The 1st Critical Welfare State Studies Network Conference

Critical Perspectives on Stigma, Shame and the Irish Welfare Imaginary

Friday 20th September 2019

University College Cork

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

#CWSS – visit the website at https://cwssnetwork.com/

Welcome to the 1ˢᵗ Critical Welfare State Studies Network Conference (#CWSS)

Friday 20ᵗʰ September 2019, University College Cork

Welcome to Cork for #CWSS!

We are delighted to welcome you to the first Critical Welfare State Studies Network Conference. The purpose of the Critical Welfare State Studies Network is to bring together a network of scholars who are interested in the 'critical' in studies of the welfare state. The first conference of the Network - 'Critical Perspectives on Stigma, Shame and the Irish Welfare Imaginary' - aims to uncover the relationship between the processes, procedures and assumptions underpinning the welfare state and processes and experiences of stigma and shame.

Scholarship has shown how welfarist imaginaries (Jensen and Tyler, 2015) can mediate who, what, why and how individuals and particular groups become stigmatised on the basis of their interaction/engagement with the welfare state. In the Irish context, scholarship has largely focused on how the Irish 'welfarist imaginary' shaped principally by Catholic social mores and values worked to stigmatize, shame and institutionalise particular groups such as women and children. What remains under-explored however, is the relationship between stigma and shame in the contemporary Irish 'welfarist imaginary'. Against these backdrops of historical legacies and recent social change, the wider context of twenty-first century of austerity capitalism and the specific dynamics of austerity, precarity, poverty, insecurity, competition, inequality, and constructions of deserving and un-deservingness in these contexts warrant further exploration.

This conference thus, seeks to capture and advance these multiple dimensions of stigma and shame in Irish welfare state research, analysis and critical debate. Research from the UK context is also highlighted to acknowledge how these issues have surfaced elsewhere.

We would like to thank the Institute for Social Sciences in the 21ˢᵗ Century (ISS21) for its support and thank you most of all for attending the CWSS Network conference on Critical Perspectives on Stigma, Shame and the Irish Welfare Imaginary.

Fiona Dukelow, Joe Whelan and Robert Bolton (School of Applied Social Studies and ISS21)
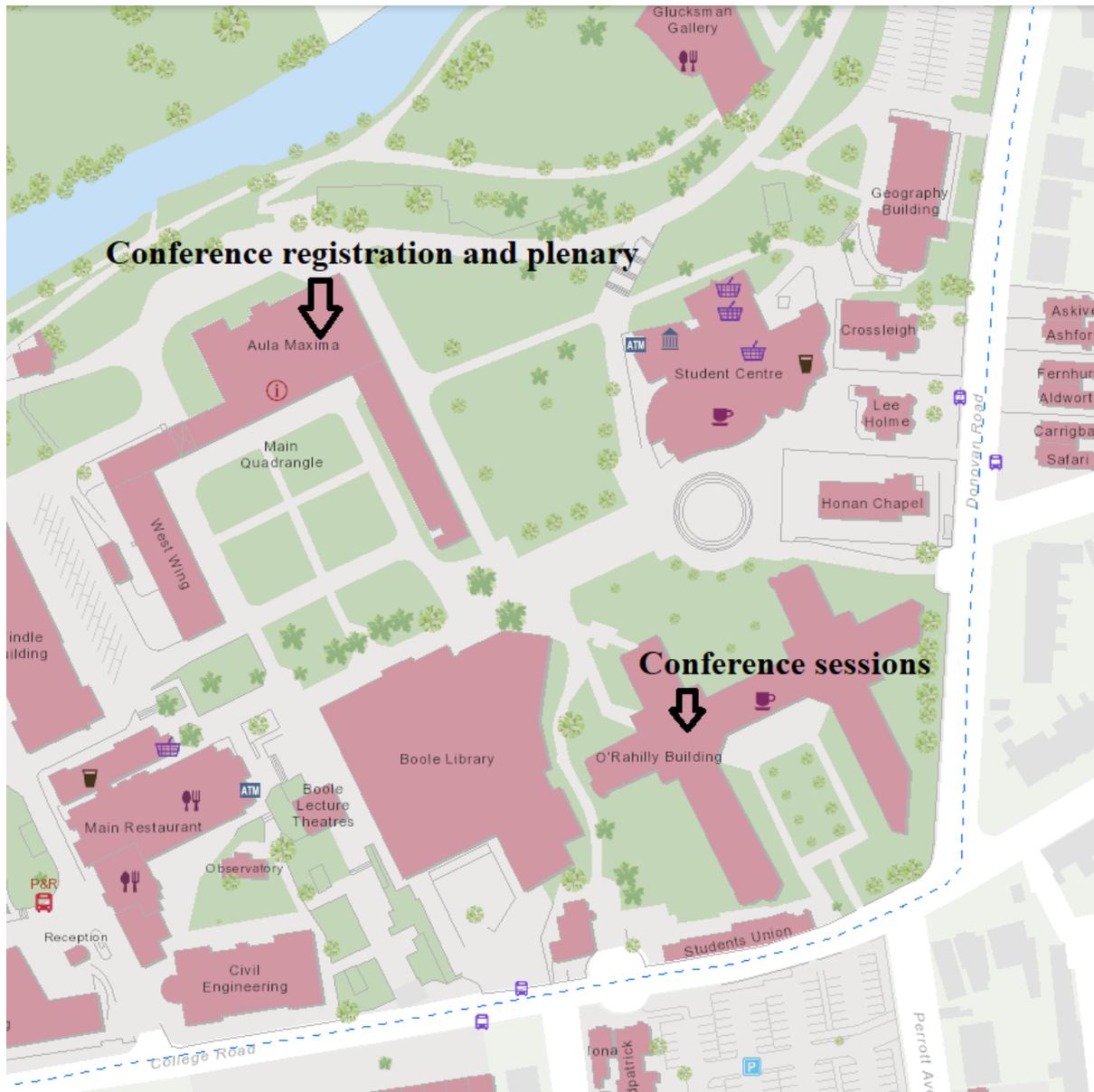
'The normal and the stigmatised are not persons but rather perspectives' (Erving Goffman)

'Shame is already a revolution of a kind' (Karl Marx)

Use #CWSS when tweeting about the conference and visit the website at
https://cwssnetwork.com/

Conference Location

The conference plenary session will take place at the Aula Maxima, located in the Main Quadrangle of UCC.

