As a creative, dynamic and welcoming place. At a time when humanities subjects are especially vulnerable to government demands for utility, the discourse of creative industries is of obvious value and importance.

But conceptualizing the relationship between the humanities and the economy only in terms of the creative industries can be narrowly restrictive. If we tie our research and teaching too closely to ideas of social utility and if this idea of social utility is measured according to dubiously normative and short term economic models, then it is likely that many areas of the humanities research will be axed or, at best, tolerated as scholarly indulgences. At a time of recession, for example, how might a discourse of creative industries justify spending three months writing an analysis of gender and subjectivity in a 17th century English play? The problem about relying on the discourse of creative industries alone to articulate the social value of humanities is that there are many areas of humanities scholarship that will not be regarded as relevant.

(Continued page 4)

Within a few days of the recently-published report drawing attention to high levels of grade inflation in Irish schools and universities, Minister for Education Batt O’Keefe called for closer alignment of education policy and ‘the strategic needs of industry.’ This wasn’t a surprise. The Minister’s announcement is consistent with the government’s key policy direction in relation to universities for some years now: an insistence on a tight calibration of all state-funded education in terms of immediate economic deliverables. In the wake of claims of ‘grade inflation’, this insistence is likely to become even sharper. Now more than ever, it is necessary to think carefully about the intrinsic value of what we do in the School of Humanities and about how the subjects of our profession relate to broader social and economic needs.

One way to conceptualize an economic return for the humanities is in terms of the creative industries. As championed by the University of Toronto economist Richard Florida in his controversial 2002 book The Rise of the Creative Class, creative industries have the ability to feed into a local economy in two ways. First, they lead to jobs (theatres, publishing houses, museums and art galleries are also businesses that employ people) and second—and this is Florida’s most important point—the creative industries bestow a beneficial aura of prestige and dynamism on a place that can help attract ‘lap-top professionals’ as well as businesses and retail outlets that wish to be seen as cutting edge, radical and innovative. Galway has gained much from the work of the creative industries and has a lot more to gain; moreover NUI, Galway with its close relationship to the arts in Galway is especially well placed to conduct research on how knowledge gained from historical and literary study, for example, can enhance the agenda of West of Ireland heritage tourism as well perhaps as provide added value to Galway’s reputation as a creative, dynamic and welcoming place. At a time when humanities subjects are especially vulnerable to government demands for utility, the discourse of creative industries is of obvious value and importance.

But conceptualizing the relationship between the humanities and the economy only in terms of the creative industries can be narrowly restrictive. If we tie our research and teaching too closely to ideas of social utility and if this idea of social utility is measured according to dubiously normative and short term economic models, then it is likely that many areas of the humanities research will be axed or, at best, tolerated as scholarly indulgences. At a time of recession, for example, how might a discourse of creative industries justify spending three months writing an analysis of gender and subjectivity in a 17th century English play? The problem about relying on the discourse of creative industries alone to articulate the social value of humanities is that there are many areas of humanities scholarship that will not be regarded as relevant.

(Continued page 4)
ENGLISH STUDENT WINS PEEL PRIZE FOR ESSAY

Each year the university awards a prize for the best English composition written in the First Semester of First Year. This year a total of thirteen essays were adjudicated by the joint heads of First Year English Dr Ros Dixon and Dr Frances McCormack, and by English Lecturer Dr John Kenny and the Director of the MA in Writing and of the MA in Drama and Theatre Studies, Professor Adrian Frazier. This jury of four was unanimous in its decision to award this year’s prize to Amit Medriatta who wrote on the topic: *Discuss the impact that tragedy has upon audiences, referring in your answer to King Oedipus and By the Bog of Cats.* Amit who was roundly congratulated by fellow students at an English lecture on 2 February last, received his €1,000 prize in a ceremony Lá na nGradam on Sat 6 Feb 2010 in the Bailey Allen Hall, Áras na Mac Léinn. Humanities webpage: www.nuigalway.ie/humanities/

BOOKS LAUNCHED IN THE SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES

Dr Marie-Louise Coolahan and Professor Danielle Clarke (UCD) at the launch of Dr Coolahan’s new book *Women, Writing, and Language in Early Modern Ireland* (Oxford University Press) Thursday 25th February 2010.

