Children of the Revolution: 1916 in 2016

Come away, O human child!

To the waters and the wild

With a faery, hand in hand,

For the world's more full of weeping then you can understand.[1]

Introduction

During the 2016 centenary celebrations of the Easter Rising, one of the best-known images of the rebellion was the face of Seán Foster. His image appeared in numerous online articles; on RTÉ television over Easter weekend itself; and on a commemorative postal stamp issued by *An Post*.[2]

Seán Foster's image is that of a bonny boy of nearly three years of age. But it is also the image of a child who led a short and sad life. His father died on the Western front in May 1915, and then, the following year, Seán himself was killed during the Dublin insurrection. On Easter Monday 1916, Seán's mother had been accompanying him along the junction of Church Street and North King Street, when she happened upon a rebel barricade (manned by her own brother) and upon a group of nonplussed British Army Lancers. In the brutal crossfire that followed, a single bullet hit Seán under the

left ear, shattered his skull, and killed him instantly. He therefore became the first child casualty of the insurrection.[4]

This long-dead child came to prominence in 2016, in large part, because of the work of the broadcaster Joe Duffy, whose book *Children of the Rising* appeared in 2015 and told the story of the forty young people aged under seventeen who died during the insurrection. This volume became the highest-earning Irish book of 2015, shifting over 25,000 copies that year, taking in over €500,000 in sales, and thus achieving prominence in the midst of a very crowded field of commemorative publications about the Easter Rising.[5] This chapter will examine some of the public memorialising which accompanied or followed in the wake of Duffy's work, and will consider what this turn towards childhood might imply about how 1916 was depicted on the Irish stage at the time of the centenary.

'They Are Of Us All'

One of the high-profile parts of the commemoration in 2016 was the opening of a new exhibition about the Easter Rising at the GPO. This 'GPO Witness History' exhibition opened during Easter Week and was put together by Martello Media, with the guidance of QUB historian Fearghal McGarry, and these organisers opted to give a prominent place to the children of the Rising. Martello Media set about using images and graphs from Joe Duffy's book to show, for instance, how many children died as a proportion of the overall dead of 1916, and used artifacts to tell the story of particular children, including Seán Foster. The exhibition's designers also sought to emphasise how other young people may have been affected by the rebellion: at its inauguration, 'GPO Witness History' displayed two affectionate letters written by the children of the British Army Captain, Frederick Dietrichsen. These letters were discovered in Dietrichsen's breast pocket after he had been killed at Mount Street Bridge, and were now loaned back to Dublin by his descendants.[6]

Indeed, anyone visiting the exhibition once it opened at Easter 2016 would have discovered that the whole presentation at the GPO culminated in a commemoration of the children of 1916. Visitors found that the 'GPO Witness History' exhibition concluded by leading them into an outdoor space that potentially recalled both the Stonebreaker's yard at Kilmainham and an urban children's playground. In this area, Barbara Knezevic had created an artwork entitled 'They Are Of Us All', consisting of forty large stones upon a mirrored steel surface, with each stone designed to pay tribute to a young life lost during the insurrection. Those who had organised the space also ensured that this part of the exhibit had a sense of the redemptive about it, as the visitor's journey through the exhibition would conclude by moving up from the darkened main zone into the light of this outdoor area. And this final part of the 'GPO Witness History' was designed to be permanent. The rest of the exhibit may change in the future, but Knezevic's artwork was devised as a lasting memorial. Here, at least in theory, the stone's in the midst of all.

In 2016, the opening of the exhibition at the GPO was only one part of a broader national attempt to reclaim and rearticulate the experience of 1916 from the perspective of children. On 15 March 2016, Ireland witnessed 'Proclamation Day', co-ordinated by the Department of Education and Skills, when each of the country's schools received national flags and copies of the 1916 proclamation. Although some of the elements of flag waving and parading looked old fashioned and somewhat regressive, the day did include a focus on individual children's own aspirations for the future. In many classrooms, students did not just unthinkingly parrot the 1916 proclamation, but also drafted and articulated new proclamations expressing their own hopes and wishes.[7] Such a focus on children's creativity perhaps dovetailed with the educational philosophy of Patrick Pearse himself, who had condemned the 'mechanical' nature of education in Ireland in his essay 'The Murder Machine'.[8]

Similarly, during the centenary, RTÉ made available on their website a series of thirty one-minute-long films called '1916 Kidspeak', which used dramatic reconstructions to tell the story of what everyday life in 1916 was like from the perspective of children rather than adults. This included the children of 2016 churning butter, and sewing clothes, and participating in various other relatively mundane activities that their counterparts would have been doing each day at the time of the Rising.[9]

Then on Easter Monday itself, the official commemorations in Dublin determinedly focused upon, as the organisers put it, '8 family zones and 50 tents, with lots of activities for children and families'.[10] Unfortunately the day was rather cold, Easter in 1916 having fallen on almost the latest day it is possible to occur, and Easter in 2016 happening on one of the earliest dates. But nonetheless, the 'Reflecting the Rising' event (organised by RTÉ and the state body 'Ireland 2016') occurred at locations including Merrion Square Park and St Stephen's Green, with circus activities, magic shows, musical performances, storytelling, and other activities specifically designed for the active participation of children.