The conference panel sessions will be held in the CACSSS Seminar Room G27 and the Mary Ryan Meeting Room which are both located in the O'Rahilly Building (ORB). These rooms are next to each other and will be clearly signposted.

PROGRAMME

Critical Perspectives on Stigma, Shame and the Irish Welfare Imaginary

Time	Event	Location
8.30 – 9.00	Registration	Aula Maxima, North Wing, Main Quadrangle
9.00 – 9.15

9.15 – 10.30 | Introduction – Professor Chris Williams, Head of College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences, UCC

Conference Plenary: 'Welfare Stigma Machines' – Professor Imogen Tyler, Lancaster University | Aula Maxima, North Wing, Main Quadrangle |
| 10.30 – 10.50 | Coffee | Aula Maxima, North Wing, Main Quadrangle |
| 10.50 – 11.30 | **Parallel session 1** | |
| | **1A: Contemporary Welfare Imaginaries**

Chair: Joe Whelan

What do social welfare systems think?, Dr Tom Boland & Dr Ray Griffin, Waterford Institute of Technology

JobPath and the Institutionalisation of the Welfare Imaginary, Kenny Doyle, Waterford Institute of Technology | CACSSS Seminar Room, ORB, G27 |
| | **1B: Stigma, Governance and Control**

Chair: Dr Rosie Meade

Crafting the society of control: Exploring Scottish child welfare policy in a neoliberal context, David McKendrick, Glasgow Caledonian University

Doing the dirty work of neoliberal governmentality? "Welfare Fraud" policy in the Irish Social Protection system 2011-2014, Stephen Gaffney & Professor Michelle Millar, National University of Ireland, Galway | Mary Ryan meeting room

(opposite CACSSS Seminar Room G27) |
| 11.30– 12.00 | **Climate strike** | Main Quadrangle |

12.00 – 1.00	**Parallel session 2**	
	2A: Practice, Practitioners and Stigma **Chair:** Lydia Sapouna **Risk, Blame and Stigma –Exploring the Impact of Moral Discourses, Managerialism and the 'Problem Family' Agenda on Multi Agency Professionals Attitudes, Decision Making and Responses towards 'Complex Youth' in the Republic of Ireland**, Dr Tracey A Monson, Director – Daughter of Charity Child and Family Services **Re/Forming Irish Youth Work through Policy Framing and Shaming**, Dr Sinead McMahon & Sasha Noonan, Limerick Institute of Technology	CACSSS Seminar Room, ORB, G27
	2B: Structures of Stigma **Chair:** Becci Jeffers **Asylum Policy and Processes of 'Othering': Social Control under the Guise of Welfare Support and Provision**, Dr Claire Dorrity, Dr Jacqui O Riordan and Mike Fitzgibbon, University College Cork **How Status Ambiguity Generates Apathy towards Welfare Retrenchment: Shame, Social Housing and Urban Regeneration**, Dr Lorcan Byrne, Limerick Institute of Technology **Neoliberalism, Misrecognition and Maldistribution: Health and Welfare Inequities in Ireland**, Dr Angela Flynn, University College Cork	Mary Ryan meeting room (opposite CACSSS Seminar Room G27)
1.00 – 1.45	**Lunch**	CACSSS Seminar Room social area
1.45 – 2.00	**Discussion of Critical Welfare State Studies Network** Joe Whelan et al	CACSSS Seminar Room, ORB, G27

2.00 – 3.00	**Parallel session 3**	
	3A: Historical Continuities of Stigma: The Work Ethic **Chair:** Dr Fiona Dukelow **Passing Stigma: Negotiations of welfare categories as street level governmentality**, Dr Tom Boland, Kenny Doyle & Dr Ray Griffin, Waterford Institute of Technology **'You can't always pretend to be buying a stamp': Experiences and Navigation of Stigma Among Irish Job-seekers**, Dr Philip Finn, Maynooth University **Stigma, shame and the forging of pathways to exclusion: A longitudinal qualitative study of the experiences of people with ME-CFS claiming social security benefits in Northern Ireland**, Dr Jay Wiggan, University of Edinburgh	Mary Ryan meeting room (opposite CACSSS Seminar Room G27)
	3B: Historical Continuities of Stigma: Lone Parents **Chair:** Dr Robert Bolton **Nesting and Gaming: how lone parents are stigmatized in contemporary Irish welfare policy**, Dr Mary Murphy, Maynooth University (by Skype) **Shameful Crisis: Lone Parenting in Ireland During the Great Recession**, Dr Clara Fischer, University College Dublin	CACSSS Seminar Room, ORB, G27
3.00 – 3.15	Coffee	CACSSS Seminar Room, ORB, G27 – social area outside
3.15 – 4.45	**Parallel session 4**	
	4A: Destigmas and Restigmas **Chair:** Dr Robert Bolton **Framing and Shaming: The 2017 Welfare Cheats Cheat Us All Campaign**, Dr Martin J. Power & Professor Eoin Devereux, University of Limerick **"Protests will not build houses…" A critical analysis of young activists' contribution to the Irish Housing Movement**, Becci Jeffers, University College Cork	CACSSS Seminar Room, ORB, G27

