



## Editorial — Irish Edition

**Aaron L. Willis**

University of Notre Dame/Murphy Irish Exchange Scholar 2013-2014

---

The Irish Edition of *Aigne* grew out of the developing partnership between the College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences at University College Cork and the Keough-Naughton Institute for Irish Studies at the University of Notre Dame; and specifically as a result of the Murphy Irish Exchange Fellowship. Marie-Luise Theuerkauf, *Aigne's* Editor-in-Chief, was selected as the first Murphy Fellow to travel to Notre Dame in 2012, and Aaron Willis followed as the first Notre Dame postgraduate to spend a year in residence at UCC. Both Murphy scholars have worked closely together on this edition, making it the first *Aigne* edition with an editorial board made up of postgraduates from Notre Dame and authors from UCC. We hope this edition represents not only the beginning of a strong relationship between our two institutions, but also between the postgraduate communities, united by a shared interest in Irish Studies. Jackie Mullins and Sara Goek offer the first fruits of this growing relationship.

In her article “Justice Done?: An Analysis of One Aspect to the 2006 Irish High Court Ruling in *Zappone and Gilligan v. Revenue Commissioners and Attorney General*”, Mullins explores the role of parenting and child development studies predicated upon assumptions privileging heteronormativity in the High Court’s decision on same-sex marriage. Mullins challenges the conventions underlying these studies in order to illuminate the contentious suppositions underpinning the current interpretation of Article 41 of the Irish Constitution. Highlighting the broader context of the case, much of the scientific evidence presented by the State rested on studies rooted in American cultural assumptions and norms. By looking at both the studies themselves, their use in court and in the final ruling, the article examines some of the current barriers to a ‘suspect’ ‘Other’ gaining the right to marry in Ireland.

In “The Poetics of Cultural Nationalism: Thomas MacDonagh’s *Literature in Ireland* (1916)”, Goek rescues Thomas MacDonagh’s inclusive notions of Irish cultural nationalism from critical inattention and the legacy of his participation in the Easter Rising. Goek reveals how MacDonagh defined the literary nation based not along narrow linguistic or ancestral lines, but rather through literature produced for an Irish audience in a manner free from English styles and norms. MacDonagh’s Irish nation was defined by its history and heritage, but in a way that created room for both Gaelic Ireland and Ascendancy figures like Yeats. Through *Literature in Ireland* Goek unearths a MacDonagh whose vision for an independent Ireland differed greatly from the cultural nationalism that arose in the wake of 1916 and whose legacy is more complex than many have allowed.

The two articles contained in this special issue address fundamental questions about the cultural underpinnings of modern Ireland. Yet these essays place Ireland in a broader context, exploring how outside influences, for better or worse, shaped the social debates taking place within Ireland. These influences were appropriated in Ireland as part of broader political debates. Through their analysis both authors reveal tensions over cultural and political boundaries within the Irish state.