

Militant Irishness – Examining Irish Diaspora Support for Republican Paramilitaries in Boston and New York as a Potential Strategy for Reaffirming Irishness Abroad.

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The Irish diaspora in the US have proven to be powerful transnational players who arguably perpetuated civil conflict in their homeland, while also being instrumental in its resolution (Bird, 2016). While peripheral support of militant groups is a potential strategy for reaffirming their Irish national identity abroad (Wilson, 1995), little is known about how such individuals construct their Irishness in light of the geo-political shifts (i.e., the peace process in Northern Ireland and domestic terrorism in the US). To address this empirical gap, interviews were conducted with 21 active members and 11 past members of Northern Irish Aid Committee (NORAID) – an organization in the US that was set up to support the dependents of imprisoned Catholics in Northern Ireland. A discursive analysis revealed the temporal disconnect between distant generation Irish Americans' use of micro-politics of the past to substantiate their identity claims and first-generation Irish who point to an increasingly globalized Northern Ireland. The implications are discussed in terms of how dissident Republican groups could potentially exploit this disconnect by encouraging individuals to seek identity continuity through their support of those who ideologically oppose peace.

W. B. Yeats once wrote that the idea of the nation can only be sustained when there is a “model of it in the minds of the people wrought by an invisible hypnotist” (Yeats, 1939, p.78). While Yeats refers to the political and literary elites that construct versions of the nation, it is argued in this paper that this reference to an invisible hypnotist can also reflect the way in which national identity is constructed and mobilized by diaspora communities. These constructions of the nation - often transgenerationally transmitted and fortified through second-hand nostalgia and storytelling - work to ‘hypnotically guide’ such individuals to consider themselves part of a collective entity (Anderson, 1983).

Indeed, diaspora groups can act as powerful hypnotists by constructing narratives that provide the scaffolding on which group members build their national identity and maintain a connection to others, across time and place. These narratives can then be used by diaspora groups as a way

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to mobilize support within their community for militant groups engaged in civil conflict in their ancestral home. Sending aid to the families of militant groups and indeed peripherally supporting civil war actors, increases the capacity of such actors to achieve their ideological goals through violent means (Bird, 2016). This was certainly the case in Northern Ireland where members of the Irish diaspora in the US provided 'passive support', ultimately increased the force and duration of militant actors' engagement in violent conflict (Bird, 2016, p. 2).

The way in which individuals manage their national identity, particularly those who affiliate with militant groups, has important implications for understanding why diaspora communities sponsor and ideologically support foreign conflict. This article examines the way in which the Irish diaspora who supported the conflict in Northern Ireland manage their national identity in the wake of socio-political shifts both domestically and abroad. How individuals 'do' being Irish or perform national identity, in the discursive sense, is of interest here, as well as how others evaluate the legitimacy of their claims to inclusion within the national category. We will draw on research from the discursive tradition that examines the fine line between 'doing Irishness' in order to stake a claim to inclusion and 'over-doing' Irishness which jeopardizes the authenticity of the claim. There are many ways to do 'being Irish' abroad. Here however, we are particularly interested in those who supported or continue to support the conflict in Northern Ireland and whether this is a potential strategy for reaffirming the authenticity of their claims to Irishness.

IRISHNESS AND AUTHENTICITY

There are many ways in which individuals can assert the legitimacy of their claims to national identity and their position within the national group. Researchers have, for example, identified different discursive styles of (national) identity expression, based on an individual's place within society. Research by Joyce, Stevenson & Muldoon (2012) found that those who oriented to their marginal position, asserted their Irish national identity proactively. Participants who orient to their majority membership, on the other hand, assert their identity as banal and consider proactive displays to be indicative of being outside of the national category (i.e., typical of what 'foreigners would do). This is evidence of the norms that govern national identity displays and how ones' social position can impact on an individual's style of national identity expression. Additionally, there is evidence of the existence of disputes over what is 'authentically Irish' and who can dictate what is considered normative. In the Joyce et al study Irish participants, were seen to display their entitlement to determine inauthentic displays of national identity and use their own display of banal identity to exclude others from the national group. Ultimately both sets of participants differed in their displays of Irish national identity and what they deemed authentically Irish on St. Patrick's Day.

Disputes over the authenticity of identity expression, from a discursive perspective, are also central to the current research of the Irish Diaspora in the USA. Many first and substantially greater numbers of distant generation Irish diaspora, are concerned with being perceived as authentically Irish (Arrowsmith, 2000; Campbell, 1999; Scully, 2012; Ryan, 2007). According to

research by Scully (2009), this issue is particularly acute for second and third generation Irish Americans who do not have an Irish accent to serve as a marker of their identity. The 'plastic paddy' trope has been used in the UK by first generation Irish to distance themselves from second and third generation who they perceived as inauthentically Irish. Second generation Irish developed rhetorical strategies to manage their authenticity and to avoid the pejorative labelling of 'plastic'. Second generation Irish themselves, for example, have adopted the label to denote fellow second generation who 'overdo' their Irishness. Similarly, over-the-top Irishness is deemed inauthentic as it is divorced from the Irishness experienced in Ireland. Second generation Irish can also construct authentic Irishness on the basis of being involved in Irish cultural activities. The idea of 'doing Irishness', in effect performing national identity, without *over-doing Irishness*, is an important one and skirts the lines of authenticity (Scully, 2009).

For the present purposes, we are interested in how the Irish diaspora in Boston and New York manage similar issues; how do they 'do being Irish', in the rhetorical sense, and ultimately whether they orient to issues of authenticity in their talk of Irishness abroad.

