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## **St Patrick's Day Expulsions: Race and Homophobia in New York's Parade<sup>1</sup>**

**Katherine O'Donnell**

When the Irish Lesbian and Gay Organization (ILGO) applied to march in the New York St Patrick's Day Parade of 1991, they were told that there was no room by the organizers of the parade, the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH). ILGO's on-going struggle for inclusion in what was then the world's largest celebration of Irish ethnicity became a major news item that rumbled on seasonally for a number of years across the USA, in Ireland, in the international gay community and amongst the international Irish diaspora. Now, fifteen years after its first application to join the parade, ILGO is even legally prohibited from holding a protest at its own exclusion.

The unquestioned assumption that being homosexual is antithetical to being Irish provided the fundamental premise from which it was successfully argued in US courts that the Irish Lesbian and Gay Organization is a violent, obscene enemy bent on the destruction of Irish ethnicity and Irish communities. The argument was not made initially by lawyers employed by the Ancient Order of Hibernians, but by the influential American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) which describes itself as working 'to extend rights to segments of our population that have traditionally been denied their rights, including Native Americans and other people of color; lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgendered people.'<sup>2</sup> This essay investigates the historical and immediate social contexts that generated the stereotype of the Irish-Americans in New York and Boston as bigoted (racist and homophobic), a stereotype I argue functioned as the unspoken ground

on which the ACLU rested their case in defending the AOH's homophobia as a traditional expression of Irish ethnicity . Perversely this led the ACLU and other liberals in New York to give unsolicited support to the homophobic AOH through making an analogy between the Irish Lesbian and Gay Organization and the racist Ku Klux Klan. The essay concludes by looking at the strange effect of this controversy as it played out in Irish political and cultural life: how it had an impact on lesbians and gays and even on the celebration of St Patrick's Day in Ireland.

### **How the New York Irish Became White**

Irish Patrick's Day parades in Chicago, San Francisco and other cities throughout the US included lesbians and gays without controversy throughout the nineties while in New York and Boston, participation was marked by threats of violence and actual assaults. The contrast highlights the local differences that mark the history of the Irish-American diaspora, but which share an Irish-American story of an origin of enforced exile due to English greed and misrule, and solace found in and fidelity to the Catholic religion, Irish culture and allegiance to America, the land of open economic opportunity.<sup>3</sup> Irish-American identity in the major east coast cities, particularly Boston and New York, has an added and defining dimension: the memory of surviving systematic sectarian oppression at the hands of the Protestant oligarchies there. The Catholic Irish fleeing the famine came to the long-established, largely Protestant city of Boston where, 'The Order of the Ancient and Most Benevolent Friendly Brothers of St Patrick,' and 'The Charitable Irish Society,' were open only to Irish Protestants or the descendents of the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians who came to the city throughout the eighteenth century.<sup>4</sup> These societies

were avowedly anti-Catholic, sharing in the city's general distress at the unwanted hordes from Ireland who were landing on their shores. Scorsese's film *Gangs of New York* depicts New York Irish-Americans' survival of the brutal sectarian onslaughts of the Protestant Nativists or Know Nothings in mid- and late-nineteenth century America, where Free Blacks were an established social and economic presence in the east coast cities, while the Catholic Irish were regarded as ape-like carriers of disease.<sup>5</sup>

In *The Invention of the White Race*, Theodore W. Allen 'look[s] into an Irish mirror' to understand the 'paramount issue in American history', that is, 'the invention of the white race'. And examines how English colonisation of Ireland from the seventeenth century racialized the Irish in 'a deliberate ruling-class policy.'<sup>6</sup> Giving a detailed description of how the Irish in nineteenth-century Ireland had a kinship with the enslavement of African-Americans, he shows how one nationalist leader in particular, Daniel O'Connell, the beloved 'Liberator', risked the Irish nationalist cause to agitate for the abolition of slavery. The most disturbing aspect of his study reveals how these same politicized Irish became white supremacists in America.

Before the American Civil War the Irish committed themselves to the American political order whose logic rested on the rhetoric of racial distinctions to claim equality and justice for all on the white side of that colour line. Examining Allen shows how the Democratic party machine, the party of the slave-holders in the South and long-time holders of power in American government, rewarded Irish-Americans for their vote with government jobs, systematic patronage and favour, and a guarantee of those other two ante-Bellum white-skin privileges: the presumption of liberty and the right of immigration and naturalization. The rhetoric of Irish-American whiteness argued that the

Abolitionist movement was 'un-American', that the Irish in Ireland should understand that it was the duty of the Irish-Americans to be 'patriotic' to their adopted country and to support the Democrat-led status quo, particularly as it was hoped that the US would give aid to throwing the British out of Ireland.<sup>7</sup> So, the appeal to both transcendent nationalisms (Irish-America) becomes hyphenated on the issue of whiteness.