Dr Daniel Carey recently edited a book *The Postcolonial Enlightenment* (Oxford University Press). Pictured above right are (L-R) Professor Nicholas Allen (Moore Institute), Dr Daniel Carey and Dean, Dr Edward Herring Tuesday 9th February 2010.
Dr John Cunningham (History) contributed an article entitled 'Teacher Unity' to ASTIR, (magazine of Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland), vol.28, no.1, January 2010, pp.28-30.

Dr Cunningham also interviewed for 'Inside Education', Dublin City FM; broadcast 28 February 2010.

Dr Tom Duddy (Philosophy) gave a talk entitled 'The Irish Response to Darwinism' on 9 December 2009, to the self-financing, self-directing adult education group, the Kilkenny Liberal Studies Group, at Langton's Hotel, Kilkenny.

Dr Aileen Fyfe (History) was interviewed in the Irish Times (January 19th) for a piece on science's role in providing moral authority; and did a follow-up piece on 4fm radio during the week of January 25th.

Dr Fiona Bateman (English) featured on a documentary 'On God’s Mission’ on RTE Available here. Fiona was also interviewed by Tom McGurk on 4fm on his show ‘McGurk on 4’.

Dr Simon Potter (History):

‘Britishness, the BBC, and the birth of Canadian public broadcasting, 1928-1936’ in Gene Allen and Daniel Robinson (eds.), Communicating in Canada’s past: approaches to the history of print and broadcast media (University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 2009)

Yeats in Context (Oxford University Press), ed. David Holdeman & Ben Levitas a new book including chapters by Professor Nicholas Allen (Moore) ‘The Church in Ireland: Protestant and Catholic’ and Professor Adrian Frazier (English) : ‘Anger Management, 1898-1913’

Dr Alison Forrestal (History) published 'Vincent de Paul: The Principles and Practice of Government, 1625-60', Vincentian Heritage, 29, no 2 (2009), pp50-67

Postdoctoral student Irina Ruppo Malone’s book is out from Palgrave Macmillan: Ibsen and the Irish Revival. The book is based on her doctoral dissertation with English and Irina currently works in that discipline.


INNOVATION, CRITICAL THINKING AND THE HUMANITIES

(Continued from page 1)

As an alternative, and in addition to the discourse of the creative industries, it might be worthwhile for the School of Humanities to resurrect the idea of critical thinking. Critical thinking is what the humanities have always done brilliantly—through the careful study of historical, philosophical, cultural and literary texts, and through the writing of analytically precise responses to texts. Interestingly also, there is also much recent evidence (emerging from the research conducted in business schools and schools of management) that a workforce trained in critical thinking is regarded as crucial to attracting business and innovation. As well as offering a more capacious category for humanities research, the kind of critical thought that is produced, developed and refined by a training in history, literary study or philosophy is also a quality that is crucial to the idea of dynamic, innovative and caring society. There is some evidence that the social value of critical thinking is beginning to be more widely recognized particularly in relation to the ‘Reviewing the Republic’ series in the Irish Times, the Fair Ireland initiative and the Cultural Odyssey project.

A student of the MA in Writing in 2008—09, Jenny McCudden has recently published a book highlighting the tragedies on Irish Roads. Entitled Impact: The Human Stories behind Ireland’s Road Tragedies, and published by Collins Press, the book is now being made into a documentary which will be shown on TV3 at the end of March. Jenny is the Western Correspondent for TV3. The book was her non-fiction project whilst a student of the MA in Writing. Irish Times article [here](#).

HUSTON SCHOOL AND CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS COLLABORATE ON NEW SUMMER SCHOOL

From Saturday 29 August to Saturday 4 September 2010 experts and experienced practitioners will deliver modules, workshops and screenings combining human-rights expertise and cinema studies. The Summer School in Human Rights, Cinema and Advocacy is an exciting programme which aims to widen the horizons of professionals in the film, documentary, NGO and media sector to reflect on the use of film and video advocacy as an instrument for enhancing human rights awareness on critical social, political and environmental issues, and to influence change.