	'Hope will suck it in' Narratives of Resilience among African migrant women, Carol Ballantine (PhD Researcher), National University of Ireland, Galway **De-contextualising madness and distress; a critical consideration of anti-stigma initiatives and recovery narratives in Ireland**, Lydia Sapouna, University College Cork	
	4B: Navigating Stigma **Chair:** Joe Whelan **A feminist exploration of experiences of and responses to classed and gendered stigma among women who claim means-tested benefits**, Nancy Evans (PhD Candidate), University of Liverpool **Incapacity-related benefit claimants: welfare dependency or welfare resilience?**, Uisce Jordan, Edge Hill University **Stigma or Starve: The Experience of Food Bank Use in the UK**, Alan Connolly (PhD Candidate), Lancaster University	Mary Ryan meeting room (opposite CACSSS Seminar Room G27)

PANEL ABSTRACTS

PANEL 1A - CONTEMPORARY WELFARE IMAGINARIES

Chair: Joe Whelan

What do social welfare systems think?

Dr Tom Boland and Dr Ray Griffin, Waterford Institute of Technology

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Abstract: Portraits of the small and large cruelties of contemporary systems are now familiar (Brodkin, 2014; Marsten, 2005, Nørup, 2018, Dywer, 2018, Boland and Griffin, 2015). But it is not enough to know a social welfare system by its fruits. Studies that explore the incivility and harm of the outcomes of active labour market, conditionality, and work first policies suggest that the good sense of the mid-part of the twentieth centuries fordist welfare systems has turned nasty, has descended into a resentment industry- an uncontrollably hurtful Heath-Robinson machine of problem populations, and sacrificial tonics.

Here we explore the dismissed or critiqued voice of the policy maker to consider what social welfare systems think. This paper sets out to study the social life of a policy document, specifically, *Pathways to Work* policy (2012-15), following theoretical innovations elsewhere to attempt to understand what it means to live and think like a welfare system.

By thinking like a market (Callon, 1998; Mirowski, 2007; Muniesa, 2007), we explore how the state has redesigned govern-*mentality*. In this way we aspire to unpick why the state has kneaded the unemployed into job seekers, why rather than protecting the vulnerable it now acutely discriminates against them, and how these transformations are incarnated in policy as the virility the dynamism of labour market. In short, we show how the state has transformed the unemployed into pliant raw material for the postmodern post-work labour market, and in doing so the social welfare system now lives and thinks like a *market maker*, the curious character encountered in anthropological studies of markets- the carnival barker, the pimp, the shills in a three card monte set-up, and the more savoury middle-men of stockbrokers, import agents, auctioneers who encourage, cajole, wheedle and manoeuvre people into a market, even against their best interests.

JobPath and the Institutionalisation of the Welfare Imaginary

Kenny Doyle (PhD Candidate), Waterford Institute of Technology

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Abstract: Drawing on and adapting Pat Carlen's (2008) notion of Imaginary Penalities this paper will examine how Welfare Imaginaries are institutionally enacted and consequently justified based on erroneous conceptions of both unemployment and unemployed people which are informed by negative political and media discourses. The key aspect of the institutionalised Welfare Imaginary is that of the individualisation of responsibility for unemployment and the rejection of explanations relating to social structure, the existing labour market or the wider economy in general. As well as this such imaginaries are evident in the means by which such systems justify themselves and measure their levels of success or failure. Welfare Imaginaries are thus fictive governing rationalities which are used to legitimise and sustain a system which is founded on faulty logic. Accordingly interventions under work first active labour market policies are generally focussed on acting upon and changing the behaviours and actions of the individual. Such practices allow for the stigmatisation and proletarianisation of unemployed people who are ultimately deemed to be to blame if they are unsuccessful in the task of getting into work. This paper will consider the example of the JobPath program which aims to 'augment and compliment- but not replace' existing social welfare services. Operating on a payment by results basis two companies (Seetec and Turas Nua) offer personal employment advisors to unemployed individuals who are mandated to engage under pain of sanctions. Using both primary qualitative data gathered from interviews with JobPath participants as well as secondary data from media and political sources this paper will analyse the operation of JobPath as well as discussing the various methods of justification put forward by its proponents in an attempt to make claims of its success.

PANEL 1B – STIGMA, GOVERNANCE AND CONTROL

Chair: Dr Rosie Meade

Crafting the society of control: Exploring Scottish child welfare policy in a neoliberal context

David McKendrick, Glasgow Caledonian University

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Abstract: This paper explores contemporary Scottish child welfare policy and locates it in a neoliberal context. The existing national practice model known by the acronym GIRFEC (Getting it Right for Every Child) has been a feature of policy and legislation since early 2000. Its latest iteration is notable for two developments, one being the change in the threshold for state intervention in family life to the notion of *wellbeing* and secondly, the appointment of a *state guardian* (known as the named person scheme) for every child in Scotland.

Drawing from the concept of late modernity (Parton, 2006) I argue that these advances constitute a net widening approach that seeks to universalise state involvement in family life. The concept of the *society of control* (Deleuze, 1992) is utilised as a method of exploring how the named person scheme can be viewed as a universal surveillance mechanism which seeks to preserve and promote neoliberal hegemony.

In the Scottish context the named person scheme is a vehicle for neoliberal state control. The scheme is underpinned by notions of normative compliance resulting in social work practice becoming distanced from its social change agenda, instead working *on* families rather than *with* families.

Doing the dirty work of neoliberal governmentality? "Welfare Fraud" policy in the Irish Social Protection system 2011-2014

Stephen Gaffney (PhD Candidate) and Professor Michelle Millar, National University of Ireland Galway

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Abstract: "Welfare fraud" has been repeatedly raised as a contentious issue by Irish politicians and the media over the past decade. During that same period, the Irish social protection system has undergone a process of retrenchment and reform that has left it with a more punitive workfarist orientation. Increased conditionality has been accompanied by a rapid increase in the use of sanctions against claimants (Boland & Griffin, 2016).