Transmitting an authentic form of Irishness is an important concern for first generation Irish and Irish descendants abroad and has also been examined from a discursive perspective (e.g., Marston, 2002; Ni Maolalaidh & Stevenson, 2014). This was an issue identified by Irish mothers raising children in England, who wanted them to acquire an authentic Irish identity (Ni Maolalaidh & Stevenson, 2014). However, it must be said, that for Irish in England who have an English accent, this is particularly problematic due to the lack of viable "Irish-English' equivalent to the 'Irish-American' identity hybrid. Many first-generation Irish in England are indeed faced with this notion of 'dilemmatic Irishness' (Ni Maolalaidh & Stevenson, 2014) where proactive assertions of Irishness are often required to transmit Irishness, yet this very form of Irish identity expression can undermine their own understanding of Irishness as banal, understated and taken-for-granted. Participants in this research context can avail of an 'Irish American' identity unlike the Irish in England, however, they must also negotiate the extent to which they proactively claim Irishness without jeopardizing the legitimacy of these claims.

Many first generation Irish abroad involve their children in Irish cultural maintenance practices, viewing them as an opportunity to passively absorb authentic Irishness: this usually includes Irish dancing classes, attending Irish traditional music sessions, being involved in Irish cultural groups and even attending Catholic mass in an Irish community. Thus, for the Irish abroad and their offspring, there are many forms of Irish national identity expression that can be used to display and maintain a connection to Ireland and to assert the legitimacy of their claim to Irishness. While these relatively banal forms of Irishness are seen as commonplace amongst the Irish diaspora (Ni Maolalaidh & Stevenson, 2014), less is known about Irish diaspora support for Republican paramilitaries as a potential strategy for reaffirming Irishness abroad.

NORAIID

Over the course of its tumultuous history, the politics of Northern Ireland and the dynamics of Irish Diaspora groups were deeply intertwined and often followed parallel paths (Wilson, 1995). This is true for the emergence of the Northern Irish Aid Committee (also known as NORAIID) which took place following the 1969 IRA split into leftist 'Official' and the militant 'Provisional' IRA (PIRA). Both Official and Provisional IRA appealed for support from the Irish diaspora community in the US. NORAIID was established as the Provisional IRA support organization in the USA and, like in Ireland, the majority of Irish American activists were inclined to support the PIRA. Ultimately, membership of NORAIID far exceeded the support groups set up in favor of the Official IRA (Wilson, 1995). Before long, NORAIID became the dominant and most active Irish-American group linked to the Troubles. NORAIID offices were established in Chicago, Boston, New York, Philadelphia and San Francisco with smaller offices in Kansas, Vancouver and Oregon. These offices were operated legally by volunteers, all above board, ostensibly with the aim of raising funds for the families of PIRA political prisoners. However, funds raised were couriered to Ireland and ultimately were notoriously difficult for authorities to trace. British, Irish and American authorities have continually claimed that a sizeable percentage of NORAIID funds were used to purchase arms - a claim which NORAIID representatives deny (Wilson, 1995).

Whilst NORAIID has a presence across the US, the organization was particularly active in the white working-class communities of South Boston. During the Troubles, regular fundraising events were held in community centers and pubs in the area (McDonald, 1999). These events were marketed according to the NORAIID objectives of raising funds for PIRA families, however they were also known as an opportunity to engage in Irish cultural activities (i.e., traditional Irish music, dancing). 'Hat passing' was also common where donations would be collected in a hat that was passed around the Irish pubs in South Boston (McDonald, 1999). To this day, murals commemorating the IRA, not unlike those seen on the gable ends of walls in Catholic enclaves in Belfast, can be found in South Boston. Boston was arguably the epicenter of the US gunrunning operations witnessed during the Troubles, the most notable being the Val Halla ship which left Gloucester, North of Boston, with ammunition destined for the PIRA but ultimately intercepted by the Irish authorities (Nee, 2006). Notorious Boston mob boss and IRA sympathizer, Whitey Bulger, also allegedly colluded with the PIRA in the gunrunning operation (Nee, 2006).

NORAIID actively used Irish national identity and militant Irish nationalism as a strategy to appeal for support from the Irish American community (Brundage, 2016; Wilson, 1995). NORAIID avoided wider political questions on the nuances of the conflict in the North of Ireland and focused instead on threats to nationalism. The conflict was presented as a zero-sum affair, involving Irish patriots fighting against an illegal occupying force. This message was simple, palatable and appealed to traditional Irish-American activists. NORAIID speakers, in their fundraising efforts, actively appealed to Irish nationalistic sentiment by making reference to the Irish martyrs of the

²1916 Easter rising, the impact of the famine on the island of Ireland, the violence of the ³Black and Tans and more generally espoused a virulent anti-British rhetoric (Wilson, 1995). In south Boston, NORAID speakers were often openly supportive of the armed struggle and their desire to acquire arms for the cause. NORAID supporters shared their enthusiasm and reports suggest that some Irish American activists would only donate money if they were assured it would be used to purchase arms (Wilson, 1995). As such, NORAID, while having a varied membership base, also had a substantial following of individuals who were heavily invested in the importance of supporting violent Republicanism as a key means of *doing* Irishness (Brundage, 2016).

Researchers have provided a detailed historical narrative of Irish-American involvement in the contemporary Northern Irish conflict, including the development and support of NORAID (e.g., Brundage, 2016; Guelke, 1988; Wilson, 1995). However, there is currently an absence of research on the national identity concerns of the Irish diaspora and the discursive strategies they use to maintain a connection to Ireland. To date, research on Irish American relations have fallen broadly into two main categories, research by American academics on the dynamics of the Northern Irish conflict which neglect the role of Irish-Americans (e.g., Pruitt, 2007) and the second category, researchers in Ireland and the UK who examine the effect of the Irish-American community on the dynamics of the conflict in Northern Ireland (e.g., Cochrane, 2007; Holand, 2001; Kenny, 2001; Lee, 2006). Researchers suggest that Irish-American support of the Republican movement is a strategy for reaffirming their connection to Ireland, particularly among distant generations (Wilson, 1995). However, to date there, has been no systematic investigation into how members of the Irish diaspora who supported, or continue to support NORAID, manage their national identity and whether their support can be utilized as a discursive strategy to reaffirm their connection to homeland.

