Identity as a Barrier to Social Services:
Stigmatization and Resistance of the Irish Travellers

by

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ABSTRACT

Irish Travellers score the lowest in most social indicators in the Republic of Ireland. Many studies blame discrimination by the Settled population as the barrier impeding Travellers' access to social services. They often suggest cultural acceptance and inclusive social policies as keys in improving Travellers' social conditions. However, Travellers remain increasingly marginalized despite many accomplishments in implementing these recommendations.

I employ in-depth interviews and observational research in Kilkenny, Ireland in order to better understand Travellers' barriers to social services. I study the Travellers, the general Settled population, and Settled people who work with Travellers to answer the following questions: What are Travellers' and Settled people's perceptions of Travellers' social services? Why do Travellers not utilize services that appear to be available to them?

My research suggests contradiction in perceptions of Travellers' social services. I study these complexities at macro and micro levels of analysis. I find that the emergence of neoliberalism as the global economic trend has caused three socio-economic impacts affecting Irish social services: increased urbanization, the restructuring of the role of government, and amplified economic fluctuations. These changes form a moral paradox in Irish ideology between the discourse of equality and the value of individual responsibility. Group identities are, thus, discreetly stigmatized under 'common sense' ideology.

Therefore, I study barriers at the micro level through the dynamic process of stigmatization. I find the existence of stigma through analyzes of Traveller self and perceived identity. I further find that Travellers respond to discrimination through internalization and resistance. In conclusion, I reveal how the dynamic nature of stigmatization results in Traveller identity becoming a barrier to social services in itself.

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

A survey of the Irish public from 2002 reveals that Irish Travellers are the least popular and most socially distant group of people in Ireland (O'Connell & Winston, 2006). They are also the most vulnerable, demonstrated by the fact that they score some of the lowest of all communities in most social indicators in Irish society; this includes immigrants and other marginalized communities. However, at the same time, there appears to be ample amount of services and funding for Travellers, particularly through Travellers' Organizations. Therefore, I ask: What is acting as a barrier between the Travellers and the social services available to them?

One of the first academics to study Travellers in Ireland, George Gmelch (1977), notes, "behavior is to a large degree shaped by the socioeconomic environment in which people live" (p. 163). Therefore, I seek the answer to my question first in macroeconomic trends. Aggleton and Parker (2003) call the current dominant economic trend of neoliberalism "an economy of stigmatization and exclusion" (p. 19). They therefore propose an in-depth study of stigma in order to understand its usefulness in the delivery of intervention and programs. Although they are writing about HIV/AIDs, stigma can certainty be applied to marginalized populations. Indeed, it is a concept that has been thoroughly neglected in terms of Irish Travellers who are often misrepresented as passive victims of discrimination.

The thesis engages the question through an ethnographic examination of Travellers', the Settled population's and the Workers' perceptions of Traveller identity and of Travellers' social

services, which includes government provided services for the public good such as education, housing, healthcare and welfare. I find that Travellers are, in fact, stigmatized and, as a result, actively resist this stigmatization. This leads to perceptions among the Settled population that the Travellers do not need, or even deserve, services. Thus, a misunderstanding emerges within the Settled population of what actually is hindering the connection between Travellers and their services. In this way, stigma is perpetuated, marginalization is increased, and the barrier continuously reinforced. By examining stigma as a dynamic process, this thesis contributes to the understanding of the Irish Travellers and provides information that can be useful in determining how best to engage them in social services.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 IRISH TRAVELLERS: HISTORY AND DEMOGRAPHICS

The Irish Travellers (the Travellers), also known as 'Tinkers', 'Pavee' and 'Itinerants', are an exclusive group of people from the Island of Ireland. They share common history, culture, language, customs and traditions. One of the most notable customs for which they are known is their traditional nomadic lifestyle (Gmelch, 1976). The Travellers have moved throughout the world to places such as Australia, the UK and the USA since their origins (Daly, Fitzpatrick, Kelleher & Whelan, 2012). There is no consistent estimate of the number of Travellers within Ireland; however, the 2011 national census found that there are an estimated 29,573 people within the Irish Travelling Community in the Republic of Ireland (Central Statistics Office, 2011). The estimated Traveller population constitutes less than 1% of the total Irish population of around 4 million (Crawford & Relethford, 2013). However, it is estimated that the number may actually be far higher due to chosen non-identification and difficulties associated with counting a partially mobile population (Cavaliero, 2011).

There are many nomadic peoples around the world. Most nomadic groups within Europe have a common ethnic ancestry with the Romani people from India (Bancroft, 2005). In contrast, the Travellers of Ireland are distinct from the Romani people. In fact, the Travellers have genes that are nearly identical, although still considered genetically distinct, to those of the Settled Irish

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population (Crawford & Relethford, 2013). Moreover, the Travellers share the English language, the Roman Catholic religion and have a similar physical appearance to the dominant culture (McElwee, 2003). Multiple theories exist regarding their origin. One theory suggests that they were previously part of Irish Society before being forced to separate as a result of hardships and delinquency (Gmelch, 1975). Another theory suggests that they are the descendants of the original inhabitants of Ireland, before even the coming of the Celts and Gaels, as early as the 6th century (McDonough & Murphy, 2000). It is, therefore, not certain if the Irish Travellers were previously part of Irish Settled population. Regardless, the question of their origins is an argument that continues today. The discussion has often been utilized to argue whether the Traveller identity should be viewed as a choice or a separate entity all together (Bhreatnach, 2006). Nevertheless, as McCann, O'Siochain and Ruane (1994) assert, Traveller identity cannot only be solved through research into the past, but in reference to the present state of the Irish Travellers' own understanding.

The Travellers score the lowest in almost all social indicators in Irish society. These indicators have remained significantly low relative to the Settled population despite much effort over the past few decades. For example, two-thirds of Travellers are educated only to a primary school level or below, compared to one-fifth of the Settled population. Furthermore, one-third of Irish Traveller households in mobile/temporary accommodation are without sewerage facilities and one-fifth of Travellers' households have no access to running water. Moreover, the life expectancy at birth for male Travellers is 61.7; the same as it was in 1987 and 15.1 years less than life expectancy is for Settled men. Overall, 17.5% of Travellers have one or more disabilities compared to 13% for Settled population. Finally, Traveller men are seven times more likely to die by suicide than Settled men (Central Statistics Office, 2011). Unfortunately, there is

far less official statistical information available about the wellbeing of Traveller women, although it is accepted that they fare worse then men on many levels due to multiple discriminations they face, both as women and as Travellers (Reilly, 2005).

2.2   TRAVELLER IDENTITY

In this thesis I will use the term 'identity' in acknowledgment of the conflict and current discussion concerning the semantics of Irish Travellers' collective identity. Travellers have previously been studied under three different concepts of identity: culture, race and ethnicity. Research often attempts to understand these three concepts in relation to those who are labeled "the others" in society (Brown, 2010, p. 186). It is rarely denied that Travellers have a unique culture of their own. However, there is ample discussion over whether Travellers constitutes a separate race or ethnicity. This discussion has also taken place among Travellers themselves (Brandi, 2013).

The concept of 'race' still enjoys common usage in both popular discourse and perception. However, social scientists have long understood the concept to have its origins in social construction (Downing & Husband, 2005). The birth of biological 'race' as a concept in the 19th century (Brown, 2010) marked the first development of Settled people's understanding of Travellers as inferior people. This concept is referred to as anti-Travellerism (MacLaughlin, 1996).

The concept of 'ethnicity' was created to contrast with the concept of race. Ethnicity also created a distinction that emphasized the physical separation between groups of people, but this distinction was achieved through historical process rather than by an innate quality. Furthermore,

the concept did not signify rank (Marshall, 1998). The increasing popularity of the concept of 'ethnicity' has called into question how to identify Traveller discrimination. Discrimination against Travellers has recently been argued as 'ethnocentrism' and even 'nationalism' as opposed to Anti-Traveller racism (Power, 2003). In fact, there is now a wide debate over whether the Travellers should be considered an ethnic group within the Irish Government (McVeigh, 2007). This debate is unofficially said to be coming to a conclusion by the end of 2015 with the Government granting Travellers ethnic status under law (Holland, 2014).