In many places across Ireland and elsewhere, urban space in the twenty-first century has been re-modelled so the business of capitalism can be transacted more easily, so that the purpose of such space is not loitering or play but the swift movement of worker-consumers through to shops, offices, and eateries. But by contrast, the Easter celebrations of Dublin allowed people to recover the central public spaces of their city, to bustle or dance or parade or protest as they saw fit.[11] As Declan Kiberd observed, 'After the years of Tiger Ireland, in which everything from public transport to consciousness itself seemed to have been privatised, the community was learning once again how to use public space and reclaim the streets'.[12] Central to that reclamation was the encouraging of children to conduct relatively non-economic activity in the heart of Dublin, with families invited to spend time in the park with a

hula hoop or face paints or a tin whistle. In 1900, James Connolly wrote his article 'The Corporation and the Children' for *The Workers' Republic*, in which he condemned 'the evil social conditions' that turn children into 'embryonic capitalists'. A century later, he and his fellow insurgents were now being commemorated by children who had the space in central Dublin to enjoy what Connolly called the 'sunshine' of freedom from such economic activity.[13]

Of course, 2016 scarcely marked the first time that children had been included in commemorations of the Easter Rising. For example, on the fiftieth anniversary in 1966, Bryan McMahon created a series of four television dramas specifically for children which had quite an earnest nationalist message. There was a well-remembered episode, for example, called 'The Bicycle Man', which revolved around an unpaid language teacher who travelled around, who taught Irish, and who criticised an imperial education system that saw pupils in Ireland repeating 'We are happy English children'.[14]

Nonetheless, during 2016 children's experience became far more central to the commemoration of the Rising. This development relates, in part, to the fact that international cultural festivals, and particularly Edinburgh's fringe and book festivals, now tend to incorporate extensive outreach programmes and educational activities for children of various ages. Yet the child-centrism of Ireland's centenary commemorations also featured particular aspects that were unique to Ireland. National organisations that focused on the children of 1916 offered a relatively inclusive way of recalling the Rising, with those child casualties having been inflicted by *both* sides during the conflict. After all, for those who detest the Rising, the child deaths could be used as evidence of the folly of launching the entire rebellion: staging an armed insurrection in a highly populated urban environment was always likely to involve a great deal of 'collateral damage'. Yet for those who admire the Rising, the

sociopathic murders of Irish children by the South Staffordshire Regiment on North King Street, and the very presence of so many impoverished children in the centre of Dublin in 1916, might provide evidence of the injustices of colonial rule, and explain why that rule needed to be overturned in the first place. Besides which, in 2016, devoting time to the children of the Rising offered another kind of *mea culpa* for the systematic abuse of children in the institutions of the Irish church and state, with such abuse having been uncovered and widely publicised during the preceding three decades. Indeed, the child-focused nature of the Easter Monday celebrations in 2016 proved successful enough to spawn *Cruinniú na Cásca* ('a meeting at Easter') the following year. Easter Monday 2017 provided the first of a planned annual day of culture and creativity focused, in its initial iteration, upon four public-festival spaces across Dublin, and featuring 'a special focus on events for families and children'.[15]

Waking the Feminists

The recent recovery of the children of the Rising dovetailed with a broader process of recovery of some of the hidden histories of Easter Week. One of the most widely reviewed Irish history books published in 2015, during the lead-up to the centenary of the Rising, was Roy Foster's compelling volume, *Vivid Faces*, which draws attention to various marginalised voices. For example, Foster highlights the fact that female couples were well-known in Dublin's socialist and radical circles in the build-up to the insurrection, pointing to 'Elizabeth O'Farrell and Julia Grenan; to a certain extent, lesbians may have been drawn to such organisations in order to meet each other'. He goes on to describe how O'Farrell was stationed at the GPO during Easter Week and how the rebels' message of surrender was 'carried by Nurse Elizabeth O'Farrell (under constant threat of gunfire) to Brigadier-General W.H.M. Lowe'.[16]

