

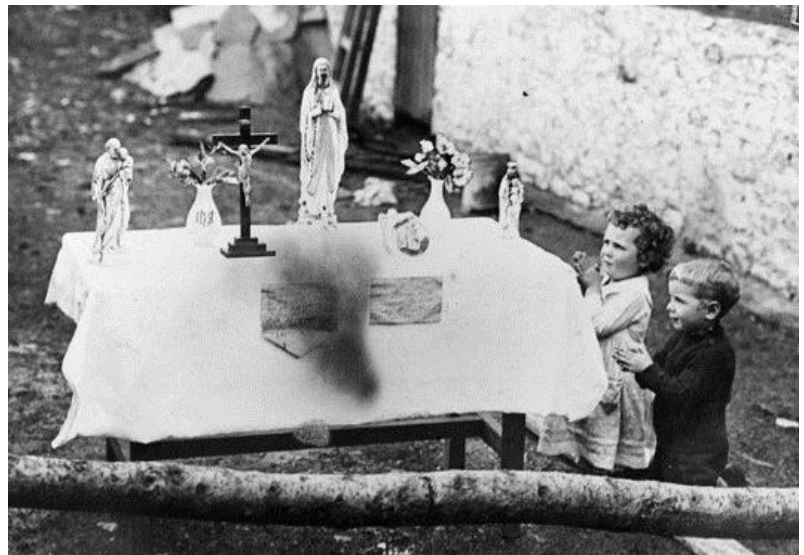
Dr. Abigail Palko
apalko@nd.edu
MW 12:30-1:45
206 O'Shaughnessy Hall

Office Hours: T, 1:00-3:00
W, 9:00-11:00; F, 1:00-2:00
Office: 325 O'Shaughnessy Hall
Telephone: 631-8635

**GSC 30588/IRST 30588:
"Childhood and the Irish Family in the Twentieth-Century"**

Ireland famously (or infamously) voted in 2004 to end the automatic citizenship right for all babies born in Ireland; supporters of the legislation argued that women were travelling to Ireland to give birth specifically to obtain an EU passport for their children. This was certainly not the first time that constructions of the family created conflict in Ireland (we might think of the 1937 Constitution and the series of divorce laws enacted by the State, or the Ann Lovett case and the various child abuse scandals), nor that representations and understandings of childhood were contentious topics of public discourse. Thus the 2009 release of the Ryan Report has been seen as signaling a new openness in Ireland to discussing formerly taboo topics. This course is an interdisciplinary exploration of the intersections of childhood and the construction of the family in twentieth-century Irish society. The central focus of this exploration will be literary representations of the family (texts to be read may include James Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*; Kate O'Brien, *The Land of Spices*; Hugo Hamilton, *The Speckled People: A Memoir of a Half-Irish Childhood*; Patrick McCabe, *The Butcher Boy*; and Emma Donoghue, *Stir-Fry*); we will also examine media depictions of the family. Topics to be covered include: education; child abuse; traditional roles of the mother and father in the family; teenage pregnancy and the Magdalene laundries; censorship issues.

The course introduces students to historical and contemporary feminist and gendered conversations about childhood, the family, and heteronormativity in Irish society. While the central texts for the course will be literary, our approach to the topic of childhood and the family in Ireland will be interdisciplinary, though, in recognition of the current state of Irish Studies (particularly Irish literary studies). We will also explore media representations of the family, including documentaries (*Pyjama Girls*), films (*The Wind that Shakes the Barley*, *Evelyn*, and *Albert Nobbs*), and television (*Mrs. Brown's Boys*). Our discussions of these texts (both written and visual) will be informed by secondary readings from the social sciences, including sociological, anthropological, and historical studies; this interdisciplinary approach introduces students to the tenor of current research in Irish Studies, and this course provides students the opportunity to undertake literary research through a gendered lens. This course will engage students in developing a deeper understanding of gender relations, class, sexuality, and family life, as well as highlight ways that Irish literature has consistently expressed these concerns. Additionally, through its focus on a single topic, the position of the child/family in Irish society, students will be able to apply insights from a variety of disciplines in order to formulate answers to the questions raised by our readings.



Course assignments:

- 10% ~~ participation
- 30% ~~ 2 short response papers (4-5 pages);
- 30% ~~ Research project – students will select a topic related to our readings:
 - 10% ~~ oral presentation of their secondary research that explores a sociological or historical phenomenon which plays a prominent role in one of the novels (child abuse or educational opportunities for girls, for example)
 - 20% ~~ a research paper (5-8 pages);
- 10% ~~ a review essay of 2 critical articles (2-3 pages)
- 20% ~~ a final exam (including take-home essay and quotation identifications).