2.2.1 Traveller Culture

The concept of ethnicity had followed, and then included, the concept of culture. 'Culture' includes norms, traditions, values, and perspectives (Brown, 2010). Traveller culture is often referenced with their strict moral codes. The traditional Traveller moral code was respected among the Settled population in the past for its strength in religious values (Gmelch, 1975). Today, while still often respected, the moral code also often clashes with morals and values held in the modern Settled population (Hayes, 2006). The clash is on three levels: gender and sexual norms, the value of place identity, and the value of distinction and separateness.

First, the strict moral code of Travellers' gender identity and sexual identity is extremely conflicting to the Settled population. In the modern Settled society, particularly among youth, there is a common value, if not practice, of equality, such as between sexes and sexualities. However, the Travelling community retains a distinction of the roles of men and women and holds to a more strict religious code regarding of the normativity of heterosexuality (Joyce, Muldoon & Stevenson, 2013).

Second, the Traveller value of 'freedom' is at odds with the Settled community's sedentary ways. A difference between the Travellers and the Settled population lies in the

concept of 'place-identity', or the connection people have between 'the where' and 'the who'. For the Travellers, freedom often takes the form of the freedom of movement. Evidently, those who are nomadic have a much broader place-identity, or none at all, compared to those who are sedentary (Dixon & Durrheim, 2000). The place-identities of the Settled society and the Irish Travellers are in conflict because they are commonly perceived as unequal; nomadism is often thought of as the remnants of a lesser-developed, unhealthier age, while sedentarism is viewed as the epitome of human development (McVeigh, 1997).

Third, the Travellers' hold a value of distinction and separateness. This is particularly evident in the Traveller economy. The Travellers do not often adhere to the value of wage labor. In fact, they have successfully avoided it until recently, traditionally choosing to work instead in the informal sector of 'tinkering', 'begging' and trading (Gmelch, 1977). The Travellers then adapted when these economies proved unproductive as a result of economic change; in fact, little is known about the extent of their economic flexibilities (Bhreatnach, 2006). Travellers are often equated with crime because of the informal nature of their economy and their high criminal visibility (Kabachnik, 2009).

2.3   BARRIERS TO SOCIAL SERVICES

The Oxford dictionary defines social services as any Government provided services given for the "betterment of the community"; this includes education, health services, housing and welfare ("Social Services", 2015). Any impediment in accessing these services is referred to as a barrier. Yoder (2000) explains that barriers "expand descriptions of identity status to specifically include or exclude conditions over which an individual has little or no control, but which affect,

often profoundly, his or her developmental options" (p. 98). Therefore, it is vital to analyze barriers holistically with attention to exclusion and identity. Dekker and colleagues (2006) found multiple levels of barriers face minorities in accessing health services. Their findings suggest that barriers can be found at a patient level, a provider level and at a system level. This thesis attends to all three levels of analysis in order to understanding the barriers the Travellers face in accessing social services. My findings specifically focus on the 'provider' and the 'patient' levels. I discuss the 'systems' level through an in-depth analysis of social services' historical development in Ireland in section 4.3.

Marginalization is one of the causes of barrier creation. The aforementioned clash of morals and values serve to further marginalize the Travelling community. Past research has shown the extent of negative public opinion of the Travellers through media analysis. Travellers are often represented as violent, sly and backwards (Hayes, 2006). In fact, institutional discrimination is latent in their interactions with the Irish Police Force from whom they have less protection, while they are subjected to more monitoring than the Settled population (Mulcahy, 2012). The nature of marginalization has given social workers numerous dilemmas in providing direct services to Irish Travellers as a result of oppressive policies and practice (Cemlyn, 2000). In fact, a study found that social workers are still prone to discriminatory opinions, many viewing social work practice as ineffective due to Traveller lifestyle rather than external factors (Butler, 1983). Social workers face particular problems in helping Traveller women and children, who are often the most vulnerable members of a marginalized population (Allen, 2012).

2.3.1 Identity as a Barrier to Social Services

It is not a new idea that identity can act as a barrier to social services through further marginalization. It has been applied to gay men (Giugni, 1998), African American women

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(Burman, Chantler & Smailes, 2004), people with transgender identities (Silverschanz, Stotzer & Wilson, 2013), adolescents (Yoder, 2000), the Roma (Puckett, 2005) and, largely, people with mental illness (Alemany Monleon & Iannitelli Muscolo, 2004). In Ireland, specifically, there has been a great deal of research on immigrants' struggles with their identity as a result of assimilation policies (Christie, 2012).

The report for the task force on Irish Travellers in 1995 states that Travellers have many barriers to health care; these include, but are not limited to, prejudice of the public and service providers, Traveller mobility, varying perceptions on sickness and Traveller illiteracy (McElwee, 2003). The training manual from Kilkenny Traveller Community Movement agrees. The manual outlines main reasons for barriers such as "fear," "prejudice," "lack of confidence" and "discrimination" as well as "literacy" and "lack of transport." Most of the attention in these lists is on the emotional and mental barriers to access rather than the physical barriers. Furthermore, the same training manual notes that there has been a notable improvement over the years in availability of social services. For example, nearly 94% of Travellers have medical cards, meaning they have access to free health care. This presents the interesting situation that many of the Travellers' barriers to access are not from the physical lack of resources, but something else.

Modern Travellers have a legal right to medical cards, free education and financial support. However, as mentioned previously, they continue to score the lowest in all social indicators, including alcoholism, drugs, life expectancy, and literacy levels (Kruckenberg, 2011). The inconsistency between the apparent availability of resources and the lack of improvement in Traveller conditions leads to the undeniable truth that there are still barriers in the way. Researchers are currently finding that barriers to Travellers' access to resources generally lie in social exclusion, disadvantage and discrimination (Bloomer, Hamilton & Potter, 2014; Knipe,

McCartan & Reynolds, 2003; McVeigh, 2007; Power, 2003) whether, for example, in education (Bloomer, Hamilton & Potter, 2014), work exclusion or political participation (O'Connell, 2006). Many explain that this barrier between the marginalized population and their services lie in the fact that they may be conducted in a culturally insensitive, ignorant or even bias manner (Puckett 2005; Silverschanz, Stotzer & Wilson, 2013). Negative service delivery results in feelings of low self-worth among the marginalized group and therefore, fears in accessing these social services (Allen 2013).

Solutions have been proposed to improve Travellers' access to services. They generally consist of increased education among the Settled population in respecting and understanding Traveller identity, particularly in the case of service providers (Bryan, 2009; Cavaliero, 2011; Cemlyn, 2008; Dion, 2008). Travellers' rights groups suggest a similar approach (Pavee Point, 2011). However, Bryan (2009) argues against the simplicity of this strategy. Likewise, I assert in this thesis that exclusion is far more complex than simple discrimination; the current inconsistent perceptions of Traveller identity have resulted in the stigmatization of Traveller identity.

Stigmatization as a process in which identity is rendered a barrier to social services, has mostly only been studied in the relation to mental illness. A barrier is created for those with mental illness through the stigma process of the labeling those without disabilities as 'us' and those with disabilities as 'them' (Alemany Monleon & Iannitelli Muscolo, 2004). This process results in a social distancing; a similar process undergone by modern Irish Travellers (Puckett, 2005). However, identity as a barrier through stigmatization has not been fully been applied to Travellers and, where the word 'stigma' has been used, it is described only passively. In this thesis I argue that the stigmatization process of Traveller identity has placed the identity itself as a barrier to social services.

2.4   SCOPE OF ARGUMENT

When I began this study, I first intended to research how the identity formation of the Travellers affected their access to social services. I soon was forced to come to terms with the active nature of identity formation. Identity is, indeed, a power struggle. Therefore, I came to center my argument on Travellers as active rather than passive victims in the larger process of stigmatization. This argument fully acknowledges and expands on the fact that Travellers face heavy discrimination, whether under the name of anti-Traveller racism or otherwise. Second, I discuss both macro global economic shifts and micro ideological shifts in order to provide a thorough analysis of stigma. Due to the broad nature of the study, my findings cannot be considered an exhaustive needs assessment. Rather, I attempt to understand trends, perspectives, and experiences. Third, I take into account the ecological theory of the person in their environment and therefore attempt to prevent over generalization through the maintenance of individuality and specificity of those who appear in the research. Finally, the research is only applicable to the modern Travellers and makes no assumptions about the perceptions and self-identities of Travellers throughout history.