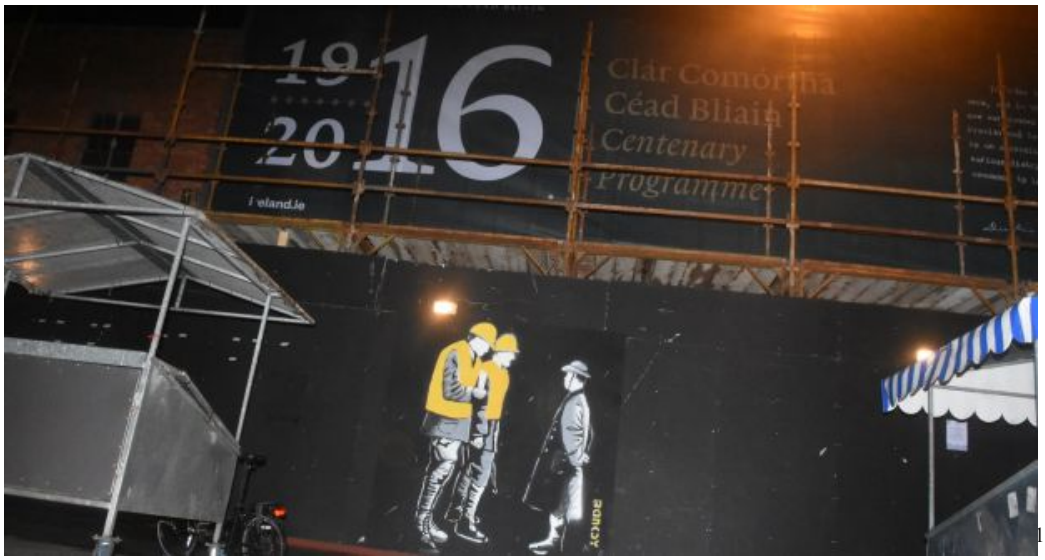
Elizabeth O'Farrell had actually been with Patrick Pearse at the surrender, and had stood back when the famous photograph was taken so that only her feet were

showing. Yet this image was notoriously airbrushed in some subsequent reproductions so that O'Farrell went missing entirely. This erasure was recently illustrated in *The Journal*:

This sequence shows the original photograph (left) of the moment Padraig Pearse surrendered to General Lowe. Beside Pearse (obscured) is Nurse O'Farrell. In the second photograph the expressions of the British soldiers' faces were changed — and by the third picture Nurse O'Farrell was eliminated from the scene.

Images Courtesy: National Museum of Ireland, Decorative Arts & History / Kilmainham Gaol [17]

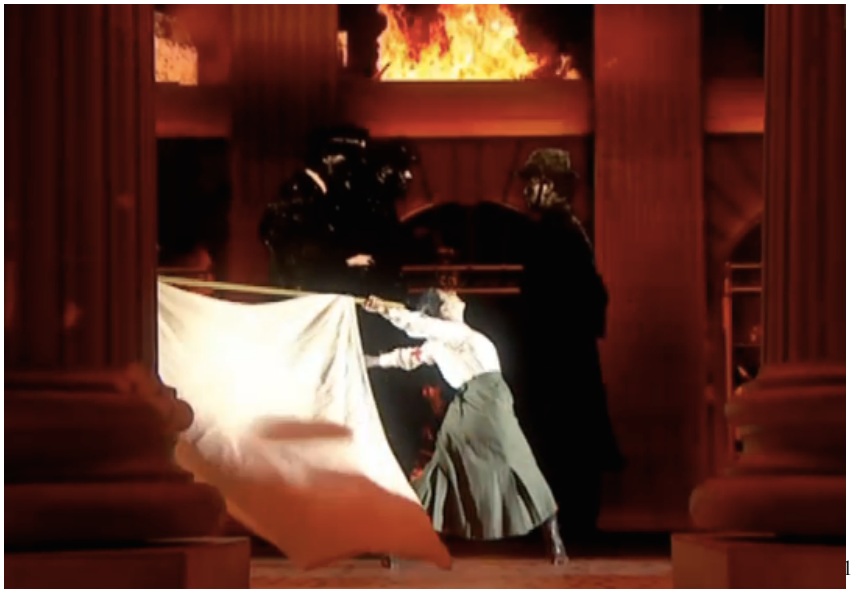
Accordingly, when a Banksy-style parody of the image appeared in Moore Street at the start of 2016, there was no sign of O'Farrell:



[18]

In this way, O'Farrell's fate has seemed to typify that of the 12% or so of participants in the Rising who were women, and whose experiences were subsequently expunged from the narrative.

Yet elsewhere, at around the time of the centenary, audiences did see Elizabeth O'Farrell being restored. For example, at the International Dublin Gay Theatre Festival in 2014, Brian Merriman's play, *Eirebrushed*, worked to highlight the story of O'Farrell and the other gay and lesbian participants of the Rising. Then, on Easter Monday 2016, when RTÉ broadcast the *Centenary* concert from the Bord Gáis theatre to a mass audience, there was a beautiful and telling moment when a dancer playing the part of O'Farrell appeared in front of the still, projected image of Pearse and General Lowe. Here was a deliberate reversal of the earlier positioning in the famous surrender photograph. During the *Centenary* concert, it was O'Farrell who became the lively, mobile figure who drew the eye, and the male figures were the static ones who now faded into the background.

