



20 November 2018

Dear Patrick

Re: Report on the Curran Fellowship 2017

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the Research Society for Victorian Periodicals for the support provided for my research through the Curran Fellowship and would like to report on my activities related to this generous award.

The Curran Fellowship allowed me to undertake research trips to the British Library in London and the National Library of Ireland in Dublin in 2017 as part of the research for my monograph, *That is No Country for Young Girls?: The Irish Girl and her Literary Cultures, c. 1880-1930*. This book focuses on the representation of young female adolescence in Ireland in popular fiction and journalism from the late nineteenth century through the Irish Literary Revival, exploring the ways in which the figure of the girl is evoked in nationalist and imperial contexts through her associations with rebellion, transition, modernity, and change. In the British Library I consulted their microfilm holdings of *The Irish Citizen*, the newspaper of the Irish suffragette movement, founded in 1912 by the Irish Women's Franchise League. I also returned to the print copies of periodicals such as *The Girl's Own Paper*, *Girl's Realm*, *Atalanta*, and *Girl's Empire*, which I had consulted on a previous research trip. In the National Library of Ireland, I examined *Bean na hÉireann*, a monthly periodical published by Inghínidhe Na hÉireann, a radical nationalist movement for women, which included serialized fiction, short stories, poems, articles on nationalist philosophy, and a children's page.

Initially I had planned that two chapters of my monograph would focus on periodical culture and Irish girlhood: one on representations of Irish girlhood and evidence of an Irish readership in British periodicals *The Girl's Own Paper*, *Girl's Realm*, *Atalanta*, and *Girl's Empire*; and the second on nationalist periodicals for women such as *Shan Van Vocht*, *Bean na hÉireann*, and the *Irish Citizen*. However, as a result of my research facilitated by the Curran fellowship, I realised that a discussion of these periodicals would require more space as each periodical drew significantly, if not always explicitly, on discourses of youth, generation, and girlhood.

In light of this additional research, I restructured my book to focus specifically on popular fiction and journalism between 1880-1930, thus emphasizing material aimed at the young female reader. I divided the book into two sections, the first exploring popular fiction for girls by Irish writers, and the second exploring the nationalist feminist periodicals, particularly their serialized fiction. The attention to the serialized fiction of Irish nationalist

feminist periodicals, which has been under-researched, reveals the significance of young women as mobilizing figures in nationalist discourses. In this section, I dedicate an individual chapter to each periodical – *Shan Van Vocht*, *Bean na hÉireann*, and the *Irish Citizen*. I argue that *Shan Van Vocht* allowed a fictional engagement of girls with nationalist politics within the confines of a romantic girlhood. *Bean na hÉireann* drew on the discourse of girlhood and offered girls significant roles in the development of the nation, to teach the future citizens of Ireland, but also to actively create and take up space in this imagined nation. The chapter on *The Irish Citizen* explores the ways in which young women were targeted by the newspaper, especially in the ways that the suffrage cause is particularly aligned with the new class of white collar women workers, as well as speaking directly to factory girls.

Since completing this research, I wrote a book chapter for the edited collection *Constructions of the Irish Child in the Independence Period, 1910-1940* (Palgrave, 2018), which has just been published. The chapter is entitled ‘This is No Country for Young Girls?: Irish Girlhood in the Revolutionary Period’ and focuses on *Bean na hÉireann* and Sydney’s Gifford’s journalism. I also drafted a chapter on Irish girlhood in British periodicals which is currently under review with the journal *Irish University Review*. The support of the fellowship is acknowledged in both publications.

I am deeply grateful to the RSVP for the support provided by the Curran Fellowship which facilitated these research trips. The research I undertook enriched and advanced my understanding of these periodicals and the ways in which they engaged with contemporary discourses of youth and girlhood. Furthermore, this research played a major role in rethinking the structure and focus of my monograph and I look forward to sharing my research and acknowledging the support of the RSVP in future.

Yours sincerely,

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