

Impact case study (REF3b)

Institution: Anglia Ruskin University
Unit of Assessment: 36 Communication, Cultural and Media Studies
Title of case study: Ethnicity and Popular Music: the Irish Diaspora In England
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>In 2011-12, Campbell engaged in a range of media activities and public talks to enable the effective sharing of his research on second-generation Irish musicians in England. These activities disseminated new insights to the public, increasing understanding of the experience and expressive cultures of England's Irish, and informing public debates on this topic. The activities comprised three strands:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Articles and interviews in the UK and Irish media generating public responses and awards; ii. Public talks increasing public understanding and generating public responses; iii. Series Advisor role on TV documentary series generating public responses and informing public debates. <p>Impact is evidenced through reach of dissemination, as well as audience comments, letters, online posts, blogs, social media, and awards.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>The research on which Campbell's engagement activities drew was conducted at Anglia Ruskin (ARU) between 2003-2011, when he was first a Lecturer (2003-5) and then a Senior Lecturer (2005-12); he is now Reader. The research was funded by an AHRC Research Leave Award (£13,625; 2004) and two competitive sabbaticals he was awarded at ARU. Campbell's research produced a single-authored monograph, <i>'Irish Blood, English Heart': Second-Generation Irish Musicians in England</i> (Cork University Press, 2011). This monograph is the first book-length account of the second-generation Irish in England, and the first full-length study of popular music making among the Irish diaspora. It challenges the invisibility of the second-generation Irish in accounts of ethnicity in England, and explores the complexity and diversity of second-generation Irish identities and experience. Previous accounts have tended to view this generation as an indistinguishable part of the host population. Through extensive archival research of print and audio-visual media, as well as conducting original interviews with the key musicians (including Kevin Rowland, Shane MacGowan, Cáit O'Riordan and Johnny Marr), Campbell's book developed a more nuanced approach, locating the English-born offspring of Irish migrants in a hyphenated Irish-Englishness marked by hybridity or 'in-betweenness'. The book explores the work of second-generation Irish creative figures from this 'in-between' perspective, whilst addressing the diverse ways in which this generation shaped popular music in England. Existing accounts have neglected to consider this generation's cultural agency, stressing the impact of the host culture on the migrant group whilst overlooking the ways in which the second-generation helped shape the host culture. Campbell's research demonstrated this achievement via detailed case studies of three high-profile projects: Kevin Rowland and Dexys Midnight Runners, Shane MacGowan and The Pogues, and Morrissey/Marr and The Smiths. His work mapped the diverse 'routes' pursued by second-generation Irish musicians, illuminating their different styles and personas, and discrete social locales (in Birmingham, London and Manchester). Critiquing accounts that see such musicians as either 'Irish' or 'English', Campbell showed how second-generation Irish music-making is a complex cultural process that has exceeded both Irish ethnicity and English assimilation, and points to an often intricate accommodation of Anglo-Irish issues (marked by 'in-betweenness'). Campbell's work thus detailed the complexities of Irish-English identities, shedding light on the creative dynamics that have emerged from this context, and complicating nationalist narratives.</p>
<p>3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sean Campbell, <i>'Irish Blood, English Heart': Second-Generation Irish Musicians in England</i> (Cork University Press, 2011). This is included in REF2. This book, which was funded by an AHRC Research Leave Award, was described by Simon Frith, the leading figure in popular music studies, as a 'a subtle and sophisticated scholarly contribution to popular music and Irish studies' as well as 'a fine and exciting account of how music can be used to make sense of the complexity, anxiety and exhilaration of contemporary cultural identities' (http://www.corkuniversitypress.com/product_p/9781859184615.html). <p>The journal <i>Popular Music History</i> praised the book as 'an excellent piece of scholarship' and 'a major contribution to popular music scholarship' (http://www.corkuniversitypress.com/ReviewsList.asp?ProductCode=9781859184905&Reviews=Y). The book's esteem was underlined by the organization of a conference at Northumbria University</p>

that was (in the words of its organizers) ‘inspired by’ the publication of Campbell’s book. Having an academic conference convened around the book is evidence of its quality and esteem. Campbell presented the keynote lecture at the conference, which took place on 27-28 June 2012 (<http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/sd/academic/sass/events/sassevents/irishmusbrit>).