NORAID offices are operational and remain involved in fundraising efforts to support the families of former PIRA prisoners and members of the Republican community who have struggled economically in the years following the peace process. NORAID have openly supported the peace process in Northern Ireland, however many of its members have been critical of the terms of the peace agreement and in particular, the notion of 'selling out' on the promise of a United Ireland (Nee, 2006). There is an apparent tension between the ideological shifts within the organization and their use of militant Irishness as the scaffolding on which their Irish identities were originally built. Very little is known about how current and past members of NORAID construct and manage their national identity in the wake of such tension. This paper will attempt to address this empirical gap by considering how members of the Irish diaspora who supported or continued to

² The 1916 Easter Rising refers to a rebellion staged Easter week by Irish nationalists against the British government in Ireland in which 450 people died including 15 leaders of the rebellion who were executed by firing squad and later heralded as martyrs. The Easter Rising factored into the establishment of the Irish free state in 1922, now known as the Republic of Ireland. The 6 Northern counties opted to remain within the UK.

³ The Black and Tans refer to former soldiers brought into Ireland by the British government as an auxiliary to the police force known as the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC). They got their name from the uniform they wore, a mixture of khaki pants and dark police uniform.

support NORAID construct their Irish national identity and manage their discursive concerns in everyday talk. Of particular relevance, here is notion of temporality (Condor, 2010), or how NORAID supporters (past & present) situate themselves within particular temporal lineage.

TEMPORALITY

The Social Identity Theory (SIT) of intergroup relations (Tajfel, 1978) is based on the assumption that individuals belong to various different groups that become more or less salient in different contexts. When social identities are more salient than personal identities, those who share the same social identity will behave in a group like fashion, adhering to group norms. However, we still know very little about the temporal dimension of social identity or how group members are motivated to create a sense of perceived collective unity through both time and context. We do know that individuals are fundamentally motivated to create a sense of self that is stable across time, often relying on group-based historical narratives that unite individuals with fellow group members, both past and present (Reicher & Hopkins, 2001). Memories of the past are also rooted in social interactions and the cultural frameworks in which these interactions are embedded (Power, 2016). National identity, for example, is a psychological concept conceived in the imagination of those who consider themselves part of an 'imagined community' (Anderson, 1983). It is used as a collective template to make sense of the past and guide our future actions (Power, 2016). It is possible that members of the Irish diaspora who supported, or continue to support NORAID, have a particular temporal understanding of Irishness that is rooted in conflict narratives that were mobilized during 'the Troubles' to galvanize support from the international Irish community (Wilson, 1995).

Individuals can appear 'frozen in time' if aspects of their identity are rooted in past experiences of perceived collective victimhood (Mueller-Hirth, 2017). The notion of 'temporalities of victimhood' refer to the incongruence between victims' experiences rooted in their past suffering and societal expectation that victims will 'move on' and seek closure from their conflict experiences (Mueller-Hirth, 2017). Victims' healing from conflict experiences do not always follow a linear trajectory in ways that are compatible with societies in post conflict transition (Breen-Symth, 2009). Indeed, victims might appear wedded to their conflict identities that are temporally rooted in the past, as well as the personal stories of loss that constitute these identities (Hamber, 1998). Importantly, for present purposes, individuals do not have to experience harm directly to identify as a victim and instead, can experience vicarious victimization through their identification with an in-group under perceived threat (Bar-Tal, Chernyak – Hai, Schori & Gundar, 2009). Such individuals may also incorporate victimhood narratives into their identity which are temporality rooted in the past and are particularly resistant to change (Mueller-Hirth, 2017). NORAID actively used victimhood narratives from the PIRA to mobilize supporters from the Irish diaspora in Boston and NY. Therefore, it is quite possible that 'temporalities of victimhood' also factor into the construction of Irishness by NORAID supporters, both past and present.

There have been some recent disruptions to the temporal narratives of victimhood that were historically used by NORAID to recruit members, namely the success of the peace process and the perception that those in Northern Ireland have 'moved on' from the conflict. The Northern Ireland peace process, known as the 'Good Friday Agreement' (henceforth, GFA) has brought relative peace and stability to the region since its signing in 1998 (McKittrick & McVea, 2002). Twenty years on, paramilitary groups exist but have disarmed and although there is low grade sectarian violence at interfaces (the borders between Protestant and Catholic communities), Northern Ireland has changed considerably from its violent past which claimed more than 3,500 lives (McKittrick & McVea, 2002). While the change is evident in Northern Ireland, for members of Irish diaspora and particularly those who have personally invested in the conflict, it might be difficult to bridge the temporal distinction between violent past and peaceful present while still maintaining a sense of temporal continuity.

Other potential challenges to historical narratives of NORAID members are 'global war on terrorism' narratives following the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York and more recently, the Marathon Bombings in Boston, MA. Ultimately, domestic terrorist attacks have also served to problematise NORAID members' support for foreign conflict and particularly, the actions and aims of the Provisional IRA. Following the Boston Marathon bombings on April 15th, 2013, media outlets drew the connection between NORAID support and domestic terrorist attacks with headlines reading 'NORAID members must examine their conscience over IRA support' (Reeve, 17 April 2013). While argue that it is first necessary to look at how NORAID members construct their national identity without presuming that 'global war on terrorism' impact on, or feature in their construction. However, it is also important to contextualize participants utterances within the broader political landscape in which they are embedded and to consider how it may impact on the temporal lineage of NORAID membership.

