

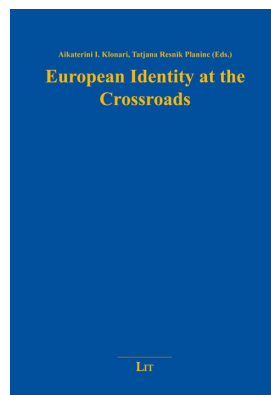
Research Newsletter



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

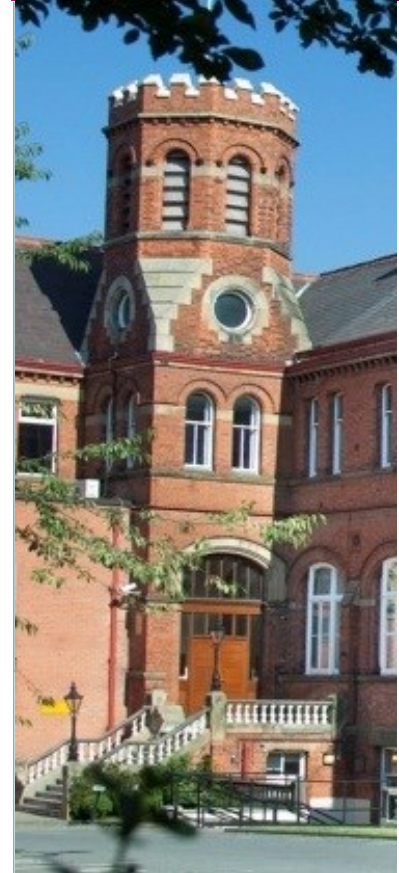
RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS YOUNG PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES TOWARDS EUROPEAN IDENTITY

The PAM-INA (Perception, Attitude, Movement - Identity Needs Action) project, which received funding from the European Union's Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013, has enabled Dr Angela Vaupel to write a chapter for the book **European Identity at the Crossroads** edited by A.I. Klonari and T. Resnik Planinc and published by Berlin: LIT Verlag in December 2013. The book deals with the development, existence and dilemmas concerning European identity among young people in Europe. It compiles the results of research conducted within the project that involved eight participating institutions from Germany, Slovenia, France, Greece, Poland, Northern Ireland, Cyprus and Sweden. The various authors from the respective countries discussed the results and presented their views on the issue of European identity and citizenship. Dr Vaupel's chapter, titled *Sitting at the edge of Europe? Perceptions of and attitudes towards Europe among post-primary students in Northern Ireland*, focused on the results of a survey conducted with Key Stage 3, 4 and 5 students in nine post-primary schools in Northern Ireland. In her conclusion, Dr Vaupel wrote, "The research presented here suggests that most questioned young people at PAM-INA partner schools in Northern Ireland are moderately indifferent to Europe and maintain traditional attitudes towards identity and nationality. This is, however, not to claim that their attitude towards Europe is over-sceptical but rather that 'Europe' is for the most part viewed in instrumental terms."



IT'S TEACHER EDUCATION — NOT TRAINING!

An international research conference held on the 20th & 21st January 2014 at the Zollverein World Heritage Site, Essen, Germany on the theme of **Education and Training for European Teachers: Competence Models, Curricular Objectives and Harmonising Theory and Practice**, included a poster created by Martin Hagan and Prof Peter Finn. The title of the presentation was *It's teacher education - not training! Mediating competences and values for authentic learning in initial teacher preparation* and it focused on the GTCNI competence framework based on the concept of the reflective and activist teacher. A summary of the presentation read, "The Primary Education Programme at St Mary's University College utilises the GTCNI framework to create an approach to teacher development which regards teaching competence holistically and within the context of a broader framework of values coupled with a sense of professional vocation and mission ... The key messages outlined on the poster indicate a process of 'education' rather than 'training'."