3.0   METHODS

3.1   RESEARCH DESIGN

The study utilizes a qualitative design of field research through in-depth interviews and observations. This methodology was chosen as a result of its ability to explore abstract ideas and perceptions. Furthermore, it allowed for greater research validity due to the mobile life of the Irish Travellers, especially during the summers. Finally, this design granted me the opportunity to become well acquainted with an exclusive group of people while, simultaneously, remain respectful to the sensitive nature of the Travelling community.

3.1.1   Research Approach

The research was conducted from an interpretivist perspective, thereby recognizing that social reality is socially constructed through people's interactions with each other and the world around them. More specifically, I qualitatively examined the interaction of perceptions and ideas between three groups of people: the Travellers, the general Settled population and people from the Settled population who worked with Travellers in the delivering of services (the Workers). I selected the research approach to better analyze identity and determine perceptions of Travellers' social services. My approach is similar to the process of ethnomethodology; an ethnomethodological approach attempts to understand "how meaning is negotiated through the process of interaction with others" (Hesse-Bieber & Leavy, 2011, p. 20).

3.1.2 Research Questions

I investigate the question of how differences in the perception of Traveller Identity, between the Travellers themselves and the Settled population, act as a barrier to social services through the process of stigmatization. The question takes into account the many perspectives and influences on Irish Travellers' identity that, in turn, inform perceptions of what type, what kind and how many social services Travellers should receive. Namely, the question accounts for both the external factor of global economic trends and the internal factor of the power struggle among the various perceptions of Traveller identity. Therefore, the research question does not put individual responsibility on the Travellers for their current negative relationship with their social resources. Simultaneously, the research question also refutes the concept of Travellers as passive victims in the power struggle.

I developed and tested my research question over a period of time in response to the inadequacy of my original research question of how the identity formation of the Irish Travellers affects their access to social services. The previous question rendered identity formation a simple process that is impacted by a one-way discrimination from the discriminator to the discriminated. The discriminated are only described as passive victims in their own linear identity formation. Furthermore, research design prevented a reliable response to the question of identity formation because I only researched Traveller identity and its role as a barrier to social services as it now stands *in current day* rather than its creation throughout history.

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

The sampling frame was within Kilkenny, Ireland and consisted of three main groupings of people: The Irish Travelling community, the Settled population and people from the Settled population who work with Travellers (the Workers). I chose to study the Travellers and the Settled population in order to conceptualize the interplay between Travellers' self-identity and their perceived identity in the dominant Settled population. Furthermore, I separated Workers from the rest of the Settled population because they are in the unique position of understanding what social services are actually given and how Travellers react to these services.

I met and spoke to many of the Settled population. The Settled population consisted of those inside and outside of Kilkenny because the Settled population showed no variation in opinion relative to location. The studied Settled population was from County Kilkenny, County Dublin, County Tipperary, County Clair and County Limerick. I often studied the Workers on the Traveller sites, often inside or near their respective community center or in the KTCM office.

According to a Traveller headcount by Kilkenny County Council in 2012, there are an estimated 177 Traveller families in Kilkenny County. However, there is no count on the number of individual Travellers. Moreover, I do not have exact information on how many families reside on each site. I studied Travellers at three distinct Traveller sites within the county of Kilkenny: the Heborn site, the Wetland Site and the Rosbercon site. The three sites are very different from one another. While the Wetlands and the Heborn Travellers are known to have a tinkering past, the Rosbercon Travellers' old economy was based in trade. Every site generally consisted of a large extended family. I describe the studied Traveller sites below.

The Wetlands site is located down a long, winding road, just off a main road in Kilkenny. It is out of sight from public viewing because of its distance from the road and the fact that it is

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obscured by bushes and farmland. The site is surrounded on three sides by concrete walls. There is a high apartment complex located in the distance behind the site. Horses were fenced into a small green area in front of the site. The site is very dirty and, on one occasion, a large pile of raw meat sat outside for days. There are many dogs, mainly very thin and sickly in appearance, walking around looking for food. Sulkies, the two-wheeled horse drawn carts unique to Travellers in Ireland, are scattered around the site. I counted a total of five caravans. Furthermore, there is one small, county council house set apart where multiple families live. The community center is located in a small concrete building in the center of the site. On the side of the center, there is a little play area for children with deteriorating equipment. The site is overcrowded. Mostly only men can be seen outside on occasion, drinking and talking. The women usually stay inside their respective caravans.

The Heborn site is a drastic change in comparison. It is located on a main road, behind a McDonalds. The walls that surround this site are low and well constructed. Therefore, the site can easily been seen from the road. There are around five Caravans. Another wall separates the caravans from about four county council houses. A moderate sized community center is located at the end of the row of caravans. This site is very clean. There are no dogs and their horses are kept away from the site. A pipe of running water provides an area to wash under outside. The office of Kilkenny Traveller Community Movement (KTCM), one of the local Travellers rights group described further below, is nearby, down the road. Most women from the Heborn site participated or even worked with the KCTM. Every time I visited the Heborn site, many people, both men and women, were outside talking, laughing and playing.

I only saw the Rosbercon site once. The Rosbercon site is in the country of Kilkenny. It is only surrounded by open fields and consists of a row of large separate houses, each with their

own fenced plot of land. One plot has a house that is under construction and another only contains a small caravan in place of a house; this family is waiting for the county council to build a house. There stands a very large community center at the end of the row of houses.

I also visited a Traveller site in Shannon, County Claire and use it as a case study in my research. This site is off of a main road that has a "no sulky" sign on a nearby roundabout. I did not see any animals on the site. It is large and clean; consisting of multiple houses with small trailers parked in the front. The houses are too small to sleep in and families sleep outside in trailers.

3.3   DATA COLLECTION

I lived in the house of a family friend only a couple of miles away from the Wetlands site. I did not walk to the site because the Workers were worried for my safety walking alone. Instead, every weekday the leader of the Wetlands Homework Club collected me and drove us to the Wetlands. The Homework Club is a program run by the KCTM. They run multiple programs for Travellers in Kilkenny including a Community Health Project and a Community Development Project. It is a branch of the national organization: the Traveller Community Movement.

I worked at the afterschool program for ages 5-12 from 1:30pm to 3:30pm. From Monday to Thursday we stayed in the on-site, cramped community center; we cooked food for the children, helped them with their homework and socialized with them. The men of the site sometimes entered the center, especially at the beginning and at the end of the afterschool program when we were setting up or cleaning. We also spoke to the men on occasion before the

children arrived from school and before we left; they were often talking in groups outside the center. The women were usually inside their caravans. It was far easier to observe the Traveller men compared to the women for this reason. On two occasions I worked at the afterschool program at the two other Travellers sites in Kilkenny in order to meet other families within the Traveller Community in Kilkenny. On Fridays we would take the children on outings to the park. I was able to observe Settled population's interactions and responses to the children. I soon noted, the Settled population could easily identify the children as Travellers by sight alone.

I sometimes went to meetings in the mornings with the KTCM office. This allowed me to meet Travellers of other sites, speak to some of the Workers and see how the organization with which I was working functioned. In the evenings I went to the library, attended groups, ate at the house of my landlady's friends, and, once, participated as a volunteer in a large comedy festival. My many activities permitted me to better interact with the Settled population of Kilkenny, speak about my research and collect information by asking questions and engaging in conversations about Travellers. I was also able to make connections with other people who worked with Travellers. One such person took me to her house in Shannon, County Claire, where she worked at the Traveller site nearby. I visited that Traveller site and worked with her as she invited some of the Traveller children over to her house.