An examination of the literature suggests the Irish case is consistent with a pattern found across the Global North since the 1970s, wherein, neoliberal reformation of the welfare state has been legitimized by the stigmatisation of welfare recipients as fraudulent or otherwise undeserving of assistance. Following Tyler (2013: 9) this can be theorised as a process of "social abjection" which does "dirty work of neoliberal governmentality" via the construction of "symbolic and material scapegoats".

This paper approaches this topic on the level of policy discourse by critically engaging with two anti-fraud strategy documents enacted during the period 2011-2014. It applies a poststructuralist framework for policy analysis as developed by Carol Bacchi (2009) to identify the assumptions and silences underpinning these "practical texts" and thus challenge what they take for granted.

Practices inscribed in these documents predominantly problematise "fraud" as a premeditated and sophisticated activity undertaken by "rational actors" – absorbing or silencing alternative problematisations of "abuse" and "error". Little attention is afforded to representations of the problem which constitute it as internal to the welfare system and wider economic institutions – i.e. the ungenerosity of available supports and a lack of alternatives in the labour market. Furthermore, welfare claimants are constituted as subjects under constant surveillance, reinforcing the workfarist turn, but also potentially serving to undermine the legitimacy of the welfare system in the eyes of both claimants and wider society.

PANEL 2A – PRACTICE, PRACTITIONERS AND STIGMA

Chair: Lydia Sapouna

Risk, Blame and Stigma –Exploring the Impact of Moral Discourses, Managerialism and the 'Problem Family' Agenda on Multi Agency Professionals Attitudes, Decision Making and Responses towards 'Complex Youth' in the Republic of Ireland

Dr Tracey A Monson, Director - Daughter of Charity Child and Family Services

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Abstract: The paper will give an overview of the findings of a doctoral study exploring the perspectives of diverse multi agency professionals in the Republic of Ireland providing services to 'Complex Youth' (engaged in youth justice, child protection and other welfare services). The aims, objectives, methodology and findings of the study will be presented. The presentation will conclude with recommendations from the study for policy and practice.

Methodology:The study adopted a social constructionist standpoint and was qualitative in approach. Research methods used were semi structured interviews supported by vignettes with a range of 27 multi agency professionals including youth justice professionals within both statutory and voluntary services.

Findings: Findings were analysed using Bronfenbrenner's Bio Ecological Systems Framework (1999) to demonstrate that 'risk' permeates professional's attitudes, decision making and responses at all stages of the social ecology; at an individual practitioner level, a workplace level and at a wider multi agency level.

The lens of 'blame' becomes focused on 'problem families' and complex youth as members of these deficit families 'undeserving' of services. In the negotiation of risk in daily work, professionals were rendered silent, 'problem families' stigmatised and marginalised and the young person as a rights holder became invisible and absent from services.

Implications for Policy and Practice: Recommendations focus on implementing reflective mechanisms at a multi agency, organisational and individual practice level to identify the influence of moral discourses relating to 'problem' and 'troubled' families and how these arise as a consequence of the neo liberal welfare 'risk' agenda.

Re/Forming Irish Youth Work through Policy Framing and Shaming

Dr Sinead McMahon (Limerick Institute of Technology (Tipperary) and **Sasha Noonan** (Limerick Institute of Technology)

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Abstract: Youth work in Ireland is primarily provided by the voluntary sector. During the Celtic Tiger years the voluntary youth work sector experienced increased state funding and policy recognition as a valued and valuable welfare provision for young people. Published just before the economic crisis, the *National Development Plan 2007 – 2013: Transforming Ireland, A Better Quality of Life for All*, promised significant support for the sector. However, Irish youth work services experienced severe cuts during the austerity period and a plethora of reform initiatives have followed in the wake of austerity cuts. On the 9th May, 2018 Minister Katherine Zappone announced in the Dáil that the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) was 'managing the most significant reform of youth services ever undertaken'.

In this paper we explore how professional youth work has been problematized in policy discourse and we consider the use of shame as one governing mechanism in current re/form ambitions. We will draw on our recent doctoral studies research. Sinead will offer a poststructural policy analysis of the *Value for Money Review of Youth Programmes* (DCYA, 2014) looking at how youth work and youth workers are to some extent outed and shamed as risky, untrustworthy, unaccountable and underperforming in recent policy discourse. Sasha will draw on her empirical, narrative inquiry study with a group of youth workers about their perspectives on professional youth work and identity during this time of significant change.

With limited exception, contemporary Irish youth work lacks critical analysis in terms of neoliberal welfare reform and its effects on practitioners. Our paper will contribute to critical welfare studies by exploring the shaming and undermining of one category of welfare worker – the professional youth worker.

PANEL 2B – STRUCTURE OF STIGMA

Chair: Becci Jeffers

Asylum Policy and Processes of 'Othering': Social Control under the Guise of Welfare Support and Provision

Dr Claire Dorrity, Dr Jacqui O Riordan and Mike Fitzgibbon, University College Cork

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Abstract: Difference exists within the economic structures of welfare and nowhere is this more evident than in the 'outsider' status implicit in asylum policy in Ireland. Since the establishment of the system of Direct Provision (DP) in 2000, asylum seekers have been the subject of punitive and restrictive mechanisms of social control that have excluded, segregated, stigmatised, and set asylum seekers apart from the rest of society. This has been engineered through state sanctioned policies of group-based exclusion and a clustering of disadvantage, which has served to stigmatise and dehumanise asylum seekers. This exclusion has been justified on the grounds of security, the welfare of non-status migrant populations, and as a means of accelerating the speed at which asylum applications are processed (Conlon and Gill, 2013). It has been propagated through a language of deserving and undeserving, technologies of governance and policing, and a problematisation of asylum seekers which has given rise to a range of deterrence mechanisms in the policy arena. Within this context, risk factors are part of a broader picture relating to the actions of particular state institutions where asylum seekers experience dual burdens; that of visibility (as groups reliant on state welfare and support and as such, often the subjects of negative media attention and political hostility) and invisibility (as individuals whose psychological, social, political, and humanitarian needs are often neglected).