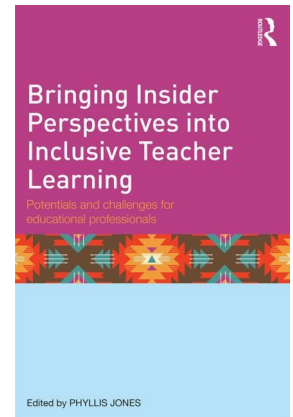
INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- * Research highlights young people's attitudes towards European identity
- * It's teacher education — not training!
- * Pupils with literacy difficulties and their self-perceptions of learning
- * On-line bullying research seminar by visitor to the College
- * Strategies for engagement with story
- * The history of the 1913 Dublin Lockout
- * Strong representation by St Mary's at research conference
- * Two St Mary's scholars featured in 'The Furrow'
- * International conference on Feuchtwanger
- * 'Smart Gear' project presented to European academics and students
- * Dialogue on the Irish economic system
- * Staff profile

PUPILS WITH LITERACY DIFFICULTIES AND THEIR SELF-PERCEPTIONS OF LEARNING

A recent book, which offers a compelling argument for the need to include insider perspectives of disability in teacher education programmes to enrich professional understandings and shed light on the reality of living with a disability, has been published by Routledge at the beginning of 2014. The book, **Bringing Insider Perspectives into Inclusive Teacher Learning: Potentials and Challenges for Educational Professionals**, edited by P. Jones features a chapter co-written by Dr Louise Long and Dr Ron Smith titled *Using vocabularies of hope to transform the educational experiences of students identified as having pronounced literacy difficulties*. With contributions from other highly experienced educators, the book includes case studies and research projects on how teacher educators gather, interpret and integrate insider perspectives into teacher education programmes, along with practical strategies as to how educators can develop programmes more sensitive to the experiences of 'insiders'. In the opening paragraph of

their chapter, Dr Long and her co-author wrote, "This chapter emerged from an Irish research project aimed at exploring how students who identified as having long-standing and marked literacy difficulties perceived themselves as literacy learners. This included an analysis of their views on the extent to which they felt ownership over the assessment process and ownership over how their own literacy needs might best be met. An arts-based research design was developed as a way to support student voice in this research. Students created artworks, which were then shared with teachers in an attempt to bring about transformative awareness."



"...an analysis of their views on the extent to which they felt ownership over the assessment process and ownership over how their own literacy needs might best be met."

STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGEMENT WITH STORY

A research conference to celebrate story-telling and reading was held at the **Zurich University of Teacher Education, Switzerland** on the 13th & 14th September 2013. The conference provided insights into new developments in story-related methodology at primary and secondary level. This particular conference provided an opportunity for Catherine Gilliland to showcase her research in a workshop for conference attendees. Catherine's presentation, which was titled *Developing children's oral language and comprehension through active engagement with a story*, directly related to her work in the College and was connected to one of the conference themes, i.e. the story-based approach to teaching and learning. During the workshop Catherine demonstrated interactive teaching strategies that use storytelling as a source for pleasure, as a way of teaching about the world and as a method to develop literacy skills.

ON-LINE BULLYING RESEARCH SEMINAR BY VISITOR TO THE COLLEGE

The **TESS (Teacher Education Seminar Series)** autumn schedule was revived in October 2013 and the first speaker to kick-start the new academic year was Dr Noel Purdy from Stranmillis University College, Belfast. Dr Purdy visited the College on the 30th October 2013 to present a paper to our community of researchers on his recent research that focused on on-line bullying. His paper, titled *'i h8 u' Cyber-bullying, schools and the law: Research findings and implications for initial teacher education*, outlined the results of a SCoTENS funded project with an emphasis on examining what schools in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland are doing currently to counter the growing issue of on-line bullying.