The political leadership of the Irish in ante-Bellum and Civil War New York was tightly controlled by the archbishop, John Hughes. A labourer before he became a priest, the Irish-born Hughes had written poetry in which he expressed the kinship he felt between this heritage and the plight of the African-American slave.<sup>8</sup> However, Allen shows that for the sake of political expediency and economic advantage Hughes' anti-abolitionist stance slid from careful equivocation into an eventual posture of white supremacy. This was eagerly taken up by his flock who, under the fosterage of the Democratic party headquarters at Tammany Hall, increasingly organized themselves as a self-protective white labour force haunted by the phantom threat of non-existent black workers--a performance that occasionally flared in the violent slaughtering of African-Americans by the white Irish-Americans of New York.<sup>9</sup>

So, the Irish became white, and joined a political and symbolic order dreamed by the Virginian Democrats, Jefferson and Madison, where equality and justice for all was assured 'above the racial line,' but at the cost of denying the poverty and precarious social status of Irish-American working class lives.<sup>10</sup> In the east coast cities of America, Irish-American poverty with its attendant high level of drug and alcohol addiction, organized crime, unemployment, school drop-out rates, poor housing and health were denied by projecting these ills as germane to African-American communities: to

complain about the oppression of poverty is to be Black. This informed the racist anger that flared during the 'bussing crisis' in South Boston, in which the desegregation of Boston's public schools led to full-scale violence against African-Americans. The TV and photographic images of Irish-Americans rioting against the school buses carrying African-American children into schools in Irish-American neighbourhoods remain the iconic examples of white racism in east coast USA.<sup>11</sup>

### **'...and all the World is Bright and Gay': New York St Patrick's Day**

The New York St Patrick's Day Parade still bears the hallmarks of its roots in the troubled 1850s. The Ancient Order of Hibernians was founded in America in 1836 at New York's St James Church, to protect the clergy and church Property from the Know Nothings and their followers. This is still a male-only fraternal organization who claim their origin in the misty days of the sixteenth century when the members were needed, in the words of their official historian, 'to protect the lives of priests who risked immediate death to keep the Catholic Faith alive in occupied Ireland after the reign of England's King Henry VIII', even though the name AOH 'can only be traced to 1641'.<sup>12</sup> While its origins in both Ireland and America lay in 'the purpose of defending Gaelic values, and protecting Church and clergy', its role changed with the influx of Irish immigration following the famines of the 1840s, after which it sought 'to aid the newly arrived Irish, both socially and politically'.<sup>13</sup> By 1854, the Irish were on red alert from violent attacks by the Know Nothings and as the AOH's Deputy National Historian, Gerry Curran puts it, the St Patrick's Day Parade of that year contained an 'unusually large number of Irish units of the state militia...The inclusion of these military units helped transform the St.

Patrick's Day procession into the parade we recognize today.'<sup>14</sup> The AOH has been the prime organizer of the New York parade since this time. The parade quickly grew in size and the AOH spread rapidly in the cities where the Irish were to be found; soon both the AOH and St Patrick's Day parades became a feature of every substantial American city, and the AOH the largest Irish society in the US. The parade thus came to demonstrate the pride of Irish Catholics, in both their ancestral heritage and their (white) American citizenship. In Curran's words: 'The celebration of St. Patrick's Day has become a symbol not only of devotion to our patron saint and ancestral home but also of our constitutional right to freely assemble in our streets as respected American citizens.'<sup>15</sup>

However, by the early 1990s, the AOH and Irish Americans felt that their church was under attack, this time it wasn't ultra Protestants but radical homosexual activists who were to blame. Aids Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT-UP) had shocked with a protest in St Patrick's Cathedral during their 'Stop the Church' action in December 1989, where an activist allegedly spat out the host during a mass officiated by John Cardinal O'Connor. While mass was disrupted, nobody spat out the host; nonetheless, the story was universally believed.<sup>16</sup> Many (including liberal Irish Catholics) might have felt that the virulently homophobic Cardinal who did his utmost to exert his considerable power in New York politics was fair game to be targeted by protesters, but there was general agreement that the action of spitting out the communion was a desecration that must be condemned. For many Irish-Americans, the (misreported) pollution of communion in their beloved St Patrick's Cathedral was considered injurious. The anger of the Irish-American community was misguided, but was informed by collective historical memories of sectarian oppression, and this configured the emotional atmosphere when

ILGO applied to march in the parade.