This paper draws attention to the standarised practices of state control and the restrictions these mechanisms of state exclusion place on those seeking asylum. It calls into question the actions of state institutions, and particularly those directly involved in the reception and administration of asylum policy. It also highlights forces that have led to the initiation and perpetuation of stigmatising processes through control and supervision and makes a distinct relationship between welfare, institutionalisation, and stigma.

How Status Ambiguity Generates Apathy towards Welfare Retrenchment: Shame, Social Housing and Urban Regeneration.

Dr Lorcan Byrne, Limerick Institute of Technology

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Abstract: This paper presents qualitative interview data from participants residing on multiple sides of social class boundaries in Limerick city. Limerick has an urban landscape characterised by sharp delineations between social and private housing estates, further socio-economic divisions, and crucially for this paper the distribution of statuses across the city. Using Bourdieu's concept of 'symbolic capital' (1984) the study contextualises contemporary, local narratives on class boundaries in the city, and highlights how poverty, shame, stigma, and often disgust, are evoked (sometimes in subtly symbolic forms) in the social construction of the city's status hierarchy. The paper also looks to historical and literary accounts that chart cultures of class conflict in the city. The paper provides an account of the emergence, institutionalisation and reproduction of the symbolic boundaries that make social class in the city socially meaningful and materially significant. The key focus of the paper is the issue of ambiguous statuses, and argues for a need to theorize about this ambiguity. The paper then highlights how status ambiguity often generates apathy towards welfare retrenchment in this localized urban scene. A large urban regeneration project has been ongoing in the city for over a decade, and this regeneration process has several times make clear how class stigmatisation informs policy formation. Drawing from scholars such as Tyler (2013) on Social Abjection, Skeggs (1997) on Respectability and Wacquant (2008) on Advanced Marginality, the paper argues that navigating class boundaries is a tricky task of overcoming Status Ambiguity. Status Ambiguity entails a search for solidity in a liquid, anomic, unstable social context where subjects of the city enter fields where an evaluative medium between respectability and disgrace is often an unwinnable task. The city demands of its most disadvantaged and marginalised members what it rarely gives them the opportunity to acquire: Respectability. Thus the status hierarchy is both institutionalised and reproduced across time and within the culture of the city.

Neoliberalism, Misrecognition, and Maldistribution: Health and Welfare Inequities in Ireland.

Dr Angela Flynn, University College Cork

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Abstract: The neoliberal approach to social and health related policies in Ireland could be seen to exacerbate health inequities. This approach to welfare and provision of care champions the role of the individual, permitting the state to relinquish its distributive responsibilities, all the while couching the ideology within the nomenclature of consumer choice and individualism. A resultant schism has formed between sections of society, amplifying the pre-existing

inequalities and reducing levels of social cohesion and social capital. The vulnerable, sick or older person in Ireland finds themselves at risk of becoming invisible within the modern social order. The subsequent misrecognition of the needs of these individuals results in injustice, humiliation, neglect and disrespect.

Methodology: Through an examination of a range of social and theoretical literature, this paper explores the concepts of redistribution and recognition as approaches to health inequalities and social injustice, and will examine how the politics of difference and the politics of equality play out in the context of Irish healthcare. This discussion will be framed within the frameworks of health inequalities research and social justice.

Results: The sustained denegration of the value of reciprocity between the citizen and the welfare state under fire, expedites the social exclusion of the vulnerable citizens and strips away layers of social cohesion. The status of the sick or unwell person in Ireland is altered as they become a socially constructed collective, with a diminishing entitlement to distributive justice, under a cloak of invisibility that renders recognition impossible

Discussion: Social justice provides an ideological framework on which to restructure redistributive policy so as to counter the hegemony of neoliberalism. It is vital that the concepts of full recognition and distributive justice are examined and applied to health and related policy.

PANEL 3A – HISTORICAL CONTINUITIES OF STIGMA: THE WORK ETHIC

Chair: Dr Fiona Dukelow

Passing Stigma: Negotiations of welfare categories as street level governmentality

Dr Tom Boland, Kenny Doyle and Dr Ray Griffin, Waterford Institute of Technology

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Abstract: Following Goffman, processes of stigmatisation are not automatic but negotiated by diverse forms of 'impression management' in an attempt to 'save face'. Much research on welfare recipients, including our own, records how the unemployed displace stigma onto other service users, positioning other(ed) claimants as the 'real unemployed' or 'scroungers'. Theoretically we approach these displacements as interpellations, following Althusser, but more particularly Butler's adaptation of this concept to describe the psychic economy whereby subjects are formed precisely via attachment to discourses which they disavow. Arguably, these displacements are functional for the governmentalising processes of generating jobseeking, with a latent function of reinforcing activation policies. Drawing on long-form biographical interviews, we trace how Irish individuals negotiate the stigma of being Welfare Claimants, in welfare offices and informal social interactions and in job interviews – how they attempt to 'pass' as good JobSeekers and thereby pass stigma on to others. Curiously, many welfare claimants suggest governmental interventions for distinguishing and discriminating between the deserving and undeserving. Beyond this, on less secure methodological ground, we examine how street-level welfare officers describe new processes and architectures of activation as modes of good governance, but via an implicit logic of stigmatisation.