Dr Noel Purdy (Stranmillis University College, Belfast) with TESS organisers - Dr Geraldine Magennis & Dr Brian Hanratty

Other TESS presentations in November & December 2013 included:

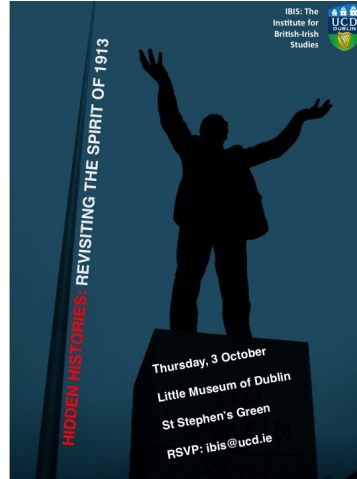
Dr Brian Hanratty: *Seamus Heaney, man and poet: Into the marvellous.*

Dr Eibhlín Mhic Aoidh: *Children's views of learning in early years Irish-medium settings.*

Denise McKee: *An examination of Irish-medium student teachers' perceptions of their Irish language competence and their perceived language development requirements.*

THE HISTORY OF THE 1913 DUBLIN LOCKOUT

The **Irish Times** highlighted a research article by Dr Peter Collins on the 11th September 2013 titled *Barriers to worker unity*. This article arose from research for a paper delivered at an event in the summer of 2013 and was tailored for the Republic of Ireland's History Leaving Certificate, as well as for undergraduate students of History. Dr Collins also delivered a paper on the 3rd October 2013 in the Little Museum of Dublin at the research conference **Hidden Histories: Revisiting the Spirit of 1913**, organised by the Institute for British-Irish Studies, University College, Dublin. The title of his paper was *The Dublin Lockout – the view from the North* and it described how the 1913 Dublin Lockout was viewed in Belfast. It consequently looked in particular at the influence and activities of James Connolly in both cities. Dr Collins plans to revise the paper as a chapter for a forthcoming edited book on The Lockout to be published by Cork University Press in 2014.



STRONG REPRESENTATION BY ST MARY'S AT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

The **37th Reading Association of Ireland International Conference** was held at the Marino Institute of Education, Dublin from the 26th – 28th September 2013 on the theme of 'Language, Literacy and Literature: Re-imaging Teaching and Learning', and it featured presentations by three members of academic staff in the College. The first was by Dr Geraldine Magennis who co-presented a paper with her Masters-Level student, Gemma Fitzpatrick, the title of which was *Reading for pleasure: Primary pupils' perspectives*. The authors, when summarising their paper, wrote "The aim of the paper was to reveal the attitudes and motivations of Year 3 children within a case study school in relation to reading for pleasure. Twenty two children (6-7 years old) completed a reading attitudinal questionnaire. Subsequently, six children were then chosen from this group to further participate in the study. This involved the use of creative research methods, namely artwork and journal writing as well as focus group interviews. Triangulation was achieved by conducting semi-structured interviews with the children's parents while the researcher maintained a reflective journal."

The second was by Catherine Gilliland who presented a workshop titled *Active approaches to comprehension through storytelling and puppetry*. The presenter, when summarising her workshop, wrote "This workshop looked at the development of comprehension skills through active engagement with story. It is suited to primary teachers and anyone with an interest in the development of language and literacy. The research of Ragnarsdóttir (2006) demonstrated that poorly developed narrative results in difficulty with comprehension and writing. The workshop aimed to help teachers see the potential of oral story for developing comprehension skills and narrative structure."

The third was by Dr Brian Hanratty who presented a paper, the title of which was *The 'Literature of the Troubles' project: A secondary school-based, cross-community initiative in Northern Ireland*. In his summary of the paper, Dr Hanratty wrote "The project's aspiration is that, using a dialogical model of education, it can facilitate upper secondary school pupils, from a representative selection of schools in Northern Ireland, to engage with carefully selected Troubles Literature; it is hoped that these explorations can enhance the pupil's aesthetic and imaginative responses to the literature while, at the same time, enabling them to reflect on, and perhaps modify, their often conflicted allegiances and identities. This paper is aimed at teachers of English or Civic Studies in secondary schools who might be interested in using literature as a vehicle for conflict resolution, and it has implications for peace and reconciliation work, not only in Ireland, but further afield."

TWO ST MARY'S SCHOLARS FEATURED IN 'THE FURROW'

Two members of academic staff in the College had articles published in the journal **The Furrow** during the last quarter of 2013. The first was an article by Rev Dr Niall Coll titled *The great sending out*, which featured in the September 2013 issue. In it, Rev Dr Coll suggested four issues for consideration in relation to the question "Will the Church find a path of reform and renewal that will allow it to emerge again onto the Irish public square humbler and more credible in its witness to and teaching of the Gospel?"