On the weekends I frequently left Kilkenny to visit other areas nearby such as Limerick, Tipperary, Waterford and Dublin. As I was with Irish friends, I had the opportunity to stay in many Settled people's houses and attend multiple gatherings, including small concerts. At these times, I was able to collect a lot of information from a variety of age groups on the Settled population's interpretation of Traveller identity and their access to resources. I gained a better understanding of the universality of opinions and perceptions the Settled population hold about

the Travellers. One weekend, I was taken to visit an infamous town named Rathkeal, Limerick that is popularly connected to international crime that media describes as having rendered the Travellers living there very wealthy. In Rathkeal there is a decreasing population of Settled people and a growing population of Travellers owning large houses in gated communities. However, they only occupy these houses a few months a year, often only living in the front in their caravans.

I collected the data throughout my stay in Kilkenny over the duration of six weeks, from May to mid-July 2014. I collected the data via multiple methods, including participant observation and semi-structured interviews.

3.3.1 Participant Observation

My first task of participant observation was to make myself familiar with the Travelling community and to allow them time to become comfortable with me. I did this by working almost every weekday with the KTCM. KTCM is a member within the national Irish Traveller Movement, a Travellers rights and service delivery organization within Ireland. I assisted children with their homework during a homework program in a community center in the Traveller Wetlands Site. I also worked once in the Heborn Site and once in the Rosbercon Site. As per agreement with the KTCM, I volunteered my time with the homework program and they then kindly helped connect me to the typically very isolated Travelling community. They did this through actively introducing me to the Travellers in Kilkenny, as well as providing me the opportunity to meet individuals myself. I used my relationship with the children in the homework program to form bonds between their families and myself. I did not conduct any research on the children by any means beyond observation. I also used my relationship with

people in the Settled population, both within and outside Kilkenny, to observe reactions and opinions toward the Traveller Community and their services.

Workers had previously warned me that the thought of being formally researched would make the Travellers particularly wary of me. Therefore, I attempted to make my interactions as informal as possible. The informal nature of my interactions prevented me from taking notes during our communications. Instead, I carried around a small notebook and wrote notes when I found myself alone. I used what I wrote in the notebook to help type up field notes on my computer each night while my interactions were fresh in my mind. Later, after returning to the U.S., I further elaborated on some of my field notes.

3.3.2 Interviews

I interviewed the Travellers, the general Settled population and the Workers. Please see Appendix A for a full list of interview demographics. An overview of the demographics can be found in the following section, 3.3.3.

The interviews were semi-structured and informal. As mentioned previously, the informality was particularly necessary when speaking with the Irish Travellers because questions from outsiders to the Travelling community are often seen as suspicious. For this reason, I did not bring my full sheet of interview questions. Instead, I memorized them and allowed the conversation to stray to what the interviewee thought was worth discussing around the presented topics. Thus, I was able to collect more accurate data on the opinions of the Travellers. The necessity of informality was particularly evident in the Travellers nervous and indignant responses when asked if the interview could be recorded. In fact, I stopped asking to record after only two weeks of interviewing because the responses to the request were very negative. Instead

I took limited notes during the interviews, writing most of them afterwards to aid in the feeling of informality and, therefore, their comfort.

The interviews with the Travellers were mostly with married women. The community's gender roles rendered it inappropriate for me, as an unmarried, young woman, to interview men individually. The interviews lasted from 10 minutes to 20 minutes. They took place either in the Traveller's site, sometimes within their own caravan/house, or at their local community center.

The questions were split into three sections: background information, identity information and information regarding resources. I used the same questions when both interviewing the Travellers and the Workers, however, I phrased the questions differently. For example, I would ask, "what do you think are the Travellers' experiences and opinions." rather than "what is your experience and opinions." I also asked about their opinions regarding Travellers' place in society. Please see Appendix B for the full list of questions.

Finally, the interviews with the Settled population were the most informal. The topic of Travellers is one in which many are strongly opinionated. Therefore, I mostly only listened during interviews. I only asked a few questions when I wanted to guide the interviewee to discussing the particular topics of interest; namely, how they view the Travellers and their social services.

3.3.3 **Participants**

As expected, the Community needed time to build a level of trust and comfort with me. I, therefore, waited until after three weeks of engagement before beginning to ask for interviews. The interview participants were chosen purposively and systematically by means of non-probability snowball and convenience theoretical sampling. I found Traveller participants by using the connections I made through the homework program. I mostly only interviewed

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Traveller women in acknowledgment and sensitivity of their gender roles; as stated previously, it would have been inappropriate for me as a young, unmarred woman to interview a man. The Worker participants were found similarly to the Travelling community and as well through my various activities in Kilkenny. I found Settled participants solely through my various activities and trips.

In total, I interviewed twenty-six people; seven people or 19% from the general Irish population, seven people or 25% were those who worked with Travellers, and fourteen people or 50% were from the Travelling community. Of the Travellers interviewed, four people or 29% were from the Wetlands site, eight people or 57% were from Heborn site and two people or 14% were from Rosbercon.

3.3.4 Role in Field

My role as a researcher in the Settled community was fully that of an overt participant observer. I constantly worked to make my role within the Traveller community known. However, in practice, my role was often not recognized. This is due to my low social status as a young, unmarried woman. Therefore, the extent of my study and my role as a researcher was often over-looked. I believe this played greatly to my advantage because my lower social status prevented my questions and me from being perceived as intimidating. Furthermore, very few people within Travelling community in Ireland have a higher education. Consequently, there was also a lack of understanding of the academic realm of research. Thus, Travellers appeared very comfortable with me overhearing conversations and explaining situations to me they would often not share.

3.4   DATA ANALYSIS

I used an iterative process to analyze the data. I looked for common themes that emerged in answer to my research questions using the constant comparative method. I did this by sifting through my field notes and writing codes beside every line. The codes that emerged for the Settled community were "frustration," "hostile attitude," "dissociation attitude," "Travellers as undeserving" and "mistrust of Traveller." The codes that emerged for the Travellers were "independence," "need of basic resources," "frustration," "mistrust of Settled community," "resistance" and "internalization." Finally, the codes that emerged for the Workers were "cultural preservation attitudes," "Integrationist attitudes," "physical barriers to services," "judgmental attitudes" and "needed social help." For all groups, I used the codes "Traveller identity as innate," "Traveller identity as choice" and "discrimination."

Next, I created two alternate versions of the field notes. The first version was grouped by code within the three categories of Traveller, Settled population and Workers. The second version of field notes were grouped by the individual person to which the notes referred; this was still accomplished within the categories of Traveller, Settled population and Worker. In this section I also created subsections of age, gender and level of connectivity to the other population. When these groupings were complete, I noted trends within each group and forming theories around them. I tested these theories in various situations and interactions written in my field notes, particularly noting what seemed like anomalies. The findings are presented in chapter 4 of this thesis. The anomalies within my findings are discussed and explained.

I used data from outside Kilkenny to cross-examine findings from within Kilkenny. I have used these throughout my essay. My findings were all equally supported by the external data. I have therefore, used the external data in discussion of my findings. I have clearly

identified when I am using external findings for the Travellers in acknowledgement that every Traveller site varies. In contrast, the external data from the Settled community, including the Workers presented no distinctions from each other based on location or nearby Traveller site. Therefore, I do not specify when I use external findings for the Settled community and Workers in the findings.

3.5   REFLEXIVITY

I used myself as an instrument in the collecting of data. Therefore I acknowledge that my history and identity impacted my research design, data collection and analysis. I describe my previous relationship with Ireland and Irish Travellers below:

I lived in Ireland for three years from age 15 to 18. I spent the first of those years in Kilkenny, before moving to Dublin. I never lived more than a few miles from Travellers' sites in both Kilkenny and Dublin. However, over those three years I had very little interaction with the Travellers. In fact, I took little notice of them. When I did have interactions with Travellers, I had not identified them as Travellers. For example, when I was 16 I volunteered for an afterschool program for children and, while I did notice and was confused by a difference in behavior between some children, I only now recognize many of those children as Traveller children. Furthermore, I remember hearing my peers call one another derogatory names, but only now understand that many of these names originate from names the Settled community derogatorily called Travellers. Finally, I had known a few people who worked with the Travellers, but we did not speak of it and I did not know what it truly meant to 'work' with Travellers.

I presumed that I had no preconceived ideas when entering this research. However, I have been forced to remember what caused me to enter the research in the first place. I was asked multiple times to reflect on my own expressions of discrimination during various social work classes. It was during these exercises that I remembered the time I crossed to the opposite side of a road to avoid being near the permanent Traveller site near my home in Dublin. I knew nothing of those people, other than the odd warning to be careful and, yet, I was scared of them. I do not think of this memory with fear any longer, but with deep embarrassment.