'You can't always pretend to be buying a stamp': Experiences and Navigation of Stigma Among Irish Job-seekers

Dr Philip Finn, Maynooth University

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Abstract: Fundamental to the experience of unemployment is not only the management of material hardships but coping with the psychological deprivations it brings. The moral obligation to work is ubiquitous and serves as the lodestar around which income, status, recognition and identity are distributed (Frayne 2015) while its absence among the able-bodied of working age denotes a deficiency justifying social opprobrium. Participation in paid employment provides one of the central bases for the contemporary articulation of historically derived classifications of 'deservingness'. It is evident in political and media rhetoric, such as Taoiseach Leo Varadkar's recent valorisation of workers 'who get up early in the morning', as well as everyday recourses to anecdotal 'scroungers'. The moral power of which is implicit

within, and simultaneously reinforced by, an intensification of work-related conditionality now attached to receipt of Jobseeker payments in Ireland. This paper explores the lived experience of welfare stigma among Irish job-seekers within this adolescent activation regime. The research is based on 42 interviews conducted with job-seekers, discouraged job-seekers and lone parent job-seekers in County Kildare as they navigate the everyday realities of conditionality and unemployment. Drawing on Baumberg (2016), the paper identifies three categories of stigma in operation: personal stigma articulating one's own internalised shame; the recognition of wider society's stigmatisation of benefit claimants; and the 'claims stigma' involved in street-level interactions. It further highlights how job-seekers respond to stigma through defensive tactics of 'othering', avoidance or politically tinged rejections of dominant characterisations of welfare. It is argued that while stigma is not ubiquitous within the experience of unemployment it is nonetheless an invasive force which devalues potential positives of the experience through its reminder of a loss; that of paid work.

Stigma, shame and the forging of pathways to exclusion: A longitudinal qualitative study of the experiences of people with ME-CFS claiming social security benefits in Northern Ireland

Dr Jay Wiggan, University of Edinburgh

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Abstract: Drawing on two waves of qualitative in depth interviews undertaken with individuals with ME-CFS claiming social security benefits in Northern Ireland this paper uses an Episodic Disability Framework (EDF) analytical lens (O'Brien, 2008; Boyd, 2012) to examine how a society saturated in a productivist work ethic and the attendant practices of state welfare institutions organised around the temporalities of 'clock time' is disturbed by the unpredictable rhythms of people with chronic fluctuating illness. The dissonance this creates is experienced by participants as a stigmatized and shaming process of triple exclusion with participants reporting institutional (lack of adequate healthcare and/or access to appropriate benefits), social (disbelief and lack of understanding from family, friends and/or employers) and financial (limited income and reliance on informal networks) exclusion. Experience of negotiating interlocking pathways and the attendant personal, social and institutional stigma while managing a chronic fluctuating condition was, perhaps not surprisingly, dealt with in diverse ways. When faced with exclusionary and shaming practices some participants engaged in collective and/or individual contestation of the views and practices of state institutions as a means to mitigate one or more forms of exclusion. Other participants however withdrew further into social isolation as a means to avoid circumstances likely to aggravate stigmatization. The findings imply that dominant imaginaries of welfare, work and (dis)ability in Northern Ireland struggle to accommodate the everyday lived experience of people with chronic fluctuating health conditions. This poses the question as to what socio-cultural changes and policy reforms could improve upon this situation.

PANEL 3B – HISTORICAL CONTINUITIES OF STIGMA: LONE PARENTS

Chair: Dr Robert Bolton

Nesting and gaming: how lone parents are stigmatized in contemporary Irish welfare policy

Dr Mary Murphy, Maynooth University

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Abstract: This paper explores incidences of stigma and shame relating to lone parents in the contemporary Irish 'welfarist imaginary' and contextualizes recent post austerity social policy and change social against historical Irish legacies of treatment of lone parents. In particular it explores how new discourses of stigmatization, in particular accusations of 'nesting' on welfare and 'gaming' public housing have recently developed to construct contemporary notions of deserving and un-deservingness. An historical lens shows Ireland actually pioneered harsh forms of both employment and housing conditionality for lone parents. Probing a deep-seated ambiguity concerning lone parents in Ireland the paper examines the gendered knowledge underpinning recent policy. This draws attention to how underlying assumptions and rational economic frames of predominantly male and middle class policy officials are erroneously applied to understand the reality of lone parent's employment and housing 'choices' (Wright 2012). In the past conditional regimes for lone parents were justified in terms of moral reformation for first time mothers and avoiding moral contagion of mothers with subsequent pregnancies. In contemporary times in the case of employment lone parents are problematized as working part-time and 'nesting' on in-work-benefits, and in the case of homelessness, lone parents who prioritise the security of tenure embedded in social housing are accused of 'gaming' the system. The paper draws on policy documents as well as qualitative primary research examining lone parent's concerns about growing welfare conditionality in employment policy and homeless policy. Having theorised Irish welfare conditionality in both historical and international contexts the paper focuses on recent conditional changes for lone parents in activation and social housing policy. The focus then shifts to the nature of gendered knowledge and assumptions underpinning recent policy and examines how lone parents who deviate from policy expectations are publicly scorned

Shameful Crisis: Lone Parenting in Ireland during the Great Recession

(By Skype) **Dr Clara Fischer**, University College Dublin

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Abstract: Recent years have witnessed an increasing problematisation of Ireland's historic policy approach to women, reproduction and sexuality. Part of this has entailed a focus on women who became pregnant out of wedlock, both in terms of institutionalization and separation from their children. While such interrogation of Ireland's past continues, the contemporary context of lone parenting, particularly by single mothers, has largely remained under-examined. In this paper, I will redress this analytical and political oversight by presenting the experiences of lone parents in Ireland. Building on previous work on the politics of shame, I will develop a new analysis of such experiences by focusing particularly on what role – if any – shame has played in the construction of lone parents in Ireland since the beginning of the economic crisis. My presentation will draw on a survey that captures the responses of over 350 single parents in Ireland and their experiences of shame. As such, my presentation will provide a unique intersectional approach to shame, by focusing on gender and class in the shame experience, and will shed light on the impact of austerity as a policy response to Ireland's economic woes during the crisis.