The second was an article by Fr Feidhlimidh Magennis titled *Living in tomorrow's world*, which featured in the November 2013 issue and focused on the author's commencement address to the College's B.A. Liberal Arts students who graduated in the summer of 2013. In the article Fr Magennis wrote "The focus of Catholic Education is to help the student move beyond information to knowledge, beyond knowledge to wisdom and so to the fullness of life."

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FEUCHTWANGER

The Jewish Museum, Berlin was the venue for the **International Feuchtwanger Society, Sixth Biennial Conference**, which was attended by Dr Angela Vaupel from the 24th-26th October 2013. The theme of the research conference was 'Lion Feuchtwanger's Berlin Years 1927-1933 and his Readership in Exile, in post-war Germany and Worldwide'. Dr Vaupel delivered a paper titled *Feuchtwanger goes Europe? The legacy of Lion Feuchtwanger's works in European educational contexts*, which focused on research that "aims at exploring the possible legacy of Lion Feuchtwanger's life and oeuvre in Europe since the new millennium, with particular reference to regions that had specific links to the exile community of 1933-45."

DIALOGUE ON THE IRISH ECONOMIC SYSTEM

A peer-reviewed journal **Nordic Irish Studies**, which publishes quality research by social and political scientists or academics from other disciplines related to the field of Irish Studies, featured an article by Dr Gerard McCann in its most recent 2013 issue. The title of Dr McCann's research paper was *The 'Celtic Tiger' in hindsight* and as referred to in its opening paragraph, "is based on the dialogue that has been ongoing since the 1990s about the very nature of the Irish economic system, between academics, NGOs and journalists, and reflects on what one commentator, Dearbhail McDonald, refers to as 'the rotten heart of the Irish economy'."

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

'SMART GEAR' PROJECT PRESENTED TO EUROPEAN ACADEMICS AND STUDENTS

The STIMULA (Stimulating science and technology competences through innovative means for teaching and learning) project, which received funding from the European Commission's Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013, officially ended in October 2013. The project, which exemplified the inextricable links between research, best classroom practice and initial teacher

education, was evaluated as "... an excellent achievement" by the Commission's Executive Agency and external experts. The project's findings were disseminated to an international audience of approximately 90 academics, students and practitioners within the field of STEM education at a conference held in Zaragoza, Spain on the 18th September 2013. Kieran McGeown gave a presentation at the conference titled *Promoting an integrated approach to STEM education within initial teacher education*, which focused on the College's integrated approach to STEM education by referring to the 'Smart Gear' project managed by the College and Sentinus. The keynote speaker at the conference was Dr Vladimir Garkov, from the Directorate General for Education and Culture at the European Commission, who spoke about tackling low achievement in mathematics and science education from an EU perspective.



STAFF PROFILE



Martin Hagan joined the staff of the College in 2006 and is currently Head of Education Studies and Chair of the B.Ed. Programmes. Martin's research interests centre on teacher education and the professional development of teachers, education policy and cultural diversity issues in schooling. Martin had his first paper published in 2001 and since then has presented a range of papers at both national and international conferences and has a collection of publications in peer reviewed journals.

Most recently, Martin, along with colleagues from the College, worked on the STIMULA project as part of an international research consortium which was funded by the European Commission's Lifelong Learning Programme. In January 2014 Martin also presented work titled *It's teacher education – not training! Mediating competences and values for authentic learning in initial teacher preparation* at the international German Rector's Conference in Essen, Germany. His most recent publication in 2013 which can be found in the Teacher Education Advancement Network (TEAN) journal is concerned with the development of teaching competence in the Northern Ireland context and provides an analysis of the Competence Framework of the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTCNI). This work is currently being developed with colleagues from four other institutions in preparation for a joint symposium on the governance of teacher education across the UK, which has been submitted to the European Conference on Educational Research to be held in Portugal during September 2014. Martin is also currently engaged in doctoral studies at the University of Bristol where his work is focussed on the role of reflective practice in the formation of teacher identity at the initial phase of teacher education.