4. Details of the impact

i. Articles and interviews in mainstream media generating public responses and awards

Campbell published an accessible 2000-word article on his research for the *Irish Times* (2 April 2011) (readership: 100,000), and gave a series of interviews on his research to other media, including: a two page interview in *Hot Press* (14 April 2011), Ireland’s leading music magazine; an interview in the *Irish Independent* (29 July 2011) (readership: 134,000); a 25 minute interview on the *Dave Fanning Show* (RTÉ 2 FM, 23 April 2011) (audience: 100,000); a 10 minute interview on the prestigious arts programme, *Culture File* (RTÉ Lyric FM, 2 April 2011); interviews on *Today with Pat Kenny* (RTÉ Radio 1, 25 April 2011) (audience: 70,000), *The Irish Abroad* (RTÉ Radio 1, 26 June 2011), *Arts Extra* (Radio Ulster, 11 April 2011), *Alison Curtis Show* (Phantom FM, 30 March 2011), *Tom Dunne* (Newstalk, 5 April 2011), and *Made in Britain* (BBC Radio Four, 12 June 2012) (audience: 400,000). These activities generated positive public responses via social media, including Tweets praising Campbell’s research as ‘fascinating’ (see Section 5.i). Campbell also spoke about his research on the BBC Radio Four programme, *Follow-Up Albums* (17 May 2012) (audience: 1.1 million), which focused on Dexys Midnight Runners’ *Don’t Stand Me Down*, an album that Campbell analysed in his book. The programme generated positive public responses via social media, with Tweets describing Campbell’s research as ‘incredibly eye-opening’ (see Section 5.i). Moreover, when Dexys released a new album in 2012, members of the public used social media to connect the record’s themes with those of Campbell’s book (see Section 5.ii), showing that the book had enriched appreciation of culture. The research presented in Campbell’s book was also discussed in the mainstream media, demonstrating the transition of his work into the public realm. In this context, positive accounts of his book appeared in the *Sunday Times* (Ireland) (1 May 2011) (readership: 108,000), *Irish Times* (2 December 2011) (readership: 100,000), *MOJO* (August 2011) (readership: 240,000), *Belfast Telegraph* (19 June 2011), *Irish Independent* (11 June 2011), *Irish Examiner* (14 May 2011), *Sunday Business Post* (1 May 2011) and the *Irish Post* (30 April 2011). Non-academic blogs and websites also engaged with Campbell’s book, noting that his research was ‘perspective-shifting’ and addressed a topic that ‘has had sparse attention ... until the arrival of this book’ (see Section 5.iii). These online responses generated Tweets and Re-Tweets (see Section 5.iii). In addition, fans of the musicians addressed in the book (as well as some of the musicians themselves) engaged in discussions of the book on websites, showing that Campbell’s research had increased appreciation of culture (see Section 5.iv). The engagements with Campbell’s research outlined above had the effect of increasing the level of public debate about second-generation Irish experience and creative expression in England. The public significance of Campbell’s work was underlined when his book was named Music Book of the Year in the *Sunday Times* (Ireland) (4 Dec 2011) and in the *Hot Press Annual* (2012), a rare accolade for an academic text. This serves as evidence of the fact that Campbell’s research was registered and praised in the public realm.

ii. Public talks increasing public understanding and generating public responses

Campbell presented his research in a range of public forums, including at Headingley LitFest (8 March 2013), in a talk co-organised by the Irish Arts Foundation, an Irish community organisation in Leeds. The talk took place at the Headingley Enterprise and Arts Centre, and was advertised in local media, such as the *Yorkshire Evening Post* (6 Mar 2013), attracting 44 attendees. The organisers collated audience comments, all of which were positive, and showed that Campbell’s talk had increased understanding of the experience and expressive cultures of the Irish diaspora in England. The full comments (available from the HEI on request) include the following:

- ‘This evening explored the ambivalence & ambiguity of the immigrant’s child in a very thought-provoking way. An intellectual journey that makes you review the lyrics of many songs!! Great stuff’;
- ‘V. interesting – look forward to reading the book. Interesting insight into Anglo-Irish relations’;
- ‘Really excellent explanation through music of how it feels to be second generation Irish in England, a side I as an English person had little knowledge of. Very enlightening towards understanding’;
- ‘An entertaining & knowledgeable talk about how 2nd generation Irish musicians felt about

Impact case study (REF3b)

- being here and what they did with their music to express their feelings. I learned a great deal’;
- ‘Thoroughly interesting and absorbing delivered by one who has researched in depth. Raised a lot of issues which look as if they are going to be pursued further by members of the audience, excellent!’