PANEL 4A – DESTIGMAS AND RESTIGMAS

Chair: Dr Robert Bolton

FRAMING AND SHAMING: The 2017 Welfare Cheats <u>Cheats Us All</u> Campaign

Dr Martin J. Power and Dr Eoin Devereux, University of Limerick.

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Abstract: Our paper evidences how discourses concerning social welfare 'fraud' are created and disseminated. Using qualitative content analysis, informed by a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach, we examine the production of hegemonic anti-welfare discourses used in the Irish Department of Social Protection's 2017 Welfare Cheats <u>Cheat Us All</u> Campaign (original emphasis). Building on our earlier work (see Devereux and Power, 2019) which focused on media coverage of the 2017 campaign and the emergence of a counter-hegemonic discourse in online and other settings, this paper investigates a Corpus consisting of pre-planning memos; the campaign's press release; and promotional materials used in the campaign. We pay particular attention to the internal debates within the Department of Social Protection concerning the linguistic and discursive choices to be made in explaining social welfare 'fraud' to the general public. Our analysis evidences the ways in which this campaign drew from an anti-welfare imaginary which has a long history. We demonstrate how the campaign rehearsed the familiar 'disgust' discourses of 'welfare fraud', welfare recipients, poverty and unemployment by the Neo Liberal State. We evidence the spurious nature of the data being used to exaggerate social welfare 'fraud' and we also note the particular political context - Leo Varadkar's bid for the role of leader of Fine Gael - in which this particular campaign occurred.

"Protests will not build houses…" A critical analysis of young activists' contribution to the Irish Housing Movement

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Abstract: In response to debates surrounding the eviction of housing activists from a North Frederick Street squat, Taoiseach Leo Varadakar stated, "Protests will not build houses…but the Government will. The private sector will also build houses" (Leaders' Questions, 18th September 2018). The events surrounding North Frederick Street brought into question the respectability of the protesters and, more specifically, what is considered reasonable protest in a "property-based welfare system" (Norris, 2016). Over the past four years, the occupation of vacant buildings has become a popular protest repertoire for housing activists in response to a deepening housing and homelessness crisis. Events like "Home Sweet Home" and "Take Back the City" have worked to highlight and critique the failure of the government to use vacant

state-owned and private properties to house the growing homeless population. These actions are one feature of a broader Irish housing movement which is composed of numerous actors, organisations, and repertoires, the radical potential of which is still unfolding. This paper examines young activist contributions to this movement and their responses to the housing crisis in Ireland. It focuses particularly on young activists' attempts to modify, mitigate, and, in many cases, dismantle contemporary failures in Irish housing policy. Drawing on a series of protest events and encounters - from the Bolt Hostel and Apollo House to North Frederick Street - the paper aims to interrogate young activists' role in mobilising the public, the reception of their actions in a hostile society and, finally, the radical potential of housing activists' critiques to revive and reshape housing policy. The purpose of this paper, more specifically, articulates why protest and protest repertoires matter.

'Hope will suck it in': Narratives of resilience among African migrant women in Ireland

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Abstract: This paper draws on my PhD research on the impacts of lifetime violence against women (VAW) on African migrant women in Ireland. It identifies two clear identity narratives in the research: that of the resilient survivor (Taylor, 2018) and the good immigrant (Razack, 1999). It places these identity narratives in the context of intersecting patriarchal, racial and welfare stigmas in contemporary Ireland.

The paper will describe the social construction of black immigrant female bodies in the context of Ireland's 2004 citizenship referendum as an instance of "stigma from above" (Scambler, 2018). It will present a narrative analysis of individual interviews and FGDs with African migrant women in Ireland on the subject of VAW. Through this analysis, I will describe the adaptations that participants make in the context of stigmatisation, and the impacts of these adaptations on help-seeking and network-building behaviours, and the relationship of participants with the Irish welfare state.

The paper finds that, against a well-defined public imaginary of migrant women as rational welfare 'skivers' (Gaffney and Millar, 2019), research participants actively avoid interaction with institutions of social protection in the state, and reproduce the stigmatisation of others who depend on welfare.

De-contextualising madness and distress; a critical consideration of anti-stigma initiatives and recovery narratives in Ireland

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Abstract: Since the ground-breaking work of Erving Goffman, the concept of stigma has become a way to talk about mental health systems as well as a way to understand and explain the marginalisation of people with 'mental health problems' in society. On that basis, the eradication of stigma associated with 'mental illness' has been heralded as a key strategy to counteract social exclusion of the 'mentally ill' and to improve access to mental health care. As part of this strategy in Ireland, as elsewhere, we have seen the emergence of mental health awareness and anti-stigma campaigns, including the sharing of personal stories of recovery, resilience and hope.

Focusing on the Irish context, this paper considers what is lost through current uses of anti-stigma campaigns and the sharing of stories of recovery and resilience within mental health systems. I will argue that such campaigns are based on a narrow, de-politised view of stigma, as a set of beliefs and attitudes, and informed by 'an illness like any other' approach which fails to move beyond dominant biomedical frameworks. This view de-contextualises distress by ignoring key factors that drive people mad: injustice, inequality, lack of human rights, powerlessness and shame. In other words, the current anti-stigma narrative fails to acknowledge how stigma is produced by the very institutions that claim to eradicate it. As part of this discussion, I will specifically consider the use and abuse of service-users/survivors stories as a core element of anti-stigma campaigns. Drawing on the Canadian 'Recovering our stories' project (Costa et al., 2012), a collaborative paper on service-user stories (O' Donnell, Sapouna and Brosnan, 2019) and my academic/activist experience, I will argue that stories of recovery, hope and resilience are becoming a commodity servicing primarily the interests of dominant systems without changing their culture. Paradoxically, such stories create and perpetuate conditions of stigmatisation and shame. I will conclude by exploring the complexities of adopting a broader view of stigma when we talk about madness and distress.