In particular, the school aims to provide participants with a framework of understanding what are human rights, how they can be transposed into film, the impact of human rights films and video advocacy on the promotion of human rights and ultimately lead to social change.

Further information from the Huston School of Film and Digital Media. info@filmschool.ie

SCREENING IRISH AMERICA NOMINATED FOR AWARD

The essay collection, Screening Irish-America: Representing Irish-America in Film and Television - which includes essays by Huston School of Film & Digital Media academics Seán Crosson and Tony Tracy - was recently nominated for the prestigious Theatre Library Association 2010 Book Award. Established in 1974, the Theatre Library Association Award is given each year to the best English-language book about recorded performance, including motion pictures, television, and radio.
UPCOMING EVENTS

To be held in the Moore Institute for Research in the Humanities and Social Studies, National University of Ireland, Galway

Friday 26th March, 2010

Sponsored by the Association for Canadian Studies in Ireland, The Moore Institute for Research in the Humanities and Social Studies, and the Department of English, National University of Ireland, Galway

Registration is free. For further information please contact the organizer, Dr Elizabeth Tilley, Department of English, 492581

Following the success of two previous lectures in the series we look forward to the final lecture The English Pale, Partition and ‘Two-Nation Theory’ to be given by Professor Steve Ellis (History) on Wednesday March 24th.

Galway City Museum will again be the venue for this lecture which will commence at 7.30pm sharp. All are welcome. Fáilte roimh chách.
School of Humanities in association with the Moore Institute

GUEST LECTURE BY PROFESSOR PEADAR KIRBY

Globalisation and Successful Development: The lessons of the Irish collapse

Lecture at the Moore Institute, NUIG
Wednesday, April 7th, 2010, @ 4:00 p.m.

Peadar Kirby

Abstract

During the years of the Celtic Tiger boom, the so-called ‘Irish model’ was seen widely as a model of successful development in the era of contemporary globalisation. However, the swift and deep collapse of the Irish economy in 2008 has raised more critical questions about just how successful was this model, questions that hold valuable lessons for other latecomers to development. This lecture analyses what these lessons are. It begins by introducing the international reception of the Irish boom as a case of successful development before going on critically to outline the nature of the Irish model, with a particular focus on how it understood globalisation and sought to harness its benefits for Ireland’s development. The lecture then argues that the nature of the Irish collapse derived from the core weaknesses of the Irish model and its one-sided view of globalisation. The lecture ends by drawing out the lessons of the Irish case, placing these in the context of the developmental challenges facing all small states, challenges that were not understood by Irish policy makers and the political establishment.

ANNUAL DONNA FERGUSON MEMORIAL AWARD

The presentation of the Donna Ferguson Memorial Award is to take place on March 25th next at 11.30 in the Siobhan McKinna Theatre at NUI Galway.

Presenter:

Presenting the award, this year, is Christy O’Connor sports writer with the Sunday Times and author of the critically acclaimed book on hurling, 'Last Man Standing', which was runner-up in the Irish Sports Book of the Year award in 2005. Christy is also the author of 'The GAA Quiz Book' and 'The GAA Quiz Book 2’ and is currently working on another book which is due out this October.

A former inter-county hurler with Clare, Christy primarily writes about gaelic games, and is a journalism graduate of NUI, Galway.

Winner

This year’s winner is Eoin Ryan, who graduated from the MAJ, with first class honours and who achieved the highest result in the Broadcasting Module of the programme. Eoin also achieved first class honours in his final project entitled: “The Birth of the GAA and its Founding Fathers”.

Donna

Donna Ferguson was a student on the MAJ in 2007, whose life was taken from her devoted parents, Gerry and Mary, in a fatal car crash (Continued page 7)
Congratulations and well done to finalists Leon Butler and Ellen McCabe, from the MA in Digital Media course run by the Huston School of Film & Digital Media, for winning the gold and silver certificates respectively in their categories at the Digital Media Awards on Thursday 25th February.