The clash between the AOH and ILGO can be understood as a cultural clash between Irish-born immigrants and Irish-American natives. Anne Maguire, a founder member of ILGO, notes that even within ILGO from its earliest inception, Irish-born lesbians and gay men resented what they perceived being romanticized and patronized by their fellow gay Irish-Americans, and there 'were rumblings [within ILGO] about how unfriendly the immigrants were towards Irish-Americans, and there was a grain of truth to this assertion and no simple explanation.'<sup>17</sup> When the parade controversy broke the leaders of ILGO were largely Irish-born lesbians and gays, who didn't readily think of themselves as the descendents of the survivors of a nineteenth-century famine, and most of whom were indifferent or opposed to the Catholic church or, if were engaged with it, tended to be critically engaged. Some of the key members involved in establishing ILGO had been radicalized through direct experience of British militarized oppression of Catholic communities in the north of Ireland or through involvement with Republican politics. However, even this potentially common ground with Irish-America was complicated because the Irish-born activists understood the inequities in the north of Ireland as Civil Rights infringements, a model that had an intellectual and political debt to the US Black Civil Rights Movement.<sup>18</sup> Given that this was before the world was wide-webbed, and that many of the Irish-born ILGO members came out as lesbians and gay men after they had arrived in the US, their first point of contact was not the lesbian and gay social scenes and communities of the urban US, but the Irish-American and so-called 'New Irish' communities. It was on this community that they depended for jobs,

housing, social life, emotional support, and connection with home through news, information or Irish goods.

### **Irish Lesbian and Gay Organization [ILGO]**

It was precisely this faultline between being Irish and being gay that ILGO sought to address. As Maguire describes it:

In the spring of 1990, we had our first meeting in a Japanese restaurant...Our mission was to make it possible for the predominantly immigrant group to be Irish and gay at the same time. Before ILGO we were forced to choose; we could be Irish if we were closeted, (which most of our members were), or we could be lesbians and gay men so long as we gave up the benefits offered by the Irish community to immigrants to this city [New York]. ILGO changed all that. Women and men from all walks of life flocked to the group. When spring passed into summer we celebrated by marching in the Lesbian and Gay Pride parade in Manhattan. Self-identified Irish lesbians and gay men seemed to come as a surprise to many in the gay community and jokes were made about how our existence was an oxymoron. This made us wonder if Irish people knew we existed at all. We naively thought the St Patrick's Day Parade would solve everything and sent in our application to march in October.<sup>19</sup>

In the same manner that Irish-Americans used the parade to assert their twin allegiance to Irish Catholic nationalism and American citizenship, ILGO members wished to assert pride in nationality and membership of the lesbian and gay community. However, this was to prove an impossibility: the difficulty that many in ILGO experienced of

expressing being both Irish and (at the same time, in the same place) gay was to be prevented in the public discourse that arose from the earliest days of the parade controversy.

ILGO did get to march in the 230<sup>th</sup> New York St Patrick's Day parade in 1991, at the invitation of the Manhattan-based Division 7 of the AOH. As guests of Division 7 they were not allowed to carry their own banner, but ILGO reasoned that their visibility would be ensured as the first, and as yet only, African American Mayor of New York, David Dinkins, was to march in solidarity with them. The Division 7 contingent was isolated from the rest of the parade up Fifth Avenue, which was clear for blocks ahead of and behind the group. Screams of hatred accompanied their procession up the Avenue. People shouted 'AIDS! AIDS!' as if wishing the disease on the group. The violent and vocal hatred was echoed in placards: 'Die Faggots,' 'Beware the AIDS of March', 'We're going to get you, We know who you are', and prophetically: 'Dinkins—One term Mayor'. Beer cans were the most frequently thrown items. Keith Moore, a gay man from Donegal, describes the experience of standing amongst the crowd of on-lookers at St Patrick's Cathedral when ILGO arrived: 'They were shouting, "Faggots. Queers. You're not Irish. Your parents must be English.' Describing how those standing beside him shouted and screamed, then turned to look at him and smiled, he comments: 'They would've wanted to kill me if they'd known I was gay. Standing in front of the cathedral felt like being raped.'<sup>20</sup>