The question remains: If NORAID representatives galvanized support from the Irish diaspora community through the mobilizing of militant Irishness and collective victimhood, how then do such individuals construct their Irishness in light of what might be considered temporal shifts in the construction of their identity (i.e., the peace process in Northern Ireland and 'global war of terrorism')?

METHOD

A total of 31 participants took part in either a research interview (single or paired), or a focus group between December 2015 and April 2016. A total of 20 individual interviews were conducted with current members of NORAID (M= 13, F=7, *M* age = 63 years). This included 4 self-identified first generation Irish and 16 self-identified second and third generation Irish-American. First generation Irish refer to those born in Ireland and who have immigrated to the US. All first-generation Irish participants were long-term migrants who have resided in the US for 15 years or longer. Second and third generation are the descendants of first generation Irish, born in the US

and who identify broadly as 'Irish American'. A total of 3 group interviews were conducted with first generation past supporters of NORAID and occurred in pairs (M= 4, F= 2, *Mage*= 52 years). An inherent advantage of interviewing pairs of participants is that, through correcting and disagreeing with each other, participants illuminated what is considered normatively appropriate in interactions (Stevenson & Muldoon, 2010). Additionally, a focus group was conducted with 5 first generation past supporters, all participants were female and ranged in age from 65-77 years (*Mage*= 66 years). See also Table 1 below for further participant characteristics (names are changed to protect the identity of participants).

The recruitment of active members of NORAID took place initially via phone and email contact with representatives of NORAID based in the central office in New York City, who referred the researcher to potential participants residing in the Boston area. Active supporters of NORAID are those who currently identify themselves as members of NORAID and who take part in organized events run by NORAID. The recruitment of peripheral supporters of NORAID took place through an Irish immigrant support centre in South Boston, MA. Peripheral supporters are those who do not identify as a member of NORAID but have attended events run by NORAID in the past, or gave money to NORAID at pub collections. Both current and past NORAID supporters were recruited using a method of snowball sampling (Goodman, 1961) where they were asked to nominate another person with similar characteristics to participate in the research process. The main pre-requisite for participation in the research was self-identification, at least in part, as Irish and some form of participation in NORAID events.

The focus group interview was conducted in a private room on the premises of an Irish immigrant center in South Boston. The paired interviews and 6 individual interviews were conducted in a private conference room in a hotel where a NORAID function was being held in New York. The remaining 14 individual interviews were conducted in participants' homes in the South Boston area. The interviewer was female and from Galway on west coast of the Republic of Ireland, thus having a Galway accent that is hearably distinct from the Northern Irish accent. This is significant as an individual's accent, syntax, name and other identifying features may play into interview dynamics, particularly when the subject matter concerns aspects of identity (e.g., Ewart & Schubotz, 2004). Any explicit orientation to the identity of the interviewer was noted and used to inform the analysis.

The interviews were transcribed verbatim, using an abridged version of Jeffersonian convention (Jefferson, 1984, see also Appendix I). Transcripts were entered into NVIVO text tagging software and instances where participants discussed their national identity and that of others were identified, as well as the identity management strategies they used to construct their national identity. This resulted in the identification of 45 relevant extracts each containing multiples instances. The interviews were analysed using resources from Discursive Psychology and Rhetorical Psychology (e.g., Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998; Billig, 1987; Potter, 1996) so that the basis on which participants negotiate and manage their national identity, as well as their position with the national group, were identified in the text.

One potential pitfall in discussing intergroup relations from a discursive perspective is negotiating the epistemological divide. Intergroup relations are concerned with pre-existing groups, while in the discursive tradition, ‘groups’ exist only in so far as individuals orient to them in conversational interaction (Stevenson, Condor & Abell, 2007). Here, in line with the discursive approach, the emphasis will be on the variability of language and although we will discuss ‘first generation vs. second/third generation Irish’ and ‘active vs peripheral NORAID supporters’, we will also evidence participants orientation to these social categories in talk.

Table 1.
Participants characteristics by gender, generation, and degree of NORAID participation

NORAID members (<i>N</i> = 31)	Generations			
	First		Distant (2nd, 3d)	
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
	Mike	Mary	Tim	Julie
	Peter	Jane	John	Ellen
			Eamonn	Francis
			Tom	Judy
			Jack	Linda
			Paul	
			Phil	
			Brian	
			Joe	
			David	
			Pat	
	Sam	Anna		
	Fred	Ida		
	Frank	Emma		
	Harry	Alice		
		Grace		
		Maggie		
		Liz		

ANALYSIS

Second/Third Generation, Active NORAID Supporters

Identity denial was a common experience for Irish Americans in this study (Cheryn and Monin, 2005); for example, many participants made reference to incidences where first generation Irish

(i.e, those born in Ireland), either within the US or in Ireland, questioned the legitimacy of their claim to Irishness. In response, the Irish Americans in this study used a number of strategies to demonstrate the legitimacy of their claim to an Irish identity and amongst them was reference to their knowledge of Northern Ireland and Northern Irish history. This knowledge was used to differentiate themselves from the 'average American'. Their use of Irish history oftentimes related specifically to the treatment of Irish Catholics by the British state, following the victimhood narrative espoused by NORAID speakers. While the participants displayed their interest in issues related to Northern Ireland, they referenced very specific and selective examples of oppression and injustice and effectively claimed vicarious victimhood by virtue of their social identity. In the following extract, Phil provides detailed background to the origins of structural inequalities between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland:

Extract 1.1.: 'He's one of us man' (original lines in transcript 255-268)

1. I: Was it that that motivated you
2. Phil: Yea it was the injustice (.) it was just terrible (.) most people (.) people don't realize that
3. why why why the Brits have a divide and conquer mentality (.) they put all these
4. Scottish settlers into the North of Ireland so basically basically so they're be able to
5. control because they identify more as being Protestant
6. I: Yea
7. Phil: Discriminate against the Catholics because they knew they wanted a united Ireland and
8. not many people know that about the Brits
9. I: Yea
10. Phil: So that's where I come in (.) I identify with that because my relatives themselves were
11. from the North and I'm very close to them (.)