I retained a close enough connection with the Irish society and culture over the years after moving away that I was comfortable with working in the Irish environment. Furthermore, I already had contacts into the Travelling community. I was, therefore, an insider among the Irish society. However, throughout the research, the Travellers simultaneously viewed me as an outsider, to the Travelling community and the Settled Irish population. My outsider status may have allowed me to avoid being associated with either side amidst the great tensions that exists between the Irish Settled population and the Travelling community.

Finally, I also acknowledge my biases as part of a Settled community. My position as part of a Settled community prevented me from completely integrating with the Travellers. As a result, I was conscious of my limitations in collecting information through interviews alone. It is for this reason I used a multidimensional process of data collection.

In conclusion, I feel I was in the ideal position to conduct this research, as both an insider and an outsider to Irish society. I have been propelled forward by my memory of my own past prejudice that prompted me to conduct this study. I hope to have produced useful information by illuminating the very factors that caused me to act in such a discriminatory manner toward a group of people I then knew little about all those years ago.

4.0   FINDINGS

4.1   INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I describe and discuss the research findings. First, I examine opinions and perceived use of social services among the Travellers, the Settled population and the Workers in section 4.2. The results indicate a complexity surrounding Travellers' barriers to social services. Therefore, I am compelled to use a multifaceted analysis of both macro and micro levels.

In section 4.3, I analyze the macro global economic trend of neoliberalism. I discuss how the socio-economic impacts and ideological shifts in Ireland are a connection to the changing relationship between social services and the Irish Travellers. Thus, I uncover an economy of stigmatization. Next, I analyze the micro levels of the ideological impacts by first comparing Traveller self-identity to perceived Traveller identity among the Settled population in section 4.4, thereby uncovering the existence of stigmatization of the Irish Traveller identity.

Finally, I analyze stigma as a dynamic process in section 4.5, by examining the stigmatized Traveller identity in terms of Travellers' dynamic reaction to discrimination through internalization and resistance. Therefore, I consider how this struggle affects the Travellers' and the Settled population's perceptions of the availability of Travellers' social services. I conclude that the barrier to Travellers' social services lies in the stigmatization of Traveller identity.

4.2 PERCEPTIONS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

"The real poverty of the Traveller community in Ireland to-day is not primarily lack of material goods (although many of them indeed suffer from poverty as well), but stems rather from the fact that they are the most despised, discriminated against and marginalized group in Irish Society" (O'Dwyer, 1988, p. 14)

In the following section I argue that the Settled population, the Travellers and the Workers have inconsistent, and sometimes contradictory, perceptions on the Travellers' social services. These findings indicate a great complexity in understanding Travellers' barrier to social services.

4.2.1 Settled population

Most of the Settled population expressed frustration at the relationship between Travellers and social services. All Settled people with whom I spoke assumed that the Travellers either have ample services or too many. The frustration the Settled population expressed can be placed within the spectrum of dissociation to hostility. The Dissociated Settled people, the majority of the Settled population, was characterized by seemingly neutral, although inherently negative as I will explain further, distant or confused feelings toward the Travelling community. They often expressed their criticisms through body language and cryptic remarks. Meanwhile, the Hostile Settled people were characterized by blatant anger towards the Travelling community and expressed their strong feelings verbally.

The Settled people who took the more hostile approach, outwardly describe the Travellers as being 'undeserving' on the moral ground that they acted inferior; most referring to

Travellers' "ingratitude" and "greed" in using social services. One Settled man suggested that that I should "take everything they tell (me) and cut it in half" when I ask the Travellers about their need for social services. A Settled woman explained that the Travellers believed that "they (are) on a different par" than the Settled population and that they think they deserve better services and extra help.

Those who were more dissociated emphasized that they were no more deserving than other poor within the Settled community; some insinuating that they were sometimes treated better. As a Settled young man explained, while it was good for Travellers to have services, they should be treated equally to the many other settled people who are waiting for houses; they should not be treated better. A Settled woman explained with humor how she heard the local veterinarian ask the Travellers "if you don't pay for the horses, how can I?". She was indicating that Travellers should not receive any special treatment. For these Settled people, Travellers are clearly perceived as a "subculture of poverty" (Crowley, 2005, p. 232), a poor subgroup within society in need of help, rather than a separate group of people entirely.

However, it is vital to note that often times those who presented more dissociation showed great discomfort in actively and externally passing these judgments against Travellers. They indicated a fear of being considered discriminatory. This is a reoccurring phenomenon that will be described further in section 4.5 of this thesis. Nevertheless, these clear hesitations represent a contradiction within the minds of the Settled population between the desire to be fair and their true feelings of frustration and confusion at the perceived relationship between Travellers and their services.

Furthermore, all Settled people indicated some level of mistrust of the Travellers or their intentions. For example, most Settled people made particular mention of the giving and the

subsequent poor treatment of the public housing the Travellers receive. Those who were more hostile clearly stated that Travellers could not be trusted with the houses. One Settled man criticized the waste of a house and danger created when, he claimed, Travellers keep burning down the houses they are given when someone dies. Those who were more hostile did not think Travellers needed extra assistance and often believed that Travellers were being treated far better than Settled people. One Settled woman, a retired teacher who taught classrooms with many Traveller children, said, "they pretend they do not have much, but you can tell by the weddings how much money they have." She further explained that "they have everything thrown at them," referring to the fact that their uniforms, meals, books and one-on-one help with teachers are all paid for. In fact, many Settled people expressed the notion that Travellers have enough money from their informal economy, so they do not need services, but these Settled people believe that they use them anyway.

Those more dissociated expressed mistrust through humor. They referred to Travellers' cleverness, slyness and silliness when using the social system to their advantage. A young Settled man explained how Travellers would come into his family's shop and try to take their own family members' deposits. Another Settled man explained that because the Settled population is now trying to reach out to Travellers' by offering them services, Travellers should perhaps try to fit into society. The Dissociated Settled people also made mention of Travellers' mistreatment of houses, however did so it a far gentler, less direct manner than the Hostile Settled people.

4.2.2 **Travellers**

I expected to find that Travellers would have a strong opinion on their right to access social services when they want, in response to the Settled population's blatant allegations. In

contrast, when I asked Travellers whether they felt they needed any social services, they either claimed that they just wanted "a house to call [their] own", other basic necessities or they claimed they needed absolutely nothing at all.

The Travellers who had all the basic facilities, for example, those from the Heborn and the Rosbercon site, often claimed that they did not receive any council help and that they "do it all themselves." For example, they emphasized that they keep their own site clean. They usually referred to how hard they worked, their own perseverance and on one occasion, even "luck". I noticed through observation that the Heborn and Rosbercon sites were well kept, that people appeared healthier than those in the Wetlands and that their children often go to the general school in the area, rather than the one for children with disabilities.

On the other hand, many Travellers in the Wetlands site expressed only a desire to have basic resources to which they do not have access; a water source as well as better housing. Wetlands Travellers did not openly admit to other needs. However, upon further observation I also noticed a frustration with regards to the school system. One Traveller mother from the Wetlands indicated that the schools needed to be improved because her children were always let out too early, a problem she felt was due to direct discrimination.

Furthermore, there is still a sense of aggravation and mistrust at the present state of social services. They explain that the Settled people "promise a lot and give nothing," how the "Settled get jobs" and how "you can't walk in and be a Traveller" in accessing services. A group of men explained how the "law treats people differently." However, it is worth mentioning that the men also expressed acceptance and importance of the law enforcement when necessary; this was evident when, after explaining a personal situation that occurred to me in the past, they advised me that I should have gone to the police.

In general, there was a strong emphasis on independence from all of the Travelling community. The notion that they do everything on their own was evidently held as a strong value within the community. However, most importantly, the Travellers were clarifying their independence from the Settled community. When it was necessary to show dependence, it was only for the most basic of human needs.