John Cardinal O'Connor's outspokenness, power and dogged hard work in opposing ILGO's participation in the parade was ultimately to prove supremely effective

in barring lesbians and gay men from the party on Fifth Avenue. Maguire evocatively describes one of the 1991 parade's pivotal moments, as it reached St Patrick's Cathedral:

Traditionally the cardinal would come down to greet the mayor, who in normal times would be honoured by being placed at the head of the parade. These were not normal times. For these two powerful men in New York City, this day would prove to be memorable in their political careers. The mayor, an African American, stood with the Irish Lesbian and Gay Organization. The Cardinal, an Irish American, snubbed him for it.<sup>21</sup>

At the end of the parade the visibly shaken Mayor held a brief press conference. He had in fact just walked a few blocks with ILGO, joining them before they came to St Patrick's Cathedral, but he compared marching with ILGO to the 1960s civil rights marches in Alabama: 'It was like marching in Birmingham. I knew there would be deep emotions, but I did not anticipate the cowards in the crowd. There was far, far too much negative comment.'<sup>22</sup>

In the run up to the parade the following year, 1992, *The Irish Voice* newspaper, a weekly newspaper read by tens of thousands of the 'New Irish' immigrants to the US, ran an op-ed piece by ILGO who wanted to make clear that contrary to what the AOH were saying, ILGO had not been established specifically to disrupt the parade. Marching in the St Patrick's Day Parade was regarded by ILGO as:

an appropriate cultural activity for the group to celebrate its Irish heritage...We see this as a fight for the full participation of all Irish people in the annual celebration of our heritage. The Parade Committee shouldn't be trying to determine who is Irish enough to celebrate St Patrick's Day.<sup>23</sup>

ILGO recognized that their exclusion was sought on the grounds that they were not representative of an Ireland or Irish identity that the AOH claimed the right to determine.<sup>24</sup>

### **How ILGO Became the KKK**

In the fallout from the 1991 parade a legal hearing was held by the Human Rights Commission of New York to determine if the AOH was discriminating against ILGO. An unsolicited amicus brief was filed on behalf of the AOH from the New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU). The NYCLU are a regional branch of the influential American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). The ACLU has a membership of over 400,000, and prosecutes over 6,000 cases a year in the USA and describes itself, without irony, as America's 'guardian of liberty'.<sup>25</sup>

It was all the more breathtaking then that NYCLU's brief, written by Norman Siegel, supported ILGO's exclusion from the Parade. Siegel sought this exclusion on the grounds that ILGO was by definition anti-Irish—not just the opposite of 'Irishness' but its antithesis, a violent self-defined enemy of the Irish:

Could the organizers of the Israel Day Parade be compelled to accept German born neo-Nazis to its ranks? Would the Gay Pride Committee be required to accept heterosexual homophobes and skinheads to its contingency? Can the AOH exclude on the grounds of national origin an English born group which wishes to march with the banner 'England Stay In Ireland'? Must the AOH include non-Catholic groups who wish to express their anti-Papal beliefs?<sup>26</sup>

A major victory of the Civil Rights movement in the USA was the ending of the segregated school system in the Southern States; the legal argument accepted by the Supreme Court leading to desegregation was that separate systems could not be equal. Remarkably, in light of this landmark decision, the brief of the NYCLU argued that ILGO be awarded a permit for a separate parade on St Patrick's Day—separate but equal. NYCLU would go on to make this same argument against ILGO in other courts and the ACLU would eventually be on the winning side in the American Supreme Court which successfully overturned lesbians' and gays' right to be included in the Boston St Patrick's Day Parade.<sup>27</sup> The support of the African-American Mayor for ILGO, despite the Cardinal's opposition, arguably fed into Siegal's assumption that ILGO were not quite Irish. Certainly, the NYCLU implicitly assumed that homophobia was intrinsic to the expression of Irish identity, and so a proud claiming of homosexual identity could not be performed as an Irish identity; the two discourses were antithetical.