(Male, second generation Irish American, active NORAID supporter, aged 63, from Boston)

The participant's choice of language is also important in this extract because it identifies him as someone who supports the idea that the six counties in Ulster under British control are a part of Ireland, rather than a separate entity. The term *North of Ireland* as opposed to *Northern Ireland* is favored by Nationalists to refer to the region and thus linguistically acknowledging its position within the Republic of Ireland (Knox, 2001). In addition, the use of the term 'Brits' to refer to the British State and its agents is predominantly a pejorative term in the context of Northern Ireland and so serves to demonstrate a level of understanding and sensitivity to language disputes that might exceed that of 'average Americans'.

In addition to the particularities of language use, the participant reproduces a victim of injustice narrative that is implicit amongst the Catholic community in the North of Ireland (Joyce & Lynch, 2017). This narrative presents the Troubles as emerging from the injustice experienced by Catholics at the hands of Protestant communities and the British State and features prominently as a justification for involvement in the conflict (Joyce & Lynch, 2017). Importantly, as mentioned,

vicarious victimhood is evoked through reference to the experiences of his family and used, indirectly, to stake a claim to inclusion within the Irish national group.

Extract 1.2: 'Cookie cutter Irish I call them' (original lines in transcript 123-130)

1. I: So being part of NORAID (.) does it help um (.) like is it how you celebrate being
2. Irish
3. Tom: Well yea it is yea (.) well I mean I think any self-respecting Irish person has an interest (.)
4. um you know like its your people and all these horrible thing happening (.) randomly
5. being searched and beaten up thrown into jail (.) um dying so young (.) I just don't get
6. the people who um (.) you know its 'im only Irish on St. Patrick's day' (.) cookie cutter
7. Irish I call them (.) you know the people who just wear green on St. Patrick's Day and
8. listen to Irish music in the bars or whatever (.) t
9. I Yea
10. Tom: That's not Irish to me (.) be involved (.) care about your history (.) you know what I
11. mean
12. I: Yea

(Male, second generation Irish American, active NORAID supporter, aged 61, from Boston)

In this extract, the participant works to construct two distinct populations: one group who are superficially Irish by virtue of their non-commitment to a richer, historical understanding of their past and the other who actively take an interest in the politics of the island. Individuals who fail to take an interest or get involved are pejoratively labeled as 'cookie cutter Irish'. For this participant, the selective attention to elements of Irish national identity is problematized and the participant actively distances himself from those who engage in softer forms of Irish cultural maintenance. In addition, the participant delineates between 'self-respecting' Irish (line 3) and inauthentic individuals who engage in overt displays of Irishness, for example, on St Patrick's Day. In this case, the participant emphasizes that it is not the proactive form of national identity expression that is perceived as inauthentic, but it is the selective display of loyalty to the national group that is consider problematic.

Finally, this participant depicts attendance at NORAID events as highly prototypical of the Irish national group. Furthermore, an active interest in political matters in Northern Ireland is seen as both normative and a marker of the national character of 'any self-respecting Irish person' (line 3).

There is also evidence across transcripts of participants engaging in subgroup-superordinate re-categorizations. In other words, it was common for participants to refer to minority group membership, both within Ireland and in the US and to use this sub-group membership to discuss within group distinctions. Often, participants would use their membership of subgroups within the Irish diaspora community to highlight their proximity to the Irish national group and by asserting a unique, heightened sense of Irishness.

Extract 1.3: 'We're more Irish than the Irish themselves'

1. I: Do you think supporting NORAID (.) is that what um most Irish people do you think (.)
2. in your experience?
3. Mike: Yes and no I guess (.) well you know where I come from in Southie you'd be looked at
4. strange if you didn't you know (.) it's not just accepted (.) its' expected (.) it's what the
5. Irish did (.) now I know Southie (.) Southie is kind of different like (.) its like you know
6. the saying 'we're more like than the Irish themselves'
7. I: Yea (laughs)
8. Mike: That's Southie

(Male, second generation Irish American, active NORAID supporter, aged 55, from Boston)

In this extract the participant, depicts the support for NORAID as implicit among the Irish diaspora in South Boston, portraying it as highly prototypical for that subgroup. He goes on to speak about how everyone in the community would be expected to support NORAID, that it was an integral part of doing Irishness. The participant evokes the common phrase 'more Irish than the Irish themselves' but alters it to include the collective 'we'. This rhetorical device works up the facticity of the claim and creates a degree of objectivity and distance from the speaker while displaying the legitimacy of his claim to Irishness (Potter, 1996). In the specific case of Southie, the historically Irish area of South Boston, the participant used their residence as a marker of Irishness and membership to a highly prototypical subgroup of Irish abroad.

Although not evidenced across transcripts, two participants display some disagreement with the current peace process in Northern Ireland and what it represents. These participants did not openly advocate a return to violence but did evoke some of the rhetoric that perpetuated the conflict and particularly the notion of 'Republican Struggle' in Northern Ireland.

Extract 1.4: That's the Irish way to fight against the struggle

1. I: Do you um like (.) with the developments in Northern Ireland like the peace process
2. (.) would you support that?
3. I: Well I can't say that I don't now can I (laughs) well I'm not stupid enough to say it on
4. tape anyways
5. I:Brain: (shared laughter)
6. Brian: No I'm messing (pause) I don't agree with what was sacrificed like (.) a united Ireland (.)
7. we don't have that (.) that's still a dream for me and many Irish (.)
8. I: How do you think people should go about getting that dream
9. Brian: I think the Irish should fight for it (.) I think if you're Irish that's what you do (.) that's
10. what we do (.) I mean for years the Irish in Northern Ireland and even here were
11. persecuted by the Brits (.) did we lay down and take it (.) no (.) no we didn't and that's
12. the Irish way to fight against the struggle
13. I: And by fight you mean?