4.2.3 Workers

The Workers express another opinion of the Travelling community's relation to social services. Workers' emphasis was on the need to improve the Travelling community's social indicators such as alcoholism rates, suicide, poor education and literacy levels and inequality of women, those with disabilities and with non-heterosexual orientations. There was a further emphasis on Travellers' accommodation needs. All Workers showed a desire to help the Travellers, and, therefore, all can be said to have good intentions.

However, there was little agreement in how social services should address these agreed upon needs. I have found two main categories of Workers: those with a more cultural preservation approach (the Cultural Preservationists) and those with a more integration approach (the Integrationists). The cultural preservation approach was characterized by the strong desire to protect the Traveller culture and way of life from overt pressure and oppression from the Settled population. Therefore, they believe services should be fully adapted to fit Travellers' traditional lifestyle. In contrast, the Integrationist approach was characterized by the want to protect Travellers from negative factors associated with marginalization. Therefore, the Integrationists' idea of social services focused on Traveller education and introducing Travellers' to other, healthier ways of living.

Generally, the Workers fit within these two extremes; however, conflicts existed between those who had presented strong affiliations. I witnessed two arguments in total. One disagreement began when I asked two Workers their opinions on the solution to Travellers' poor social indicators, the lack of housing and the poor relationship between the Travellers and Settled population. One Worker, a strong Cultural Preservationist, emphasized how moral Travellers are compared to the Settled population and how attempts to integrate them will result in loss of "culture" and "way of life". She further explained how Settled people could, in fact, learn from Travellers. However, the other Worker countered saying that Travellers' low social indicators show that Travellers do not have a good way of life. Therefore, for her, integration is a good option for those Travellers that want to be integrated or, in other words, those who want a better way of life. The Integrationist Worker did not appear to associate integration with the loss of culture, as the Cultural Preservationist did, but only with the improvement of quality of life.

Not only were there conflicts between Workers, but also between two main Traveller organizations in Kilkenny. The conflict was over the use of resources. For example, these two organizations utilized the same community building in the Wetlands site and there were many complaints regarding the cleanliness of the other organization. There were tense feelings toward each other; both organizations criticized each other in how they delivered services to Travellers and how their resources were treated.

All Workers also spoke of some physical problems Travellers have in accessing social services due to discrimination in policies and individuals of the general Settled population, although the Cultural Preservationists spoke of this more than others. Many shared the opinion that many offered services are not sensitive to Traveller culture, and, therefore, that Travellers naturally do not use them. For example, one Worker explained that the Kilkenny city council had

previously appointed a nurse especially for the Travellers. The first nurse was not very respected or listened to within the Travelling community because she was advocating for contraceptive use, which has traditional been against the Travellers' belief system. The second nurse who replaced her, however, was very liked because, instead, she taught Traveller women how to have babies more safely rather than how not to have them at all. However, many Settled people in Kilkenny felt it was unfair for Travellers to have their own nurse and soon, the position of a Traveller public health nurse was eliminated. The courts under the Equal Status Act, one Worker explains, are handling blatant discrimination. For example, one parent told me that the school is paying their child to leave too early in the day; her and KTCM intend to look into whether this is discrimination and then, maybe take it to the courts.

Other than inadequacy of housing, other accommodation policies and the speed with which Travellers are given the accommodation, the Workers did not criticize the services offered as much as *how* they are offered, in terms of cultural sensitively. No workers denied the cash benefits the Travellers received such as unemployment income or their access, although slow, to public housing. However, Workers explain that the main problem Travellers' seemed to face is how to get the Travellers to use the many resources that are available to them, such as education and health services. For example, there is much support given from Traveller organizations to keep the children in school for as long as possible with help such as special tutoring. However, many continue to leave school early. Furthermore, although Travellers have a higher likelihood of personal problems, including depression and drugs, they generally do not seek to receive help from social services. These were the sources of constant frustrations among the Workers.

Interestingly, many Workers also expressed annoyance or a judgmental resignation at Travellers' attitudes toward social services. One explained with disgust after giving out free gifts

to the children that, if you give them an inch, they will take a mile. Another Worker explained "you need to leave (the Travellers) behind you when you (leave the site), otherwise you will have a line of Travellers waiting at your door" asking for more help from you. Furthermore, the Workers also refer to false discrimination. For example, when a Traveller indicated that she was discriminated against when she wanted a job at a hairdresser, one Worker explained to me later that she did not consider this discrimination because the Traveller simply did not have the requirements.

4.2.4 **Discussion**

The Settled population, the Travellers and the Workers have very different perceptions of Travellers' social services. The above analysis raises multiple questions. How can such contradictory ideas exist surrounding the Travellers' social services provision and use? How can Travellers not use many social services, as claimed by the Travellers, but, according to the Settled population, be offered more than the Settled community? I believe the answer lies in the contradictions, disagreements and frustrations of the Workers who hold, or at least know of the Settled populations' perceptions, yet also have a direct understanding of the relationship between Travellers and their services.

The questions presented in this section must be studied with their complexities. Therefore, in the following sections, I analyze macro economic changes and the resulting the ideological shifts affecting how Traveller identity relates to their access to social services.

4.3   **STIGMA OF NEOLIBERALISM**

"The transformations in social and economic organization profoundly affected the

Travellers' position in Irish Society" (Bhreatnach, 2006, p. 142)

I enter into a discussion of macro trends of social service exclusion to further explain

these findings in a wider context. In this section, I connect a large array of existing sociological,

historical, political and social work research in order to conceptualize what neoliberal changes

have meant for Ireland's social services. Finally, I associated neoliberalism with the disguised

stigmatization of marginalized groups, particularly as experienced by the Irish Travellers.

4.3.1   **Economic Change**

A significant change has occurred in the dominant perception and delivery of social

services over the past 35-40 years within Ireland. The change occurred in the context of

economic and social trends associated with the discourse of neoliberalism. Neoliberalism is

characterized by the promotion of individualism, free markets and privatization and is supported

by the ideology of natural self-regulation (Steger, 2013).

Ireland's acceptance of neoliberal policies has been dated to the 1980s and had

immediately led to the opening of Ireland to international trade and investment on a large scale.

However, as Steger (2013) explains, political decisions of global interdependence emerged from

certain economic environments that were created in the 1970s. Therefore, in this section I

analyze economic change as it occurred beginning in the 1970s, rather than the 1980s. Ireland's

economic environment reflected the change toward neoliberalism through its succession into the

European Union in 1973 when the decision was made to surrender self-sustainability in favor of

the global market economy (Haughton, 1998). These changes had a ripple affect throughout all Irish society that ranged from the socio-economic to the ideological level.

4.3.2 Socio-Economic Impact

Through the review and conceptualization of literature, I identify three major overarching, and at times unique, socio-economic impacts of neoliberalism on social services in Ireland. These impacts consist of increased urbanization, the restructuring of the role of government and the acceptance of economic fluctuations.

First neoliberalism symbolized the end to a self-sustaining Ireland as the State moved towards further industrialization. A previous decline in agriculture and an increase in available plastics in the liberalization and "modernization" period of the 1950s and 60s had already undercut much of the rural economy (Gmelch, 1977; Helleiner, 2003). Thus, the Traveller relationship with the Settled community was already threatened when previous economic change had already rendered much of their multifaceted informal economy, which included tinkering, animal trading and temporary farm laboring, nearly obsolete (Gmelch, 1976; Bhreatnach, 2006). However, in the 1960s, agriculture was still the largest industry, accounting for one-third of labor and had far from disappeared. Yet, in 1995 agriculture only constituted one-eighth of the work force (Commins, 1995). Part of this drastic change is due to the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) that politically guided further urbanization of Irish society (Fanning, 2004b). The loss of agriculture symbolized the official end of Traveller traditional economy and therefore the official end of a mutually reliant relationship between the Settled population and the Travellers (Moore, 2012). Thereafter, the Travelling community was increasingly viewed as an unnecessary nuisance and burden, the more they became dependent on Settled society's social services, such as welfare (Breathnach & Breathnach, 2006). The Travellers thus adapted to new informal

economies, further marginalizing the community from the Settled population (Bhreatnach, 2006).