Primary texts to purchase:

- Emma Donoghue, *Stir-Fry* [Harper Collins, 978-0060171094] ***this is not available in the bookstore**
- Hugo Hamilton, *The Speckled People: A Memoir of a Half-Irish Childhood* [Harper Perennial, 978-0007156634]
- James Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* [Penguin, 978-0142437346]
- Patrick McCabe, *The Butcher Boy* [Delta, 978-0385312370]
- Kate O'Brien, *The Land of Spices* [Virago, 978-1844083169]

Schedule:

Week 1:

8/28: Introduction – the changeling figure and Bridget Cleary

Week 2:

9/2: *Riders to the Sea* (1904)

http://archive.org/stream/riderstosea00syngiala/riderstosea00syngiala_djvu.txt

9/4: library work – Patricia Lynch's *Strangers at the Fair and other Stories*

Week 3:

9/9: *Albert Nobbs* [to be screened in advance] (turn-of-the-century)

9/11: Kilfeather, Siobhán. "Irish feminism. *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Irish Culture*. Ed. Joe Cleary and Claire Connolly. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005. 96-116. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CCOL052182009X.006>

Bourke, Joanna. "The Ideal Man: Irish Masculinity and the Home, 1880-1914."
[e-reserves]

research presentation [education at the beginning of the 20th century; traditional roles of the mother and father in the family]

Week 4:

9/16: *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Chapters One and Two (1914-15)

9/18: *Portrait*, cont., Chapters Three and Four

Week 5:

9/23: *Portrait*, cont., Chapter Five

9/25: Clair Wills, "Political Background to the Rising"; "Introduction: In the name of God and the dead" [e-reserves]

The Wind that Shakes the Barley [to be screened in advance] (1920)

Week 6:

- 9/30: Macardle's "The Return of Niav" [e-reserves]
O'Connor's "My Oedipus Complex" [e-reserves]
1st response paper due (film) – prompt to be provided
10/2: *The Land of Spices, Book One* (pre-WWI; pub: 1941)

Week 7:

- 10/7: *The Land of Spices, cont., Book Two*
10/9: *The Land of Spices, cont., Book Three*



Week 8:

- 10/14: Mary Lavin, "the Nun's Mother." [e-reserves]
Cara Delay, "Ever so holy: girls, mothers, and Catholicism in Irish women's life-writings, 1850-1950" [e-reserves]
Elizabeth Cullingford. "'Our Nuns Are Not a Nation': Politicizing the Convent in Irish Literature and Film." [e-reserves]
10/16: Bowen, Elizabeth. "The Happy Autumn Fields." [e-reserves]

Week 9: Fall Break (10/19-10/27)

Week 10:

- 10/28: *Evelyn* [to be screened in advance] (1953)
10/30: Kavanagh, "'A Christmas Childhood' in Ireland" and "The Great Hunger" [handouts]
Friel, "The Child" [e-reserves]
O'Flaherty, Liam. "The Fanatic." [e-reserves]
Research presentations [Magdalen asylums; teenage pregnancy; sexual mores]

Week 11:

- 11/4: *The Speckled People: A Memoir of a Half-Irish Childhood*
11/6: *The Speckled People: A Memoir of a Half-Irish Childhood, cont.*
2nd response paper due (poetry) – prompt to be provided

Week 12:

- 11/11: *The Butcher Boy*
11/13: *The Butcher Boy, cont.*

Week 13:

- 11/18: Meehan, "The Statue of the Virgin at Granard" and "Child Burial" [handouts]
Research presentation [child abuse; the role of the Catholic Church in Irish society; censorship issues]
11/20: Boland, "The Room in Which My First Child Slept" [handout]
Ní Dhomhnaill, "The Battering" and "First Communion" [handouts]
Heaney, "Digging" [handout]
Research paper due



Week 14:

- 11/25: *The Pyjama Girls* [to be screened in advance]
Ní Dhuibhne, Éilís. "Sex in the Context of Ireland."
11/27: Thanksgiving break



Week 15:

- 12/2: *Stir-fry*
12/4: *Stir-fry*, cont.