14. Brian: You're trying to get me to say it (.) you're a crafty one (laughs) by fight I mean just that
 15. (.) fight for what you believe in (.) have conviction (.) don't just lay down and accept
 16. 'well I guess this is it then' I mean if we always did that (.) where would we be now (.) I
 17. think we sold out (,) like bowing to the queen and all her cronies (.) it makes me sick
 18. really

(Male, second generation Irish American, active NORAIID supporter, aged 60, from Boston)

Here, the participant constructs a description of Irish national character as one where individuals 'fight' for the cause and have the courage of the convictions. Again, the participant subtly and unobtrusively shifts between evoking superordinate categorizations 'the Irish', to collective categorizations that include the participant 'that's what we do' within the superordinate category of 'the Irish'. These forms of 'distance footing' allow the participant to manage any counterclaims to inclusion within the category by first establishing the perimeters of inclusion before rhetorically situating himself within those boundaries (Potter, 1996). Throughout the extract the participant explicitly refers to perceived injustices and 'fighting against the struggle' (line 12), thereby reproducing the dominant Republican narratives that perpetuated and justified the conflict. However, the participant also displays an awareness of the sensitivity of the context and not wanting to openly reject the peace process 'on tape' (lines 3-4).

First Generation Irish, Peripheral NORAIID Supporters

While first generation Irish participants (i.e, those born in the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland) reported being more mindful of their Irish national identity in the US vs. 'at home' in Ireland. They also reported that their own sense of Irish national identity was banal and taken for granted. In the following extract, the participant is asked to consider any differences between their sense of Irish national identity abroad vs. in Ireland and in doing so, is being forced to produce more explicit talk of Irishness:

2.1. Extract: 'I haven't really thought about it' (original lines in transcript 15-23)

1. I: What's it like being Irish here (.) is it um (pause) is it you know any different
 2. to being Irish at home (.) do you (.) um do anything different?
 3. Sam: Um (pause) I don't know um it's a hard one to answer um (.) I haven't really
 4. thought about it (.) I don't really think about it (.) um (pause) yea though now
 5. that you ask I do um you know I want more to do with like Irish pubs and like
 6. taytos (laughs) I don't know I think it's just a similarity thing and missing what
 7. you're used to like food at home or whatever but really I just get on with it and
 8. don't think 'oh am I more Irish here or at home' I don't think about it you know

(Male, first generation Irish, aged 60, from Co, Clare, residing in Boston)

The participant displayed difficulty formulating a response to the interviewer's request to explicitly consider Irishness. Pauses, space fillers (um) and displays of conversational difficulty allow the participant to problematise spontaneous talk of Irishness (e.g., Sacks, 1992; Sacks & Schegloff, 1979). The participant manages his 'awareness' of national identity by attributing talk of Irishness to the interviewer's question (lines 4-5). He then repeatedly disavows the salience of national identity by claiming, 'I don't really think about it' (line 4).

The participant's explicit talk of Irishness is confined to the context of being abroad and is attributed to sentimentality and familiarity, rather than any spontaneous thinking about being Irish. In such a way, the participant manages any proactive talk of Irishness while presenting his own identity as taken for granted.

First generation Irish also commented on the authenticity of displays of Irishness on St Patrick's Day and considered overt, proactive displays to be indicative of individuals who are outside of the Irish national category (i.e., typical of Americans).

Extract 2.2: 'Irish people just look on with amusement' (original lines in transcript 55-64)

1. Ida: You know what it is that people say again (.) like that whole idea of 'everyone is Irish on
2. St. Patrick's Day' (.) you know its uh (.) its nice people want to be but you know it's a bit
3. over the top here like you know
4. I: How so?
5. Ida: Just the hats and the leprechauns and the green beer and the whole lot same at home
6. you know (.) all that over the top larger than life Irish is part of the celebration at home
7. but you know (.) think Irish people just look on with amusement (.) Americans take it
8. very seriously altogether (laughs)

(Female, first generation Irish, aged 70, from Galway, residing in Boston)

In the extract above, Grace distances herself from 'over the top Irishness' which she deems inauthentic and typical of 'Americans' or those outside of the Irish national category. However, in order to present her own Irish national identity as banal and taken-for-granted, she must manage any appearance of being over-interested in the comments being produced. The participant begins by displaying that she is searching for someone else's formulation - 'you know what it is that people say'. This displays that the idea is not the speaker's but also that she can't quite remember the specifics of the description. In such a way, Grace inoculates against any counterclaims of vested interest (Potter, 1996). She can therefore attend to dual concerns in interaction, distancing herself from proactive displays of Irishness - 'the hats and the leprechauns and the green beer' - while managing issues of stake and interest that would undermine the objectivity of the account (Potter, 1996).