PANEL 4B – NAVIGATING STIGMA

Chair: Joe Whelan

A feminist exploration of experiences of and responses to classed and gendered stigma among women who claim means-tested benefits

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Abstract: In the context of unprecedented welfare reform, alongside divisive policy narratives and media depictions which continually stigmatise benefit recipients, examining the lived experiences of those at the receiving end of such interventions is particularly pertinent. As revealed by feminist policy analyses, such shifts disproportionately impact on women, whose position within the welfare state is unique in terms of the gendered relationship between welfare, paid work and unpaid domestic labour. Concurrently, feminist research has also highlighted the gender politics at play in stigmatising narratives and representations of those who claim benefits, where gendered ideals of femininity, respectability and deservingness are increasingly attached to labour market participation, while the unpaid labour of care is devalued. Nonetheless, there is an absence of empirical research which specifically explores how classed and gendered stigma plays out and is negotiated in the lives of women who claim benefits. Theoretically, this project utilises Goffman's (1963) micro-level conceptualisation of stigma, in that it examines the manifestations of and responses to stigma in women's everyday lives. However, it also draws upon contemporary critiques of Goffman, which rightly illuminate the broader structural power relations at play in the creation and persistence of stigma towards certain groups (Tyler and Slater, 2018; Scambler, 2018). Indeed, as well as investigating micro-level everyday experiences, my research draws upon a feminist political economy approach to contextualise classed and gendered stigmatisation within a broader structural and historical framework, understanding how they are shaped and reinforced by class and gender politics in the current era of austerity and welfare reform. My research uses in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 25 working-age women who claim means-tested social security benefits, accessed via a women's organisation in Merseyside. My conference paper will discuss my research context and some emergent findings from my data collection.

Incapacity-related benefit claimants: welfare dependency or welfare resilience?

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Abstract: Austerity-related changes to the welfare state have had a turbulent impact on the provisions available for those unable to work. Using preliminary data from a doctoral study employing the Free Association Narrative Interviewing (FANI) method, this paper contributes to theoretical gaps in literature by exploring the lived experiences of men with

mental health difficulties who are in receipt of welfare assistance. It will highlight the apparatus and mechanisms which continue to underpin and construct 'dependency' as a stigmatising social problem.

The FANI method sits within the psycho-social interdisciplinary field, simultaneously conceptualizing human subjects as the products of their own unique psychic worlds as well as a shared social world (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013). The method enables people's complicated lives to be both situated and made meaningful in psychosocial terms. This paper will show how the FANI method has been utilised as a tool to consider the everyday lived experience of welfare for individuals who face two stigmatising characteristics; a mental health condition and long-term benefit receipt.

An in-depth exploration of the narratives gained will be considered, alongside the context of changing welfare state paradigms stressing individual responsibility and conditionality, and of societal pressures, such as increasing poverty and social exclusion. Preliminary findings include insights of participants' experiences of and navigation around issues such as 'deservingness', homelessness, mental health and drug use.

A key part of this research is to bring an awareness of the, often harsh, consequences that these individuals face to a wider audience, thus increasing the understanding of the lived experiences of a marginalised and stigmatised group. Findings from this research will be designed to inform policy makers, those working within social care and the wider public, ultimately becoming a further contributing resource to a new research and practice agenda.

Stigma or Starve: The Experience of Food Bank Use in the UK

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Abstract: An estimated 8.4m people in the UK are 'food insecure', 20% of the population live below the poverty line and food bank use has increased nearly 400% since 2012, with up to 1.3m people now using them annually. This paper will highlight that food bank use engenders feelings related to both stigma and gratitude among those accessing them. Analysis of interviews which I conducted with food bank staff, people using food banks and other stakeholders throughout the Liverpool City Region shows that issues arose frequently. Those using food banks often expressed discomfort about the experience as well as about the reasons they were there and often felt that private charity was an inadequate response to poverty. On the other hand the setting (usually a religious community centre or church) the personal welcome, refreshments and the transaction of the food parcel seemed to put the person accessing the food bank in a position where they felt that gratitude ought to be expressed, or criticism qualified by reference to gratitude. The factors which led to these feelings among people receiving charitable food assistance will be explored, as well as the social sigma stigma surrounding the experience of poverty itself. I will discuss food bank practices as well as the current government policy in the UK in the context of individual (as opposed to structural) views of poverty. Finally this will lead to a discussion of the ways in which this is applicable

to an Irish context and how similar issues are dealt with in Ireland. My conclusions recognise the complexities and contradictions inherent in food banking, and charitable giving generally, in that, while such organisations are striving to aid people in difficult situations, their efforts are inevitably affected by wider social and political forces.

Delegate List

Carol	Ballantine
Aaron	Bates
Tom	Boland
Lorcan	Byrne
Conor	Cashman
Leanne	Caulfield
Molly	Collins
Alan	Connolly
Joan	Cronin.
Annie	Cummins
Nergis	Dama
Daniel	Delaney
Angela	Desmond
Eoin	Devereux
Nicola	Dineen
Fiona	Donson
Claire	Dorrity
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Philip	Finn
Joe	Finnerty
Clara	Fischer
Mike	Fitzgibbon
Mike	Fitzgibbon
Ann	Fitzpatrick
Angela	Flynn
Eamonn	Furey
Stephen	Gaffney
Aisling	Gallagher
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Donal	Guerin
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Tracey	Monson
Tracey	Monson
Darragh	Mulcahy
Ray	Murnane
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Sasha	Noonan
Diarmuid	O Driscoll
Thomas	O Driscoll
Mark	Omahony
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Jacqui	O'Riordan
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