The Digital Media Awards recognises and rewards excellence in the Digital Media accepting entries from companies, individuals and organisations who produce the most stylish, creative and pioneering work in Digital Media.

The Digital Media Awards are granted at three levels. Entries that receive the highest average score from the judges within that category are awarded the ‘Best in Industry’ Digital Media Award and receives a personalised trophy. The remaining entries are judged with the top two receiving gold and silver certificates.

Ellen’s entry entitled “Engaging Media: An Exploration of Digital Media Integration in Second Level Learning Environments”, was a finalist in the E-learning category. Ellen's research investigates the current disparity between learning and entertainment as well as examining how digital media may constructively facilitate the realigning of positive elements of entertainment with formal learning contexts. As a self-directed exploratory learning environment, the application’s main purpose is to encourage appreciation and analytical thinking with regard to the core narrative. This project seeks to explore how education and entertainment can be merged through the utilisation of new media.

Leon’s entry entitled “Ghosts Before Dawn” was a finalist in the Student Digital Story Telling Award Category. It tells the story of Nima, a child who is woken up in the middle of the night by an automated call from the Israeli Defence Force telling her to leave her house as it has been identified a legitimate target. Nima thinks that the ghosts are coming. Her mother finds her crying and comforts her by telling her the ghosts will be gone before the dawn arrives. Unfortunately Nima slips out of the house in the night to find what she thinks are the stars falling. The “stars” are in fact white phosphorous bombs. Her mother screams for her not to touch them. The film deals with the tactics used within the offensive and also examines the human factors as the mother’s attempts to shield her daughter from the true realities of war. To see Ghosts Before Dawn click here.

ANNUAL DONNA FERGUSON MEMORIAL AWARD

(Continued from page 6)

accident in 2007. Her family and her community in Beleek, Co Fermanagh initiated this award in honour of her memory. The inaugural presentation of the DFMA was made by Gay Byrne, in 2008 and by Noirin Hegarty, Editor of the Sunday Tribune last year.

Donna excelled academically while she studied at NUI Galway and was posthumously awarded her MA by the University.

Donna also excelled as a sportswoman and played Gaelic for the NUI Galway women’s team. She also played for her home county of Fermanagh. The award this year wants to shine a light on Donna’s sporting achievements in her life and in her work: in the short time that she studied journalism at NUI Galway she launched her own aptly named magazine “Stir” which included an interview with the well know sports journalist and broadcaster, Michael O’Muireachartaigh.
**SCHOOL NEWSLETTER**

The School of Humanities newsletter encourages articles from all its members. Views expressed are those of the writers themselves and do not necessarily represent the view of the School as a collective. Different and conflicting viewpoints are especially encouraged. The contents of the newsletter are reviewed by the School’s Executive Committee prior to publication.

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**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

Professor Adrian Frazier will be giving keynote addresses at the Fourth **George Moore International Conference** (in Almeria, Spain, on Mar 26) and at the **Ireland, Modernism, and the Fin de Siècle Conference** hosted by University of Limerick and Mary Immaculate College on 16-17 April.

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**GRADUATE BRIDGES SCIENCE AND FICTION**

English Department graduate Val Nolan has recently been published in the prominent British journal *Nature*, the world’s most highly cited interdisciplinary science publication. In January, Nolan’s story ‘Brief Lullaby’ was published on the journal’s ‘Futures’ fiction page, a feature which has previously boasted the work of writers such as Arthur C. Clarke, Alastair Reynolds, and Kim Stanley Robinson. The story concerns the aftermath of an extraterrestrial radio signal being received on Earth and its implication for human society and imagination.

In November, Nolan was awarded his doctorate in contemporary literature. He continues to teach part-time in the English Department, and regularly contributes to publications including The Sunday Business Post, The Stinging Fly, and Poetry Ireland Review. Last year he received a scholarship to attend the Clarion Writers’ Workshop at University of California, San Diego, the only Irish participant invited to attend in the course’s 40 year history. While he continues to write stories, Nolan’s current academic research focuses on representations of science and technology in Irish fiction from the mid-nineteenth century to the present day, concentrating on novels and short stories from the 1960s to the twenty-first century.