Normative displays of Irish national identity and issues of authenticity also appeared in participants' discussions of their own and others' support of NORAID. First generation peripheral supporters claim that their own attendance at NORAID events was passive and solely for the purpose of socializing with fellow first generation Irish. This was evidenced in accounts of retrospective involvement, as well as present day attendance at NORAID events. Below is an extract from a focus group discussion with 5 first generation Irish residing in South Boston who have attended NORAID functions in the past:

Extract 2.3: 'It was where all the Irish met' (original lines in transcript 51-62)

1. I: Yea I know what you mean (laughs) so what about you guys (.) did you ever um go
2. to events organized by NORAID?
3. Grace: Oh yes yes (.) we did yea (.) all the Irish did
4. Liz: [they did] ya don't know anyone who didn't
5. back then it was just what you did you know (.) you didn't really think too much about it
6. Anna: [no no]
7. I: Did you think about where the money was going?
8. Anna: No no you just went for the dancing
9. Liz: [and the music] =
10. Anna: = and the music you know it was where all the
11. Irish met back then and that was it (.) you just paid the money to get in (.) listen to the
12. bands and to see people

(Focus group, first generation Irish, peripheral NORAID supporters, aged 66-70 years)

The participants collaboratively work up an account of their attendance at NORAID events as normative among fellow Irish in the area. Throughout the entire account, participants use the collective 'we' and 'you'. If 'I', the speaker, is replaced with 'we' the utterance can now be understood to represent a collective entity, with their own beliefs and opinions, rhetorically distinct from the speaker of the utterance. 'Where all the Irish met' provides a version of events that may have occurred in a certain neighbourhood as normal, which therefore makes the speaker's own attendance at NORAID events an unexceptional case (Edwards & Potter, 1992). 'You' then extends their attendance to an objective third party. 'You' includes not only the speaker but 'embedded animators' (Goffman 1981) or the collective of people who hear the utterance and are assumed to collaborate with the account being produced 'you just pay the money to get in' (line 11).

These are rhetorical devices used by speakers to manage accountability by discursively altering their perceived endorsement of a particular statement (Goffman, 1981). Overall – the participant's acknowledge their attendance at NORAID events, while avoiding talk that would indicate personal endorsement of support.

First generation past supporters of NORAID (i.e., those who attended NORAID events or who donated to pub collections) consider the active support of NORAID to be a misguided interpretation of Irishness. First generation peripheral supporters actively distance themselves from proactive support of NORAID. They attributed the strategy of supporting NORAID as a method for reaffirming Irishness, as one predominately utilized by Irish Americans. In the following extract, Fred who is attending a NORAID event commemorating the 100th anniversary of the 1916 Easter Rising, discusses the difference between his own attendance at the event, versus that of 'Irish Americans':

Extract 2.4: 'It's kind of a naive notion' (original lines in transcript 22-35)

1. I: And if it wasn't the commemoration of the 1916 Easter Rising would you be here
2. today?
3. Fred: Umm let me think (pause) would I be here today
4. I: Yea
5. Fred: Ah I think probably not (.) like probably not to be honest (.) you know maybe my mates
6. would go and maybe (.) but probably not (.) no
7. I: What about Irish American's why are they here you think?
8. Fred: Ah (.) uh not to be mean right and I know this is going to sound bad but I think some of
9. them are you know really holding ah holding onto the conflict (.) like those banners
10. those England out banners (.) that's appealing to them I think and keeping their support
11. alive
12. I: Why do you think they're holding onto it
13. Fred: Well its you know like a way of being with the Irish (.) kinda of naive notion (.) or is that
14. the word I don't know but you know romanticized a bit (.) like we're all swinging hurlies
15. at each other fighting for freedom in modern Ireland (.) you know
16. I/Fred: (shared laughter)
17. Meanwhile they're drinking lattes in Starbucks and getting on with life in the North you
18. know (.) like your average Irish person isn't thinking about uh (pause) you know English
19. Out of whatever (.) it's just not on our radar or I think for people in the North either but
20. they cling onto it

(Male, First generation Irish, aged 60, from Dublin, resident in New York)

When asked about the possibility of attending future NORAID functions, Fred uses hedging and qualifying in the form of performative modal verbs ('I think') to introduce some distance between the speaker and what is being said (Goffman, 1981). The partial repeat 'would I be here today?' (line 3) suggests that the question was hearable by the participant and therefore, the repeat is designed as a space filler to formulate a response (Sacks & Schegloff, 1979). Future involvement is depicted as passive. There is an absence of agency as it is the participant's 'mates' who determine future attendance (line 5). Notable is the absence of the first-person pronoun 'I' at this point, possibly managing accountability for the production

and reception of the utterance. Overall, the participant depicts his own attendance as passive and actively distances himself from commitment to future support of NORAID.

When asked to speculate on the motivation behind Irish America attendance, the participant provides a 'disclaimer' (e.g., van Dijk, 1992) 'I know this going to sound bad'. This disclaimer is part of an overall strategy of impression management (e.g., Goffman, 1959; Tedeschi, 1981) and can be used by the speaker to manage accounts that may attract criticism. This allows the respondent to get on with the discursive business of critiquing the support of Irish Americans.

Irish American support for NORAID is depicted as misguided, 'naive' and divorced from the reality in Ireland. The description 'we're all swinging hurlies' is then used to contrast against what he orients to as normative displays for Irish people. This is followed by 'you know' which acts as a marker of common knowledge (Edwards & Mercer, 1987; Schiffrin, 1987) that builds up the objectivity of the account and again, possibly inoculating against counterclaims of vested interest. Similar to research by Scully (2009), acceptable forms of Irishness are territorially situated in Ireland and any deviation from this is depicted, rhetorically, as over-elaborate and inauthentic.

DISCUSSION

Similar to research by Joyce, Stevenson & Muldoon (2012) participants used their talk of St. Patrick's Day as an opportunity to distinguish between authentic and inauthentic displays of Irishness. Similar to majority Irish in research by Joyce et al (2012), first generation Irish, although more mindful of their Irish national identity abroad, demonstrated an awareness of the norms of identity expression in this context. Such participants consider overt, proactive displays of Irishness to be inauthentic and indicative of those outside of the national category ('it's how American's do St Patrick's Day). Second generation NORAID supporters also typically rejected mass marketed, stereotypical notions of Irishness (i.e., drinking green beer on St. Patrick's Day) and deemed these forms of identity expression to be inauthentic and typical of 'American-Irish' or individuals who selectively engage in Irish national identity expression. However, unlike First generation Irish, second generation did not deem proactive displays of Irishness to be inauthentic and in fact, considered overt displays of loyalty to the national group year-round, not just on St. Patrick's Day, to be highly prototypical of the national group ('I'm not just Irish on St. Patrick's Day). Therefore, first and more distant generation Irish/Irish American had divergent understandings of the norms of Irish national identity expression in their talk of St. Patrick's Day.