 [19]

In the theatre, this issue of restoring the women of 1916 to prominence gained great attention because of the controversy over the 'Waking the Nation' commemorative programme which was announced by the Abbey Theatre in 2015, but which, upon examination, featured only one play written by a woman amongst the ten scheduled shows. The Abbey director at the time, Fiach Mac Conghail, initially reacted on Twitter to the appalled reaction by writing 'Them the breaks'.[20] But ultimately the

Abbey's sidelining of women functioned, in a very welcome way, to encourage the public articulation of a broader set of concerns about women's position and status in the arts world and in Irish society more generally. Indeed, on Easter Monday 2016, Mac Conghail himself spoke on the Abbey stage specifically in order to praise Helena Molony, the early twentieth-century actor and member of the Citizen Army. Mac Conghail declared that Helena Molony had emerged as what he called the 'towering figure' of 1916.[21] Elsewhere, a number of television programmes and books highlighted the key contribution that women had made to the insurrection. Such interventions included Lauren Arrington's fine monograph, *Revolutionary Lives*, and Fiona Shaw's well-produced television documentary, *Seven Women*.[22] Even the posters aboard Bus Éireann's fleet of vehicles highlighted the activities of female rebels. Perhaps, as Eleanor Methven put it, the Easter Rising was showing signs of mutating into an Estrogen Rising.[23] Indeed, on 31 March 2016 Victoria White wrote in the *Irish Examiner* to complain that this whole process had now gone too far, declaring, 'I am sick, sore and tired of hearing about the women of 1916'.[24] But that was the whole point of this recovery, to show that the women of the Rising were never just dilettante participants, but were seriously committed to the cause. If it had taken a great deal of effort to obliterate them from the narrative, then a great deal of effort had now been made to put them back.

The children of 1916 never had the same moment of public controversy as 'Waking the Feminists', but the reclamation of children's experience of the rebellion clearly worked, and has worked in the theatre, in tandem with that movement to recover women's voices. After all, Ashis Nandy has suggested that the colonial relation is inevitably a profoundly gendered one, as the occupying power justifies its presence as civilising and paternal towards the 'underdeveloped' subjugated people, who are figured as feminised to make them seem passive and unthreatening.[25] Nandy also

demonstrates that colonised human beings often come to be represented as children: he argues that colonised peoples have been recast by their oppressors as child*like* and thus open to reform, being 'innocent, ignorant but willing to learn', and on the other hand colonised people have also been considered child*ish* and thus in need of firm-handed repression: the people 'ignorant but unwilling to learn, ungrateful, sinful, savage, unpredictably violent, disloyal'.[26] Thus, Nandy exposes not only the infantalising of the colonised human being, but also the way that this devalues personhood in a fundamental way, distorting what any developmental stage theory would suggest as part of the normal process of growing up. Unsurprisingly, then, after independence the nationalist response to the colonial caricature of the feminised and childish Celt was to insist on adult Irish masculinity. Women and children were often considered solely in terms of the domiciliary, and when the machinery of the independent state remembered the uprising of 1916 there was a characteristic sidelining of any hints of female experience, child casualties, and the rights of women and children that had been articulated so insistently by James Connolly. Instead the state's public acts of remembering tended to be done in a male-dominated realm of anniversary parades and Catholic religious services.

The Abbey and O'Casey

The commemorations of 2016 revealed an attitudinal shift, and showed that a reclaiming of female involvement had now gone hand in hand with a reclaiming of children's experience. If 'Waking the Feminists' showed how drama might assist with the recovery of women's voices, so the Irish stage also highlighted the children of the Rising. The one female-authored piece that was included on the Abbey Theatre's commemorative programme for 2016 was Ali White's play, *Me, Mollser*, effectively a single-hander inspired by Tim Crouch's recent dramas retelling Shakespeare's stories from the viewpoint of one particular character (*I, Peaseblossom*

of 2006 and *I, Malvolio* of 2010). *Me, Mollser* therefore narrates the story of O'Casey's *The Plough and the Stars* from the perspective of the consumptive child Mollser, and had been touring Irish schools since 2012. White's show appeared in 150 primary schools during 2016 alone, and was staged in the Abbey main house itself on Easter Monday. The play includes an affecting moment when Mollser looks forward to her own future, anticipates both raising her own children and being a grandmother, before she then coughs and brings out a bloodied handkerchief that signifies her imminent death. The piece then ends by moving in the direction of Augusto Boal, initiating a discussion of children's rights amongst the young people in the audience. The show's female actor encourages spectators to become aware of the Irish children's minister and alerting them to the idea that young people should always complain to the ombudsman if they feel their rights are in any way infringed. The Abbey Theatre's main-house production of *The Plough and the Stars*, staged over Easter in Dublin during 2016, likewise made the character of Mollser central to the drama. In this Brechtian rendering of the play, directed by Seán Holmes, Mollser began the entire drama by standing alone in the spotlight onstage, dressed in red sneakers and a red Manchester United shirt. She started performing the national anthem, but, in an opening *coup de théâtre*, the song was interrupted by her coughing and hacking up blood. Mollser then remained an almost ever-present figure on the stage throughout the play, only disappearing from view shortly before her death, after which her coffin took her place. Thus Mollser retained an onstage presence almost from start to finish of the production.