The battle as to who was really Irish continued in the hearings of the Human Rights Commission. Their judgment, written by Judge Rosemary Maldonado, rejected the AOH argument that the parade was a private affair. Attended by over 500,000 people and costing well over a million dollars to the taxpayer, the Commission ruled that the parade was a public accommodation. The judgment also ruled that the AOH's claim that they had ILGO on a 'waiting-list' of would-be participants was a sham and that the AOH had discriminated against ILGO.<sup>28</sup> Despite this, Judge Maldonado's final analysis was that as the parade was a celebration of Irish ethnicity, the AOH had a right to discriminate against ILGO, based on the tacit acceptance that an *a-priori* condition of being Irish was an active intolerance of homosexuals, and therefore no expression of an identity that was

simultaneously Irish and homosexual were possible. This effectively asserted that the AOH's right to be homophobic because they are Irish outweighs Irish people's right to define themselves as gay.

When a three-judge panel at the New York City Commission on Human Rights overturned Moldonado's original recommendation, concluding that, given the secular nature of the annual Irish celebration on Fifth Avenue, the ILGO should march, the media echoed the argument of the NYCLU and the analogy between ILGO and the Ku Klux Klan was welded into a short-hand trope. *New York Newsday* asked: 'Would anyone force a civil rights group to let David Duke [of the KKK] march in a parade honoring Martin Luther King Jr.?'<sup>29</sup> Such is the power and danger of analogies that they can so readily slip from being a comparison to being an aphorism that can be substituted for the truth. Though ILGO can hardly be said to resemble the KKK except for the fact that they are a largely white group, this idea that ILGO were a mimicry of the KKK came to characterize public and media commentary. For instance, the *New York Times* gave right-wing conservative Pat Buchanan the column inches to fulminate that: 'Martin Luther King Jr. could not have been compelled to let the Ku Klux Klansmen march with him',<sup>30</sup> while the President of the New York County AOH, Timothy Hartnett, filed an affidavit to reverse the Human Rights Commission decision, exploiting the same rhetorical tactic: 'Constitutional protection is not reserved for zealots. It is not the only the Nazis and the KKK and the gay groups that have the right to shape their message.'<sup>31</sup> Court rulings eventually decreed that ILGO was not allowed to march in 1992, but granted permission to stage a protest at the sidelines. This was to be the last time that ILGO were allowed the right to protest. Since 1993, ILGO has been put in the position where organizing any kind

of protest on Fifth Avenue is interpreted as civil disobedience and results in mass arrests.<sup>32</sup>

The American media took an extraordinary interest in the controversy and were largely very sympathetic to the Irish Lesbian and Gay organization: 'mild mannered' became the epithet most associated with ILGO. However, while expressing 'genuine sadness' for ILGO's plight, most media commentators and print editorials were happy that ILGO had not been ordered into the 1992 parade by a court decision; as *The New York Times* put it, that would have been the cure 'that looked worse than the disease'.<sup>33</sup> Fifteen years after the first parade controversy the 2006 New York parade chairman, John Dunleavy, of the AOH in an interview with *The Irish Times* again recycles the analogy of ILGO and the KKK *Irish Times*, declaring that an African American parade could hardly be expected to have the KKK march, therefore why should New York's St Patrick's Day Parade include ILGO?<sup>34</sup>

### **Conclusion: Backward Irish-Americans and the Dawn of the Celtic Tiger**

Irish Americans have had a long struggle to be included in the white and middle classes of east coast USA. Irish ethnic pride in Boston and New York has traditionally been articulated within the context of an active participation in trade unionism, policing, pub culture, white racism, class shame, Democratic party politics, and Catholicism. At the same time the Irish in Boston and New York have also had to negotiate the negative portrayal of the Irish as a drunken, brawling and racist working class with their leaders depicted as network of corrupt union officials, crooked cops, tribal politicians and elected officials, ruled by creepy, secretive and reactionary Catholic clergy. It is perhaps no

surprise then that the American courts and media were most comfortable in maintaining the status quo representation of the Irish AOH as intrinsically bigoted and homophobic and ILGO, perversely, as having a racist potency, a representation expressed through the media associations of ILGO with the KKK. The ethnic Irish were again depicted as bigots: the comfort that New York liberals found in their own ethnic and heterosexist supremacy had once again found a self-confirming foil in the Irish.

A key cross-class touchstone for Irish identity in Boston and New York is rooted in the status of being the descendents of exiled victims of the Famine, refugee survivors of the British Empire, and Irish-America takes seriously its role to keep this memory alive. It is this backward-looking aspect of Irish-America and its concomitant fund-raising for the IRA that has most embarrassed the Irish living in the Republic of Ireland. At the time the ILGO controversy broke, in the early pre-economic boom nineties, Ireland was still a country desperate to 'modernize', to join Europe, to disavow kinship with Northern Irish Catholics, and was, furthermore, engaged in a complex struggle to remove the influence of the Catholic church from state affairs.