Campbell’s talk at Headingley also generated online responses, such as blog entries, which show evidence of his work’s impact on public understanding of this topic. These included the following: ‘On the ninth of March I met a lady who had attended this talk. She is married to an Irishman and she told me how the insights given by Dr. Sean Campbell had helped her understand her husband’s experience of life in this country more closely “because he would never talk about it himself”. Such was the impact of this humorous and knowledgeable speaker ... During the lively Q&A session that followed ... it was clear that Dr. Campbell had touched the sensibilities of his full-house audience many of whom were ... second (or even third or fourth) generation Irish’ (<http://headingleylitfest.blogspot.co.uk/2013/03/dwellers-on-threshold-dr-sean-campbell.html>).

Campbell also presented his research at other public talks, including at ‘Culture Night’, an Irish community event at London’s Shortwave Cinema (23 September 2011) that attracted 70 attendees. The event’s convenor provides evidence of Campbell’s impact in a letter (available from the HEI on request) which includes the following: ‘Sean’s talk expertly and insightfully bridged the gap between many people on this Culture Night which, in my role as programmer and producer, was ideal – the theme of the evening was ‘nasc’, the Irish for connection. It was wonderful to see people from many walks of life and from such varying ages, intensely debate the topics and questions posed from Sean’s talk. In this regard, his position as a keynote speaker provided immense and lasting work to the evening and all that followed’. In 2012, Ireland’s Department of Foreign Affairs invited Campbell to speak about his book at the Irish Embassy in London. At the event (12 June 2012), the Ambassador discussed the book’s themes, before Campbell gave a talk to the attendees, who included high-profile figures from the realms of politics, media and music (see Section 5.vii). This invite, and the talk Campbell gave in this forum, evidences that his work was registered, and valued, at governmental as well as public levels.

iii. Series Advisor role on TV documentary series generating public responses and informing public debate

In 2011 Campbell was appointed Series Advisor on *Guth: Musical Sons of the Irish Diaspora*, a six-part television documentary series broadcast on TG4, a public service broadcaster for Irish-language speakers, in 2013 (see Section 5.viii). The series drew on the themes and ideas of Campbell’s book in its exploration of the role of Irish ethnicity in the lives and work of musicians of Irish descent. Campbell advised the producers in face-to-face meetings, phone discussions and e-mail exchanges, and was interviewed on camera, appearing in the series as an onscreen contributor (particularly in episodes 3-5), discussing material from his book. The primary stage of impact (of Campbell’s research informing a TV series) was extended when the series reached an audience of approx. 100,000 in Ireland, generating a positive public response, with responses on social media showing that the series had enriched appreciation of culture. This is evinced in the following Twitter comments:

- ‘great tv “Guth”, Irish connections with musicians, reflecting on class, race & identity’ (<https://twitter.com/SorchaGeoghegan/status/391179136712318976>);
- ‘Excellent series exploring the music icon offsprings of Irish emigrants’ (<https://twitter.com/MaireDineen01/status/391194869714001923>);
- ‘If you get the chance look out for Guth on @TG4TV re Brit bands with strong Irish heritage – Smiths Oasis Dexys Costello Lydon’ (<https://twitter.com/Neekyatn/status/393661528747962368>);
- ‘Repeat of the Smiths documentary "Guth " on TG4 at 11.50pm tonight. Explores the Irish ancestry and influences of the band. Very good’ (<https://twitter.com/joeneville2010/status/392379571783610369>);
- ‘Best show on Irish TV in years’ (<https://twitter.com/talkirish/status/392969071928832000>);
- ‘Excellent Irish tv. The best Irish programme I’ve seen on tv in ages. It deserves more publicity’ (<https://twitter.com/theScreamS/status/390949594999570432>);
- ‘Fantastic programme’ (<https://twitter.com/AnalogueCatalog/status/392361381296496640>).