This character's persistence on the stage served to heighten and draw attention to one of the most important and still pertinent themes of O'Casey's script, namely, the way that children suffer in areas of cultural and economic impoverishment. For example, in Act Two of *The Plough and the Stars*, Mrs Gogan brings a baby into the pub and

feeds it with whiskey before getting into a fight and leaving without the child, provoking panic among the men who are left with it. But the 2016 Abbey version of the play allowed us to see what we do not usually have visualised: the fact that Mollser, Mrs Gogan's other child, suffers from similar neglect. In this production, Mollser was shown at home, alone, through her period of sickening and dying, whilst her mother spent time brawling in the alehouse.

Furthermore, during the Dublin leg of this production, Mollser was being played at the Abbey by the non-white Irish actor Mahnoor Saad. During act two, Saad remained onstage at the same time as the prostitute, Rosie Redmond, played by Nyree Yergainharsian, who yelled in Armenian across the bar at one particular moment of frustration. The casting of these actors, and the fact that they were clad in modern-day dress rather than in the fashions of 1916 like many of those around them, helped to make the point about who the new economic victims of today's Ireland might be, and about the social positioning of women and children from the 'New Irish' communities.

The production also repeatedly nodded towards contemporary images of childishness. For example, the pillaging of Noblett's sweetshop in 1916 found its echo at the Abbey in the looted shopping trolley onstage, filled with Chupa-Chups lollies and electronic-games equipment. The theatrical programme was decorated with the stylised image of a pram, as well as with a sports shoe (the starry plough becoming a variant on the Nike 'swoosh'). Such a focus on childishness, and the particular focus upon Mollser – the child who was dying, who was a member of a minority community, and who was part of modern Europe's economic underclass – meant that the production kept asking an insistent question about the relevance of the Rising towards the injustices of 2016. After all, the production came in the wake of the death of three-year-old Syrian migrant Alan Kurdi; the reporting of a 'mass grave' of babies at a Mother and Baby

Home in Tuam; and the vigilante attack conducted by 200 people on a Roma house inhabited by children and toddlers in Waterford.[27] Indeed, on Easter Monday 2016, to her great credit, the actor playing Bessie Burgess, Eileen Walsh, interrupted the applause at the end of the show to say that the cast would be donating their bank-holiday pay to a children's charity, and Walsh encouraged the audience to make a financial contribution too.

O'Casey himself, who was caring for his own dying mother at the time of the Easter Rising, had constructed a play in *The Plough and the Stars* that continually looks towards childhood and the way that it might be violated and ruined by prevailing forms of economic and political injustice. By the end of that script, after all, the revolutionary bloodshed and the imperial system under which it occurred has so stunted Dublin's life that the actual children of the tenement building are now either dead or miscarried, and in their place the grown-up characters themselves regress to infancy. The notion of childhood has gone so awry here that the British corporal at the end of O'Casey's play calls one of the Irish characters 'mother' and another 'daddy', and before being shot Bessie Burgess nurses the ailing Nora with all the delirious tiredness of a parent caring for a new-born baby.[28] This impulse within O'Casey's work was also drawn out, during Easter Week in 2016, by Mark O'Rowe's production of *Juno and the Paycock* at the Gate Theatre. O'Rowe's staging had none of the Brechtian hijinks of the Abbey production but did give a similar thematic emphasis in highlighting O'Casey's depiction of ruined childhood. After all, although *Juno and the Paycock* is not set during the Rising, the effects of Easter Week upon the children of Dublin hang over the play, in the form of the doomed character of Johnny Boyle, who according to his mother, 'was only a chiselur of a boy scout in Easter Week, when he got hit in the hip'.[29] Accordingly, after Johnny Boyle was dragged off to his doom in the Gate production, Mark O'Rowe added in a sound effect that is

not specified in O'Casey's script: at that point at the Gate, there was a blackout and prolonged sound of a newborn baby crying.

Back to School

At around the time of the centenary, a group of theatre scholars also began to think afresh about the way that the Rising in 1916 had always been, right from the beginning, indebted to the realm of children's performance. Of course, Patrick Pearse's relationship with the children in his care has long been the subject of controversial (although likely unverifiable) speculation about his sexual predilections.[30] But between 2013 and 2017, Eugene McNulty and Róisín ní Ghairbhí published two co-edited books and organised a Dublin symposium, each of which helped to articulate the idea that Pearse's schoolroom theatrical work had made a significant impact on the overall philosophy and direction of the Easter Rising.[31] As McNulty and ní Ghairbhí put it in their 2013 edition of Pearse's plays, Pearse became 'an expert in marketing and public relations', having honed those skills after establishing St Enda's school in 1908:

> The founding of St Enda's provided Pearse with a space in which to convert his theories about education, the Irish language and history, and self-reliant identity into real-world practice. The school annals, published in *An Macaomh*, show that theatre played a very important role in wider school life from the beginning.[32]

When McNulty and ní Ghairbhí published their 2017 volume, *Patrick Pearse and the Theatre*, the curator of the Pearse Museum, Brian Crowley, contributed an essay that likewise emphasised how, at Pearse's school, 'The plays were a great success, critically and ideologically. Pearse intended them to embody the school's mission to revive the Gaelic heroic tradition and impress upon both the audience and wider Irish society that Scoil Éanna represented nothing short of a rebirth of these ancient

traditions'.[33] What such scholarship did, then, was to show that, if the Rising had entered the realm of children's theatre in 2016, this was actually a return to origins, and not an entirely new departure. After all, something of the impulse of the Easter Rising was, according to these arguments, derived from the realm of children's theatre in the first place, and so the recent theatrical productions staged by the Abbey at Easter 2016 had simply been bringing it all back home.