The desire to both retain the ideological aspiration as enshrined in law and constitution and to fulfil contemporary aspirations to modernization and reform have frequently resulted in a somewhat self-contradictory Irish polity. Michael G. Cronin has written eloquently on how Irish gay men politically and symbolically constructed themselves as totems of 'modernity', harbingers of Irish modernization, though at the height of the dispute between ILGO and the AOH, those years between 1991-1993, the expression of a gay male sexual identity was criminalized in the Irish Republic.<sup>35</sup> With the migration of the New York controversy to Ireland a group of lesbians in Cork decided

to apply to march in that city's 1992 St Patrick's Day Parade. Thirty-two lesbians marched as a contingent behind the banner that read, 'Hello New York' and were awarded a prize as 'best new entry'. This prompted Kieran Murphy, of the organizers, Cork Junior Chamber of Commerce, to tell *The Washington Post* that, in an implicit contrast to the Irish-American diaspora, 'we are fairly progressive down here in Cork', recognizing 'that this group are part of our society and have as much right to march as anybody else.'<sup>36</sup> The following year, lesbians and gay men (still criminalized until June of that year) paraded not only in Cork but also in Galway and Dublin, and the Dublin St Patrick's Day Parade expressly announced itself as an inclusive multi-cultural festival, even hiring an organizer of the Dublin Gay Pride Festival. Two years later, in November 1995, the State stepped in and took over the running of the Dublin Parade as part of what is now called 'St. Patrick's Festival', a week-long promotion of the new, forward-looking, 'multicultural' Ireland, its brief being to '[p]roject, internationally, an accurate image of Ireland as a creative, professional and sophisticated country with wide appeal, as we approach the new Millennium.'<sup>37</sup>

For well over a hundred years the St Patrick's Day Parade in New York had been the world's largest celebration of Irish ethnicity, but in the wake of the liberal Irish media's denunciation of the 'backward' Irish-American expulsion of Irish-born lesbians and gays, allied to the desire to project the Republic of Ireland as a 'modern' nation, the St Patrick's Festival, centred on Dublin, was born. A strange but potent legacy of ILGO's stand against the AOH is the impetus it gave for the Irish state to claim St Patrick's Day for the Irish Republic: 'it was a strange fact of life that the celebrations held in Ireland for St. Patrick's Day prior to 1996 paled in comparison to those held abroad, especially when

one considers what an ideal opportunity the day represented to showcase Ireland and Dublin to the world. We set out to seize that opportunity, and completely transform the national and international perception of St. Patrick's Day in Dublin.'<sup>38</sup> Ten years on, over 4,000 performers parade at the Mardi-Gras style parade while over 1.5million come to watch. At the height of the Celtic Tiger it should be no surprise that the main festival events are, 'GE Money Oiche', 'Irishjobs.ie Ceili' and '*The Economist Boat Race*'. Meanwhile, fifteen years later, ILGO is still fighting for inclusion in a parade that is still a significant Irish space, however much the forward-looking Irish state might wish to deny it and the Irish diaspora that the NY parade includes and excludes.

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<sup>1</sup> This paper relies on the Irish Lesbian and Gay Archive: IQA, which has a comprehensive news clippings archive of over 250,000 clips from Irish national, regional, and some international media, spanning over three decades.

<sup>2</sup> ACLU website, 'About Us'. <<http://www.aclu.org/about/index.html>>. Accessed on March 21, 2006.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas O'Connor, *The Boston Irish: A Political History* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1995), p.61.

<sup>4</sup> The website of the Charitable Irish Society claims that, founded in 1737, it is the oldest Irish society in the US, but omits mention of its sectarian history. *Charitable Irish Society* website, 'History'. <<http://www.charitableirishsociety.org/history.htm>>

<sup>5</sup> See Theodore W. Allen, *The Invention of the White Race Vol. 1: Racial Oppression and Social Control* (London and New York: Verso, 1994), p.139.

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<sup>6</sup> Allen, p.23.

<sup>7</sup> Allen, pp.182-4.

<sup>8</sup> For an example, see 'The Slave', in Allen, Appendix K.

<sup>9</sup> Allen, pp.159-99.

<sup>10</sup> Allen, p.19.