Second, the Irish government restructured its relationship with the newly developed welfare state. Ireland possesses an Anglo-Saxon welfare state. An Anglo-Saxon welfare state only claims the responsibility of providing the minimum safety nets comprised of social services for its citizens, as opposed to providing universal care. Ireland is unique, however, in that it is a weak Anglo-Saxon welfare state in comparison to the United States or the UK (Richardson & Rush, 2007). Therefore, neoliberalism's socio-economic impact takes a less obvious form in Ireland. The comparison between strong and weak welfare states is evidenced by the enormous Traveller emigration from the UK to Ireland during the 70s and 80s as they tried to escape the worsening social exclusions caused by the recent neoliberalization of a strong Anglo-Saxon welfare state (McLaughlin, 1998). Social conditions were, and continue to be, far better in Ireland for marginalized populations. Ireland can be called a weak welfare state because Irish policies have often considered the value of social solidarity and cohesion; a value that is possibly due Christianity's important role within the State. Ireland's welfare state had its inception in the age of protectionism during the 1930s, soon after independence (Georghegan & Powell, 2006). At that time, care was given almost solely from religious charitable organizations and the family (McCoy & Peddle, 2012). Welfare grew more rapidly during the liberalization period (Powell, 1992). The Irish State officially began to be involved with Travellers as a result of liberalization in the 1960s, where before State Traveller involvement was only sporadic (Bhreatnach, 2006). The initial publication of the Commission on Itinerancy in 1963 produced one of the first systematic attempts to address problems of increasing Traveller urbanization by recommending that local governments provide

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official Traveller sites with the goal of eventually housing the inhabitants. In hindsight, the goal of Traveller assimilation, although modernly disputed as a greatly ethnocentric and inadequate strategy, nevertheless was one of the first social solutions to what was seen as the social problem of Travellers at the time (Norris & Winston, 2005). However, from the 1970s to the present, there has been increased dependence for social services on the voluntary sector and the informal sector once more. The 1970s also marked the increased dependence on the private sector (Fanning, 2004b). Therefore the Irish Anglo-Saxon model has been strengthening. The strengthening of the Angle-Saxon model took the form of the creation and evolution of social partnerships in Ireland.

The creation of social partnerships supported the Irish government's reduced role of directly providing social services. Social partnerships are characterized by increased responsibility on behalf of non-governmental organizations to provide social service, thus, increasing competition amongst service organizations (Georghegan & Powell, 2006). Through the concept of pluralistic social partners, or the segmentation of political responsibilities, the government is able to focus on its economic development. In this way, pluralism is only truly representative of the socio-economic realm (Pheillon, 1995). They began in the 1970s with the first National Wage Agreements. Continued trends in the 1980s from the EU and within Ireland itself worked to further strengthen the secular social responsibilities of civil society (Dundon & McDonough, 2010). Traveller organizations such as Pavee Point and the Irish Traveller Movement were created during this period. The government even published the Report of the Task Force on the Travelling Community in support of the development of these Traveller organizations (Crowley 2005). Wickstrom criticizes the nature of Traveller organizations as "inclusive" social partnerships, saying that they "put pressure on Travellers to become willing

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partners" of neoliberal changes in Ireland (Wickstrom, 2012, p. 152). My criticism runs deeper; social partnerships create a dissonance between the goals of Irish civil society in the delivery of social services and the goals of government in the maintenance of free economic markets. Yet, it is still the government that is responsible for creating the social polices on social services. Irish civil society and government are, therefore at odds. I argue that through social partnerships, increased pressure on civil society has naturally led to social services bearing the brunt of the negative impacts of economic fluctuations.

Finally, neoliberal policies cause Ireland to sustain large economic fluctuations. Garner (2004) believes that the relationship between the neoliberal economy and social services renders already marginalized populations more economically and socially vulnerable. The vulnerability, I argue is partly the result of these economic fluctuations. While there was an increase in government social spending in 1970, the bust period of 1980 signified increased cuts and a reduced quality of social services (Powell, 1992). The correlation between the economy and social services is echoed on a far greater level with the boom of the 1990s: the Celtic Tiger. The Celtic Tiger became an icon for neoliberal reform worldwide (Boyle, Gleeson & Kitchin, 2012). Again, the boom initially resulted in a moderate, disproportional increase in the social service sectors; especially in the sectors deemed socially worthy, such as for people with disabilities (Power, 2009). However, social services soon underwent severe additional cuts in 2008 when Ireland, as one of the earliest in Europe, began to enter recession (Considine & Dukelow, 2010). Irish policy effort is focused first on cutting taxes for international business, rather than prioritizing the improvement of social services, particularly in times of economic downturn (Coleman & Coulter, 2003). Curry (2003) further explains that the rise and fall of services during this period, further disadvantaged marginalized groups who rely on them most, and at a time they

were most needed. Despite this, Irish neoliberalism, at face value, appears to have led to a gradual, sporadic and fluctuating overall expansion in social services. However, I will explain in the following section how an increase of services does not necessarily indicate an increase in equality.

Irish neoliberalism did not cause welfare supports to decrease; in fact, there was a great increase in social welfare along with the heightened push for employment equality and poverty reduction. In the 1970s and 80s there were welfare campaigns for children (Rush, 2006), and the creation of Supplementary Welfare Allowance Act was established in 1975 (Powell, 1992). There was also a great increase in assistance for those with disabilities (Power 2009). Furthermore, women had a heightened role in the workplace (Shmitt, 1998). Significantly, the EU and Irish Policy also appeared to "rediscover" poverty in the 1970s (Powell, 1992, p. 289). Since then, many anti-poverty campaigns have ensued (Dowler & O'Connor, 2011). The anti-poverty campaigns created a new emphasis on Traveller inclusion into society (Crowely, 2005). Indeed the concepts of equity, equality, opportunity and social inclusion became and continue to be main aspects of social policy in Ireland (MacVeigh, 2006).

However, the persistence, and in many respects increase, of inequality within Ireland indicates a confounding variable beyond the socio-economic realm. For example, while the number of children attending secondary and post-secondary school grew tremendously over the years, class barriers have remained intact in "rank order" (Hout, 2007, p. 23). Today there are still raging inequalities in Ireland in health, education and welfare. Thus, we are reminded that economic changes do not necessarily indicate a change in people's "relative advantages" within a society (Whelan, 1995, p. 350). I propose that in order to understand this paradox, we must analyze the ideological level and uncover the process of stigmatization within the economy.

4.3.3 **Ideological Shift**

Neoliberalism permeates from the level of the large ultra-state to an individual's sense of self (Rose, 1996). With this understanding I have identified three ideological shifts resulting from the aforementioned socio-economic changes: the reforming of social service goals, the creation of a moral paradox and, thus, the stigmatization of group identities.

First, the goals of Irish social services have been reformed. Hartman (2005) writes that neoliberalism seeks not to abolish welfare, but to reform it from an entitlement to an individual obligation. Social supports are, therefore, reformed in favor of individual citizens' freedom to self-actualize (Ferguson & Hong, 2012). Thereby, people are assisting "individuals to alleviate their difficulties, rather than actually addressing the structural causes of these difficulties" (Welsh & Parson, 2006, p. 52). Yet, I reiterate that Ireland is only a weak Anglo-Saxon state, and so is faced with more subtle changes. Ireland's version of self-help can be understood through analysis of the 'exclusion' concept. As mentioned previously, reversing and preventing exclusion is a frequent topic at the level of the Irish State. However, exclusion has become synonymous with the exclusion from paid work, thus creating an Irish class society (Drudy, 1995). With the concept of class comes the concept of the underclass. The underclass is understood as an individually caused poverty due to lack of social norm attainment and unemployment (Wilson, 2012). By definition, therefore, the Irish Travellers are an underclass based on their maintenance of alternative wage-labor, which leads them to be socially labeled as unemployed, as well as their possession of separate, sometimes conflicting, social norms. Thus, the dominant Settled community is led to use the underclass concept to legitimize discriminatory behavior of already marginalized groups, such as the Irish Travellers (Fanning, 2006). Ireland has altered its goal of

welfare from helping alleviate troubles as a citizen's right, to helping citizens prevent their own exclusion from paid work in a new class society.