Conclusion: *The Private View*

During the build-up to the centenary, a number of other stories emerged about the way that the other playwright-leaders of the Rising were associated with children and child-rearing. For example, in February 2016 the *Irish Times* printed correspondence between Thomas MacDonagh and his son, Donagh. This included a letter written by the three-year old child (or perhaps by his mother on the child's behalf) declaring, 'Dear Daddy, I was a very good boy when you were out. Your loving little boy, Don xxxxxxxxxx'.[34] Meanwhile, RTÉ made available the video testimony of James Connolly's daughter, Nora Connolly O'Brien, on the broadcaster's website in March 2014. This recording dated from 1965, but after RTÉ placed it on the internet the footage became widely reproduced on Youtube, making some of James Connolly's final words to his family more broadly known: 'please don't cry, you'll unman me'.[35] Meanwhile, in 2015, a one-man show staged as part of the Dublin Theatre Festival focused on an intriguing father-son relationship not on the rebel side but on the imperial side of the conflict. For three days in October 2015, the director of the Little Museum of Dublin, Trevor White, staged his first play (directed by Gerard Stembridge) at the museum premises on St Stephen's Green, before giving three

performances in the USA the following month. This drama, *The Private View*, begins by focusing upon this famous photograph of Pearse and O'Farrell's surrender.

[36]

However, in *The Private View* O'Farrell and Pearse are not the main focus of attention. Instead, White's work tells the real-life story of the men to whom Pearse and O'Farrell were surrendering. As *The Private View* reveals, the British soldiers here were actually a father-and-son team, William and John Lowe. The older man, William Lowe, was commander of the British Forces in Dublin during Easter Week. The younger man, John Lowe, was an eighteen-year-old who had already fought during the war in Egypt and France, and who had taken what he thought was a break from combat to visit his parents in Dublin. But three days after he arrived, the Rising broke out, and John was co-opted as his father's Aide de Camp. Hence, as *The Private View* reveals, John Lowe and William Lowe are both present in the photograph, receiving the unconditional surrender.

Taking its cue from this image, Trevor White's play then continues – via a lecture-style delivery interspersed with various audio clips and visual images – to tell the unlikely (but true) story of how the son in that photograph, John Lowe, went on to

become a major Hollywood film star and to get married, for a time at least, to Hedy Lamarr, one of the most glamorous actors of the age.

The biographical information about John Lowe in *The Private View* is largely culled from John Lowe's own memoir *Hollywood Hussar*, and audio clips from a recording of the book are played throughout the show. That 1977 volume explains how, to a large degree, John's career as a film star was triggered by his father's antipathy towards his son. As the memoir asserts, after the Easter Rising, John returned to fight in France, was captured by the Germans, and remained in Germany at the end of the war. Here he tried to run a condiments factory, but that venture soon failed and John reflected on how, 'My father had been furious when I resigned my commission. I did not dare return home and face him now – a bankrupt pickle manufacturer'.[37] With fear of his father keeping him from returning to his home country, John Lowe went to the Templehof film studios, introduced himself to the Hungarian producer Alexander Korda, and managed to get a part as an extra in a 1926 film starring Marlene Dietrich. But again, John knew that his father would be disgusted, writing in his memoir that:

> In those days the film world had a somewhat dubious aura […] The prospect of my name being printed on a board outside a cinema would, I knew, meet with the unstinted disapproval of my very conservative father […] My father was still rankling beneath my resignation from the only career he really approved of for a son of his. I had no wish to upset him any more.
>
> 'What shall I do about my name?' I asked Eric [Loder, an old schoolfriend].
>
> 'Simple, borrow mine', replied my friend who had always been a matter-of-fact character.[38]

Thus John's relationship with his father grew so hostile that John had to change his name entirely, and it was under the adopted name of John Loder that he then went on to enjoy considerable success for more than thirty years in the movie business.

In Hollywood, John Loder even ended up acting alongside Arthur Shields, someone who had fought for the rebels in 1916 before himself becoming a famous Irish actor.[39] John Loder acted in three films with Arthur Shields: *How Green is My Valley* in 1941, *Confirm or Deny* in 1941, and *Gentleman Jim* in 1942.[40] And it is surely tempting to wonder, as Trevor White's 2015 play does, about whether these two former combatants, from opposite sides of the Easter Rising, would have discussed their shared wartime experience in Ireland when shooting these films.