The series also informed public debates about the Irish diaspora in England, with newspaper articles on this topic directly citing the material presented in the series. One such article, in the *Irish Independent* (readership: 120,000), observed: ‘this phenomenon of kids who were seen as Irish by

Impact case study (REF3b)

the English, and vice versa, and how this could be a powerful creative force. But I would now see it as being more complex again than that. They say that from time to time an Irish writer like, say, Brendan Behan, emerges to give the English theatre a blast of energy, and yet it is also true to say that the English theatre is always there to recognise the raw talent of a Behan, to help turn his ideas into actual plays. Likewise, The Smiths, subjects of last week's *Guth*, had eight Irish-born parents between the four of them. So we need to understand that this relationship with Britain has been far more mutually beneficial than is generally admitted. That for all the ass-kicking that the sons of Erin have administered to British culture, it is also virtually unknown for the Irish to become internationally successful without some significant contribution from a friendly neighbour. So the Smiths, brought up in the Irish community in Manchester, might have felt this separateness from England, but then most artists, everywhere, feel a bit separate from their surroundings. Again, I would prefer to join with Guth in rejoicing in such complications, rather than to regret their intrusion on a more simplistic nationalist narrative' (see Section 5.ix for reference). This newspaper article shows how Campbell's research – through its transposition into a TV documentary series – informed public debates. The engagement initiatives outlined above had a wide public reach in the UK and Ireland, increasing understanding of the experience and expressive cultures of the Irish diaspora in England.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

i. For evidence of public responses to Campbell's media work, see for example:

<https://twitter.com/fanningsessions/status/54876036743168000>

<https://twitter.com/C602XM/status/54691667135053824>

<https://twitter.com/gmcmahon/status/62451930517082112>

<http://www.pogues.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=30&t=2576&p=184806&hilit=pat+kenny#p184806>

<https://twitter.com/colmmcauliffe/status/222045890532220928>

<https://twitter.com/fanningsessions/status/61781216466186240>

<https://twitter.com/phantom1052/status/53089515878879232>

<https://twitter.com/fanningsessions/status/55571303566032896>

<https://twitter.com/Davefanningshow/status/260834805585936384>

ii. For evidence of the public connecting Campbell's research with the release of Dexys' album, see for example:

<http://pjcarly.tumblr.com/post/18130525537/with-a-new-album-coming-out-and-the-fact-that>

<https://twitter.com/search?q=this%20good%20book%20by%20Sean%20Campbell&src=typd>

<https://twitter.com/CarlyCiufu/status/172700144360370176>

iii. For website and social media responses to Campbell's book, see for example:

<http://www.culturenorthernireland.org/article/4068/book-review-irish-blood-english-heart>

<http://theknockingshop.blogspot.co.uk/2011/06/irish-blood-english-heart.html>

<http://www.nuthousepunks.com/blog/2011/05/16/campbells-examination-of-irish-music-in-england-fascinating/>

<https://twitter.com/sourcephoto/status/71226877892759554>

https://twitter.com/Russian_Photos/status/71229144154902528

iv. For evidence of fans and musicians engaging with the book on websites, see for example:

<http://www.pogues.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=30&t=2576&start=1500>

<http://www.pogues.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=24&t=9639&p=185810&hilit=sean+campbell#p185810>

<http://www.morrissey-solo.com/threads/113926-Threats-for-Smiths-on-1984-Irish-tour?highlight=sean+campbell>

v. Audience responses to Campbell's talk at Headingley LitFest, collated by the organiser.

vi. Letter from convenor of 'Culture Night' event at Shortwave Cinema, outlining the public talk that Campbell gave at this venue.

vii. For evidence of Campbell's talk at the Irish Embassy, see:

http://www.anglia.ac.uk/ruskin/en/home/faculties/alss/deps/english_media/news_and_events/news_archive0/campbell_launch.html

viii. Letter from Company Director of Abú Media, outlining Campbell's role as Series Advisor for *Guth*, and explaining the importance of his research to the TV series.

ix. For evidence of *Guth* informing public debates, see <http://www.independent.ie/entertainment/tv-radio/perhaps-our-young-raw-talents-need-britain-29702870.html>.