Week 16:

- 12/9: **Critical article review due**
12/11: Tom Inglis, "The Global Irish"
Mrs Brown's Boys [to be viewed in advance –
Web links on Sakai]
Wrap-up

Final exam – Tuesday, December 17, 8-10 am

Primary Texts:

- Bowen, Elizabeth. "The Happy Autumn Fields." [1940s] *The Collected Stories of Elizabeth Bowen*. New York: Vintage, 1982. 671-85.
Lavin, Mary. "The Nun's Mother." [1944] *The Stories of Mary Lavin*. London: Constable, 1985. Vol. II. 43-XX.
Macardle, Dorothy. "The Return of Níav." [1920] *Earth-bound: nine stories of Ireland*. Worcester, MA: Harrigan Press 1924 55-72.
Ní Dhuibhne, Éilís. "Sex in the Context of Ireland." [2000] *The pale gold of Alaska and other stories*. Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 2000. XX-XX.
O'Connor, Frank. "My Oedipus Complex." [1956] *My oedipus complex and other stories*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963. XX-XX
O'Flaherty, Liam. "The Fanatic." [1976] *The collected stories*. Ed. A. A Kelly. Dublin: Wolfhound Press, 1999. 244-54.

Secondary texts:

- Bourke, Joanna. "The Ideal Man: Irish Masculinity and the Home, 1880-1914." *Reclaiming Gender: Transgressive Identities in Modern Ireland*. Ed. Marilyn Cohen and Nancy J. Curtin. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999. 93-106.
Cullingford, Elizabeth. "'Our Nuns Are Not a Nation': Politicizing the Convent in Irish Literature and Film." *Éire-Ireland* 41.1 (2006): 9-39. *Project MUSE*. Web. 24 Apr. 2013.
Delay, Cara. "Ever so holy: girls, mothers, and Catholicism in Irish women's life-writings, 1850-1950." *The Country of the Young: Interpretations of youth and childhood in Irish culture*. Eds. John Countryman and Kelly Matthews. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2013. 10-30.
Inglis, Tom. *Global Ireland: Same Difference*. New York: Routledge, 2008.
Kilfeather, Siobhán. "Irish feminism." *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Irish Culture*. Ed. Joe Cleary and Claire Connolly. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005. 96-116.
Wills, Clair. *Dublin 1916: The Siege of the GPO*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2009.

Additional Sources:

- Joseph Dunne, *Childhood and Its Discontents: The First Seamus Heaney Lectures*
- Harry Ferguson, "Abused and Looked After Children as 'Moral Dirt': Child Abuse and Institutional Care in Historical Perspective" in *Journal of Social Policy* 36.1 (January 2007): 123-39.
- Diarmaid Ferriter, *Occasions of Sin, Sex and Society in Modern Ireland*
- Jane Helleiner, "'For the Protection of the Children': The Politics of Minority Childhood in Ireland" in *Anthropological Quarterly* 71.2 (April 1998): 51-62.
- Betty Hilliard, "Motherhood, Sexuality and the Catholic Church." in *Motherhood in Ireland: Creation and Context*. Ed. Patricia Kennedy. Douglas Village, Cork: Mercier P, 2004. 139-59.
- MacLellan, Anne and Alice Mauger, eds. *Growing Pains: Childhood Illness in Ireland 1750-1950*. Dublin: Irish Academic P, 2013.
- Jane McDermid, *The Schooling of Girls in Britain and Ireland, 1800-1900*. New York: Routledge, 2012. 10-29.
- Gerardine Meaney, *Gender, Ireland, and Cultural Change: Race, Sex, and Nation*. Routledge Studies in Twentieth-Century Literature. New York: Routledge, 2010.
- Richard Mills, "Perspectives on Childhood" in *Childhood Studies: A Reader in Perspectives of Childhood* [Editors Jean Mills and Richard Mills]
- Cliona Rattigan, *'What Else Could I Do?': Single Mothers and Infanticide, Ireland 1900-1950*
- Maxine Rhodes, "Uncovering the History of Childhood" in *Childhood Studies: A Reader in Perspectives of Childhood* [Editors Jean Mills and Richard Mills]
- James M. Smith, *Ireland's Magdalen Laundries and the Nation's Architecture of Containment*
- Johanne Devlin Trew, "Migration in childhood and its impact on national identity construction among migrants from Northern Ireland" in *Irish Studies Review* 17.3 (2009): 297-314.
- Thomas Walsh, "Constructions of Childhood in Ireland in the Twentieth-Century: A View from the Primary School Curriculum 1900-1999" in *Child Care in Practice* 11.2 (April 2005): 253-69.