Indeed, although Trevor White's *The Private View* does not dwell on this particular movie, when John Loder and Arthur Shields starred in 20th Century Fox's *Confirm or Deny*, both actors had to perform as characters in London during the Blitz. Here, the two real-life veterans from either side of the conflict in 1916 were acting in a fictional scenario where bombs were exploding, where the buildings of a major city were being reduced to rubble, and where the plot concludes after the death of a twelve-year-old boy. In this film, the fictional Albert Perkins is killed in a German bombing raid on London, and is then celebrated with the lines:

> Single-handed, one of the Nazi squadrons mowed down an Englishman named Albert Perkins aged twelve. Albert Perkins, a volunteer, stuck to his post during the greatest bombardment in history. He will not be mentioned in orders. He will not get a citation or a Victoria Cross. But when they find his body and bury it in the ground of England the soil over his grave will be free soil.[41]

Did Loder and Shields talk to one another about this scene? Certainly, if we follow the thinking of Trevor White's *The Private View* of 2015, those two film stars may have spent some time looking back on their experiences of Easter Week from the vantage point of the Hollywood hills.

Of course, during the Dublin Rising the children who died had generally not been

sticking to any military positions, but had mainly been working-class boys and girls caught in pitiless crossfire whilst trying to go about their daily lives. Yet, just like the fictional Albert Perkins, for many years these real-life children were generally not mentioned in public memorials, were not given awards and honours, and found their stories obscured by a simplified narrative of adult conflict. The belated recovery, at around the time of the centenary, of the children of 1916 has now deeply affected and deeply enriched our understanding of the Easter Rising. Moreover, this recovery work has offered a model for the retrieval of those other obscured narratives about 1916 – including perhaps the gay, the lesbian, the socialist, the elderly, the disabled, and the transnational – which have still to be fully recognised, and have still to be adequately performed.

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[1] Yeats, 'The Stolen Child', in Yeats, *The Collected Poems of W.B. Yeats*, ed. by Richard J. Finneran, rev. 2nd edn (New York: Scribner, 1996), pp.18-19, p.19.
[2] *Children of the Revolution*, dir. Gerry Hoban, RTÉ, 27 March 2016.
[3] <http://www.anpostmedia.com/Media/1916_Stamps/1916_SOAR_STAMP10_Foster.jpg>.
[4] Joe Duffy, *Children of the Rising: The Untold Story of the Young Lives Lost During Easter 1916* (Dublin: Hachette, 2015), pp.21-23.
[5] John Spain, 'Joe Duffy's Book', *Irish Independent*, 3 January 2016, <http://www.independent.ie/entertainment/books/joe-duffys-book-focused-on-children-of-the-rebellion-is-the-biggest-irish-book-of-the-year-34331262.html>.
[6] For more about these letters, see James Moran, 'Easter 1916: A British Soldier's Family Reunion and Death in Dublin', *Irish Times*, 6 April 2015 < http://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/people/easter-1916-a-british-soldier-s-family-reunion-and-death-in-dublin-1.2162615>.
[7] See <https://www.scoilnet.ie/proclamationtemplate/>. I am grateful to Susanne Colleary for involving me 'Proclamation Day' activities in Sligo.
[8] Pearse, 'The Murder Machine', in Pádraic Pearse, *Political Writings and Speeches* (Dublin: Phoenix, 1924), pp.5-50, p.11.
[9] At the time of writing, only one of the films remains available to view: <http://www.rte.ie/player/ie/show/1916-kidspeak-30002276/> [accessed 1 June 2017].
[10] Easter Monday, *Luan Cásca*, 28.03.2016, Event Guide, *Treoir na nlmeachtaí*, fol.1.
[11] At one point on Easter Monday, those dressed in the paramilitary uniform of Republican Sinn Féin marched at one end of O'Connell Street, whilst, at the other end, Sharon Shannon and The High Kings performed music, and those dressed in Bloomsday-style costumes milled in between.
[12] Kiberd, 'Acting on Instinct', *TLS*, 20 April 2016, p.15.
[13] Connolly, 'The Corporation and the Children', *The Workers' Republic*, 24 November 1900 < https://www.marxists.org/archive/connolly/1900/11/children.htm>.
[14] McMahon, *The Bicycle Man*, RTÉ, 3 April 1966.
[15] See 'Cruinniú na Cásca – A Day for Culture and Creativity Nationwide', <https://www.rte.ie/culture/2017/0323/862064-cruinniu-na-casca-celebrating-culture-and-creativity-this-easter/>. The day was organised by RTÉ and Creative Ireland, with the support of Dublin City Council, OPW, and Transport for Ireland.
[16] Foster, *Vivid Faces* (London: Allen Lane, 2014), p.133, p.243.