These divergent understandings of the norms of identity expression were also mirrored in participants talk of their involvement in NORAID. First generation peripheral supporters claimed that their attendance at NORAID events was passive and purely for the purposes of socializing with fellow Irish. Such individuals actively distanced themselves from proactive support of NORAID and attributed this strategy for reaffirming Irishness as one predominately utilized by Irish Americans. Second generation active NORAID members, on the other hand, consider those

who engage in 'softer' forms of Irishness (i.e., attending Irish social events) to be inauthentic and typical of those who have a tenuous link to their Irish national identity (American Irish). Therefore, similar to their talk of St. Patrick's Day, first generation Irish assert a passive banal form of Irish national identity expression and consider overt displays as inauthentic, while distant generation Irish-American consider overt displays of loyalty to be an appropriate and highly prototypical form of Irish national identity expression abroad.

Ironically, however, first generation Irish who arguably occupy a more secure position within the Irish diaspora group (i.e., they do not report others challenging their claims to Irishness) question the legitimacy of NORAID supporters' strategies for reaffirming their connection to Ireland. These proactive displays of loyalty to the national group is interpreted by first generation Irish (whether in relation to St. Patrick's Day or active NORAID support) as typical of Americans or those outside of the Irish national category. Therefore, similar to Irish traveler participants in research by Joyce et al., (2012), overt displays of Irishness could in fact identify individuals as 'inauthentic' further reinforcing their peripherality within the Irish/Irish diaspora group. For NORAID members who have oriented to issues of identity misrecognition and have used their talk of NORAID support as a strategy to reaffirm Irishness, this could potentially only reinforce their experiences of peripherality, which in turn, could fuel their efforts to demonstrate their loyalty to the group.

These findings speak to the notion of temporality in social identity theory, or how it is important to look, not just at how individuals manage their identity with contextual shifts, but also how individuals actively construct and manage their identity through time and context. The work of Power (2016) also speaks to these issues by reference to collective memories and how the narratives on the past inform current responses to the present. However, this study demonstrates how some Irish-American participants appear to be frozen in time, in a liminal state, using conflict narratives from the PIRA to substantiate their identity claims. This does indeed jar with the current reality of Northern Ireland, which some 1st generation Irish rightly point out is about "*Starbucks*" and being increasingly globalized rather than fixated on the micro-politics of the Troubles. This temporal disconnect could potentially marginalize members of the Irish diaspora who use narratives that are increasingly irrelevant to the identity of the group they seek to connect with. Therefore, it is important to look at how participants experience temporality in identity construction and the potential discursive consequences that arise from its use.

Mirroring research by Scully (2012: 2009) the notion of 'doing being Irish' but not over-doing Irishness is a similar concern for certain participants in this particular research context. However, the results presented here also bring into relief how 'over the top Irishness' can be used as a discursive resource. First generation Irish present their Irish national identity as banal and understated and therefore, any proactive assertion of Irishness is deemed inauthentic and overdone in comparison. Second/third generation Irish Americans on the other hand, proactively display their loyalty to the national group through their support of NORAID and consider this display of Irishness to be highly prototypical. In such a way, by over-doing Irishness, Irish

American NORAIID supporters construct a highly prototypical subgroup of 'super Irish' abroad; participants also work to construct their own 'over done' Irishness as 'more Irish than the Irish themselves'. Therefore, we have not only evidenced participants' orientation to authenticity and over the top Irishness similar to Scully (2012: 2009) but have demonstrated the ways in which participants can use 'over the top Irishness' as a discursive strategy to negotiate their social position and construct subgroup membership. However, the experience of identity misrecognition among some Irish-American participants would suggest that their attempts to demonstrate Irishness is not always validated by those deemed unequivocally Irish abroad.

Of course, there are limitations to this research which are worth noting here. There are other axes of difference between participants such as social class and education that could have afforded different constructions of Irishness in this context. In addition, participants orient to a whole range of different social categories in a manner that is more fluid and flexible than the static 'first generation Irish' and 'second-third generation' distinction presented here. However, this study provides an important starting point for the systematic investigation of the ways in which Irish diaspora who supported Republican paramilitaries construct Irishness abroad. Nonetheless, our data supports the central contention of this paper that distant generation Irish are concerned with authenticity and use their support for the Northern Irish conflict as a discursive strategy to reaffirm their Irishness.

Practically, we must return to the notion of the 'invisible hypnotist' or what seemingly guides individuals to consider themselves part of a collective entity (Yeats, 1939). In the context of diaspora populations who support organizations involved in political violence, the experience of peripherality and the desire to demonstrate the legitimacy of their national identity could potentially guide individuals to reject the disintegration of the groups to which they belong. This is problematic if we consider dissident Republicans as the 'invisible hypnotist'. Dissident groups could potentially exploit this vulnerability in identity construction by encouraging such individuals to demonstrate their loyalty to the national group through their support of those who violently oppose the peace process. If individuals consider the pursuit of a united Ireland by force to be central to their identity construction, it is possible that their desire to maintain a sense of identity continuity would manifest in their support for those who ideologically oppose peace in Northern Ireland.

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APPENDIX

Transcription Key

- [] Square brackets marks the start and end of overlapping speech. They are aligned to mark the precise position of the overlap.
- Underlining Indicates emphasis; the extent of the underlining within individual
- (.) A micropause, hearable but too short to measure.
- (Pause) A measurable pause of greater length than micropause
- ((laughs)) Additional comments by the transcriber, for example, about features of the context or delivery.

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