<sup>11</sup> For an astute personal account of racialized conflicts between Irish American and African American working class communities, in this case in Boston, see Michael Patrick MacDonald, *All Souls: A Family Story from Southie* (New York: Random House, 1999).

<sup>12</sup> 'What is the Ancient Order of Hibernians in America?'

<http://www.saintpatricksdaysparade.com/AOH/AOH.htm> Accessed on March 21, 2006.

<sup>13</sup> Mike McCormack, 'The Ancient Order of Hibernians' (Sept. 21 2005)

<http://www.aoh.com/history/index.htm>. Accessed on March 21, 2006.

<sup>14</sup> Gerry Curran, 'St. Patrick's Day and the AOH' <http://www.aoh.com/history/index.htm>  
Accessed on March 21, 2006.

<sup>15</sup> Gerry Curran, 'St. Patrick's Day and the AOH' <http://www.aoh.com/history/index.htm>  
Accessed on March 21, 2006.

See also Mike Cronin and Daryl Adair, *The Wearing of the Green: A History of St Patrick's Day* (New York and London: Routledge, 2002), p.37.

<sup>16</sup> Emily Nahmanson describes Tom Keane, the alleged miscreant: 'he was the Sacrilegious Wafer Smasher, when in fact he just simply said, "Communion? I don't think so."' Emily Nahmanson, 'The Sacrilegious Wafer Smasher', Interview 23, 'The ACT-UP Oral History Project' (April 27 2003).

<[http://www.actuporalhistory.org/interviews/interviews\\_04#nahmanson](http://www.actuporalhistory.org/interviews/interviews_04#nahmanson)> Accessed on

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March 21, 2006. ILGO were encouraged to resolve their dispute with the AOH by disavowing the Stop the Church action. See Anne Maguire, *Rock the Sham!* (New York: Street Level Press, 2006), pp.138-9.

<sup>17</sup> Maguire, p.42.

<sup>18</sup> See, in Maguire: Lucy Lynch, p.18; Tarlach MacNiallais, p.20; Anne Maguire, pp.28-9; and Marie Honan, p.32. See also Brian Dooley, *Black and Green: The Fight for Civil Rights in Northern Ireland & Black America* (London: Pluto Press, 1998).

<sup>19</sup> Maguire, pp.12-13.

<sup>20</sup> Quoted in Maguire, p.17.

<sup>21</sup> Maguire, p.17.

<sup>22</sup> Quoted in Maguire, p.19.

<sup>23</sup> Quoted in Maguire, p.79.

<sup>24</sup> See Kathryn A. Conrad, *Locked in the Family Cell: Gender, Sexuality and Political Agency in Irish National Discourse* (Madison WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), pp.63-9.

<sup>25</sup> For the ACLU 'mission statement', see <<http://www.aclu.org/about/aboutmain.cfm>>

<sup>26</sup> Quoted in Maguire, p.94.

<sup>27</sup> For the summary of the argument in the ACLU amicus brief, see October 1 1994 U.S. Supreme Court case of *Hurley v. Irish-American Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Group of Boston* (GLIB), 63 U.S.L.W. 4625 (June 19, 1995)(9-0).

<sup>28</sup> Maguire, p.110.

<sup>29</sup> Quoted in Maguire, p.130.

<sup>30</sup> Quoted in Maguire, p.130.

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<sup>31</sup> Maguire, p.133.

<sup>32</sup> For a summary of the ILGO court cases see Maguire, pp. 203-204.

<sup>33</sup> Quoted in Maguire, p.120.

<sup>34</sup> *Irish Times* 16 March, 2006 p. 6.

<sup>35</sup> Michael G. Cronin, ‘“He’s My Country”: Liberalism, Nationalism, and Sexuality in Contemporary Gay Fiction’, *Éire-Ireland*, 39/40:3&4 (Fall/Winter 2004): 250-67.

<sup>36</sup> Quoted in Maguire, p.107.

<sup>37</sup> ‘St Patrick’s Day’ <[http://www.stpatricksdays.ie/cms/history\\_stpatricksdays.html](http://www.stpatricksdays.ie/cms/history_stpatricksdays.html)>

Accessed on March 21, 2006.

<sup>38</sup> ‘St Patrick’s Day’ <[http://www.stpatricksdays.ie/cms/history\\_stpatricksdays.html](http://www.stpatricksdays.ie/cms/history_stpatricksdays.html)>

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