[17] Aoife Barry, 'Eirebrushed – The Woman "Written Out" Of Irish History (And Why This Isn't Unusual)', *The Journal*, 26 April 2014 <http://www.thejournal.ie/eirebrushed-play-1428985-Apr2014/>.
[18] Hugh Linehan, 'Moore Street Mural Is NOT By The Artist Banksy', *Irish Times*, 29 January 2016 <http://www.irishtimes.com/culture/moore-street-mural-is-not-by-the-artist-banksy-1.2515144>.
[19] Screenshot from broadcast of *Centenary*, RTÉ, prod. Cilian Fennell, 28 March 2016.
[20] Mac Conghail quoted by Sara Keating, 'Abbey Director "Regrets Exclusions" in Programme', *Irish Times*, 6 November 2015, <http://www.irishtimes.com/culture/stage/abbey-director-regrets-exclusions-in-programme-1.2419782>.
[21] Mac Conghail's words introducing Nell Regan's lecture, 'Helena Moloney, Abbey Rebel', 28 March 2016, 3pm.
[22] Arrington, *Revolutionary Lives: Constance and Casimir Markievicz* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015). *Seven Women*, dir. Martin Dwan, RTÉ, 20 March 2016.
[23] Methven quoted by Orla O'Sullivan, 'Theatre Women Stage Uprising', *Irish Echo*, 9 March 2016, < http://irishecho.com/2016/03/theatre-women-stage-uprising/>.
[24] White, 'True Heroines of 1916 Forgotten in Attempt to Feminise the Rising', *Irish Examiner*, 31 March 2016 <http://www.irishexaminer.com/viewpoints/columnists/victoria-white/true-heroines-of-1916-forgotten-in-attempt-to-feminise-the-rising-390207.html>.
[25] Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp.1-18.
[26] Nandy, *Exiled at Home* (Oxford University Press, 1998), p.16.
[27] Helena Smith, 'Shocking Images of Drowned Syrian Boy Show Tragic Plight of Refugees', *Guardian*, 2 September 2015 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/02/shocking-image-of-drowned-syrian-boy-shows-tragic-plight-of-refugees>. Amelia Gentleman, 'The Mother Behind the Galway Children's Mass Grave Story: "I Want to Know Who's Down There"', *Guardian*, 13 June 2014 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/13/mother-behind-galway-childrens-mass-grave-story>. Sue Murphy, 'Not Protests, But Vigilante Mobs', 28 October 2014 <http://www.newstalk.com/Im-reluctant-to-call-them-protests-theyre-vigilante-mobs>.
[28] O'Casey, *The Complete Plays of Sean O'Casey*, 5 vols (London: Macmillan, 1984), I, 250, 253.
[29] O'Casey, *The Complete Plays*, I, 30-31.
[30] See, for example, Ruth Dudley Edwards, *Patrick Pearse: The Triumph of Failure* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2006), p.127: 'Pearse was an innocent, but there can be little doubt about his unconscious inclinations. His prose and poetry sing when he speaks of young male beauty'.
[31] See *Patrick Pearse: Collected Plays*, ed. by Róisín ní Ghairbhí and Eugene McNulty (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2013); *Patrick Pearse and the Theatre*, ed. by Eugene McNulty and Róisín ní Ghairbhí (Dublin: Four Courts, 2017). Ní Ghairbhí and McNulty also organised the symposium, 'Patrick Pearse and the Theatre' at St Patrick's College in 2013.
[32] Ní Ghairbhí and McNulty, 'Introduction', in *Patrick Pearse: Collected Plays*, ed. by Róisín ní Ghairbhí and Eugene McNulty (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2013), pp.1-63, pp.14-15.
[33] Crowley, 'Escaping the "Suburban Groove": Pearse, Theatre and the Landscape of Scoil Éanna', in *Patrick Pearse and the Theatre*, ed. by Eugene McNulty and Róisín ní Ghairbhí (Dublin: Four Courts, 2017), pp.50-66, p.53.
[34] Quoted by Ronan McGreevy, 'Stories of the Revolution: The Thomas MacDonagh Letters', *Irish Times*, 6 February 2016, p.4.
[35] <https://www.rte.ie/news/player/2014/0328/20552145-nora-connolly-obrien-talks-about-the-lead-up-to-the-1916-rising-and-her-last-meeting-with-her-father-before-he-was-executed/> and <http://www.rte.ie/archives/exhibitions/1993-easter-1916/portraits-1916/793171-portraits-1916-nora-connolly-obrien/>.
[36] Image taken from Michael Sheils McNamee 'The Story of the Chip Shop, A Hollywood Actor and Pearse's 1916 Surrender', *The Echo*, 5 March 2016 <http://www.thejournal.ie/chip-shop-actor-freedom-1916-rising-2642021-Mar2016/>.
[37] John Loder, *Hollywood Hussar: The Life and Times of John Loder* (London: Howard Barker, 1977), p.70.
[38] Loder, *Hollywood Hussar*, p.77.
[39] Shields' career is detailed by Adrian Frazier in *Hollywood Irish: John Ford, Abbey Actors and the Irish Revival in Hollywood* (Dublin: Lilliput, 2011), pp.101-46.
[40] Loder also performed in a 1936 film about the IRA, *Ourselves Alone*.
[41] *Confirm or Deny*, dir. Archie Mayo and Fritz Lang, 20th Century Fox, 1941.