoTENS and titled “English as an additional language in undergraduate teacher education programmes in Ireland”. Available at: <http://scotens.org/?p=1874>

Mrs Mary Greenwood, in collaboration with two academics from Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, has completed a SCoTENS-funded research project. It is titled “Student teachers’ perceptions of their competence to meet the needs of pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder in mainstream primary schools”. Available at: <http://scotens.org/?p=1872>

Ms Louise Long has completed a report for SCoTENS, having worked with an academic from Trinity College, Dublin and another from St Patrick’s College Drumcondra, on a research conference hosted by the College, titled “Dyslexia, Literacy and Inclusion—a Joint North-South Conference”. Available at: <http://scotens.org/?p=1785>

EUROPEAN STUDIES RESEARCH SEMINARS (ESRS)

The programme for the European Studies Research Seminars in Semester 1 of the academic year 2010-2011 included:

Mr Jonathan Worley, St Mary's University College Belfast "**On the Edge of Europe: Wordsworth's European and English Identities**".

Dr Birgit Schippers, St Mary's University College Belfast "**Europe's Others: Geo-philosophy and Geopolitics in Kristeva's Conception of Europe**".

INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY VIA 'MOBLANG'

The College is represented by Dr Gerard McCann, Mr Seán Mac Labhraí and Mr Padaí de Bléine on an international research and development project, funded by the European Commission & the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, through the Framework Lifelong Learning Programme. The partner countries include Cyprus, Basque Region, UK, Ireland and Greece.

By exploiting technology and especially the recently emerging developments in mobile learning, a viable alternative to attending a language class can be offered to Europeans. This project applies Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) to support minority and/or less-frequently used and less-taught European languages (LWULT). The aim is to promote intercultural dialogue especially in former European conflict regions or regions with many minority groups through promotion of linguistic diversity.

The project will develop the open-source mobile learning environment 'Moblang' in which users can design and publish their own prototype micro language courses. User specific micro courses will be embedded in a social and cultural context, which will include activities such as lectures, exercises, games, quizzes, as well as access to a live tutor.

Further details are available at the project's website address: <http://www.moblang.eu/>

STAFF PROFILE

Dr Brian Hanratty has worked in the College since 1975 and, although his specialist area of research lies within The Arts, i.e. Anglo-Irish literature, both fiction and poetry, more recently he has been heavily involved in research within Education and the school setting. In 2003, Brian worked on research that explored the Pushkin Trust's focus on experiential learning and its impact on children with special educational needs. In 2004, he then moved on to research involving a cross-community investigation into A-



level pupils reading literature related to The Troubles in Northern Ireland. This also led to published research, in 2006, on how literature could help teach aspects of the global dimension at key stage 4. More recently, in 2008 & 2010, he has published articles respectively on teaching poetry at key stage 4 and on exploring the relationship between poetry and gender, again involving pupils aged 15-16. His earlier research work on teaching the literature of The Troubles prompted him to seek research funding for further development of this area and in 2007 he made a successful application for research funding to the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation which enabled him to direct a major project, entitled "The Literature of The Troubles Project". As Project Manager, he was responsible for overseeing the work of a Project Officer and for chairing a steering group made up of other academics, teachers and specialist educational agency staff. As a result of Brian's research, he has presented many papers at international research conferences, published articles in peer-reviewed academic journals and has been asked to give lectures, based on his research, at a number of universities in Europe and the USA.

St Mary's University College Belfast
191 Falls Road
Belfast
BT12 6FE
Northern Ireland
Phone: 02890 327678
Fax: 02890 333719
E-mail: research_admin@smucb.ac.uk



St Mary's
University College
Belfast
A College of Queen's University