Second, this Irish social reform allows for a paradox of moral judgments under the name of equality and justice between the civil society and the Irish state and within civil society itself. Moreton (2007) explains that past economies relied on 'elaborate divine ideologies' to explain blatant exploitation. Alternatively, exploitation of the unworthy can now only be hidden behind the ideology of salvation; the notion that any action of exploitation of a group is taken only for the group's benefit. Gammon (2013) similarly argues that the neoliberal welfare reform involves the installation of new moral controls of judgment along the lines of previously existing social power structures. For example, the anti-poverty initiative in Ireland retains an imbedded contradiction; a survey in 2006 indicates that the majority of the Irish public has either a mixed view on the cause of poverty, blaming both the individual and the society for a person's poverty, or just an individual view on the cause of poverty, blaming only the individual for their own poverty. However, simultaneously, the majority of people believe that poverty is unjust and that the law treats the poor unfairly (Hardiman, McCashin & Payne, 2006). In fact, it is the youth of Ireland who are more likely to view poverty as individualists (Hardiman McCashin & Payne, 2006). The strengthening of individualism in the younger generations is caused by the increasing secularism of the welfare state. In 1972 the Catholic Church clause was removed from the Irish constitution, representing a lessening of religious role in government, with no new ideology to replace the decreasing Catholic value of social cohesion (Crotty, 1998). Therefore, it is no coincidence that after the mid-1970s, the welfare state stopped being viewed as a positive entity in Irish society (Powell, 1992).

The trend of contradiction continues in education when the reforms of 1970s and 80s

focused on increasing participation among school children with the intention of improving social inclusion. However, there was no focus on eliminating the inequalities that cause the social exclusion (MacVeigh, 2006). In a time of heightened equality speech, surveys conducted between 1997-2002 indicate a strong increasing trend in disapproval toward minorities' use of social services. In the survey many believed that "education suffers with minority presence," that they "abuse social welfare" and that they are given preference when obtaining housing (O'Connell & Winston, 2006, p. 14). Moreover, the Equal Status Act of 2000, that particularly affects the Irish Travellers today, although arguably a noble message, also acts to disguise hierarchical and discriminatory ways by ignoring the cause of discrimination and instead giving attention to a liberal diversity of uniformity (Christie, 2004). Finally, as I alluded to previously, social partnerships themselves create a contradiction; while they create an outlet of social services into society through community responsibility, they simultaneously function within a market-based economy that significantly undermines them (Hardiman & Scott, 2010). The increasingly popular neoliberal ideology of equality is, therefore, contradicted by neoliberal economics. Thus a moral paradox is created.

Finally, moral judgments have allowed for scapegoating ideological tendencies that result in the stigmatization of entire groups (Good et al., 2007). The "moral communitarianism" of neoliberalism governing individual responsibility leads to the reconstruction of differences. Thus, Travellers are excluded by "populist politics" at all levels of State (Fanning, 2004, p. 60a). The distinction between who is part of the Irish society and who is an outsider is evident through the increasing level of nationalism within Ireland (Brandi, 2013). It is, therefore, unsurprising that scholars have found a clear correlation between nationalist sentiment in Ireland and discrimination tendencies towards the Irish Travellers in national sentiments (MacLaughlan,

1998). Indeed, the separating of 'us' and 'them' is a clear stage of stigmatization, as described in section 2.31. In this way, recent economic trends have been linked to the stigmatization of populations (Furuya, 2002).

It is undeniable that stigmatization of the Irish Travellers existed before the onset of neoliberalism in 1970s Ireland (MacLaughlan, 1998). Rather, I conclude from this chapter that neoliberal socio-economic impacts have led to the institutionalization of this process of stigmatization under ideals of morality. Neoliberalism has "called forth in all of its citizens an imperative toward new forms of subjectivity" (Wickstrom, 2012, p. 152). Through stigmatization, populations are dissuaded from using the limited resources of a society to which they are told they do not fully belong (Burman, Chantler & Smailes, 2004; Puckett, 2005; Silverschanz, Stotzer & Wilson, 2013). Therefore the socio-economic impacts of neoliberalism have restricted access to an increased amount of services. Thus, I argue, that it is through this process of stigmatization that the perception of marginalized group's identities can become a barrier to social services.

In the following sections, I outline the stigmatization process of Travellers in order to determine how stigmatization of Traveller identity affects their access to social services on a micro level. In order to do this, I uncover the first steps of stigmatization of Traveller identity in the next section to confirm that the stigmatization is in fact taking place.

4.4   CONFLICT OF TRAVELLER IDENTITY

"[Take] as its starting point, the classic formulation of stigma as a 'significantly discrediting' attribute, but [move] beyond this to conceptualize stigma and stigmatization as intimately linked

to the reproduction of social difference" (Angleton & Parker, 2003, p.13)

In the following section, I analyze and discuss how there is a clear process of stigmatization of the Traveller identity. I do this through comprehensive review of the differences between Travellers' self-identity and their perceived identity by the Settled population and the Worker.

4.4.1 Settled population

All of the Settled population identified Travellers' identity with a consciously chosen set of behaviors. One member of the Settled population explained that Travellers are different because "they do things differently," while another Settled person indicated that Travellers are different because of the strict moral codes they adhere to. Both of these examples indicate the general belief among the Settled population that it is the physical actions of Travellers that comprises Traveller identity.

The Settled people with a more hostile approach to the Travellers expressed only negative perceptions of Traveller identity. They reproached what they saw as Traveller issues, such as gender inequality, their suspicious nature, their mistreatment of animals, their lying and their laziness. The majority of the Settled people, who were not as overtly hostile, but simply dissociated, also agreed. They viewed Traveller identity as comprised of stealing, lying, fighting and an inequality between men and women. However, the dissociated Settled population showed a desire to take the concept further and recognized that these behaviors are not seen as negative in Traveller culture. For example, one Settled person explained, without any apparent reproach, "stealing is okay in their culture." Another explained that they just "do not know better."

Therefore, the Settled community held an underlying belief that Traveller culture was a

choice. The Settled people with a more hostile approach indicated that these aspects of identity were only 'chosen' to exploit the Settled community. For example, one Settled man believed that Travellers' culture changes when it is convenient so as to exploit the Settled population's social services. Another Settled person explained that the "new Travellers" want to be like the "old Travellers," but with modern day benefits of social services. The dissociated Settled people represented Traveller culture as a choice the Travellers had the right to have, but also generally referred to its outdated aspects. For example one Settled person referred to the town's aggravation at the large amount of horses that are owned by the Travellers that serve no purpose anymore.

As this discussion demonstrates, there was a consensus among the Settled people that Traveller identity is a chosen set of negative behaviors, undistinguished, less permanent and interchangeable with the concept of culture.

4.4.2 **Travellers**

My findings indicated a differentiation between the perception of Traveller identity held by the Settled population and that held by the Travellers themselves. When asked what made a Traveller different from the Settled population, the majority of Travellers depicted their identity as both innate and unchanging. One young woman from the Traveller community explained that the difference between Travellers and Settled people is found in "blood, ancestors, (and) generation". Multiple Travellers agreed that a Traveller is simply "born", not made over time. For example, the Settled person that had married into the Heborn site years ago is still, and will always be, considered a Settled person on that site. Travellers' perception of their identity as innate is comparable with the concept of an ethnicity described in section 2.2.1, emphasizing a clear distinction between the identity of the Settled population and the identity of the Travellers.

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A smaller portion of Travellers gave the response that there is no difference between the Travellers and the Settled people. Those who emphasized a lack of difference often had similar thoughts to one Traveller women who explained, "human beings, we're all humans." Most of these Travellers then further expounded that they feel Travellers are not being treated as equals. This assertion of similarity between Travellers and the Settled population does not counter my claim, that Travellers perceive their identity as innate and unchanging. Rather, it represents a global trend of "moral communalism." The emphasis on "moral communalism" represents a belief that because we are all human that we should be treated the same (Fanning, 2004a, p. 60). I believe the few Travellers who highlighted their similarities rather than their differences were doing so as a result of my questioning on their social services. They were possibly indicating how Travellers should have the same resources, particularly in regard to housing, as the Settled population.

Although Travellers perceived their identity as innate, their culture was not. Many Travellers seemed to acknowledge that their culture is indeed changing, whether they appreciated the fact or not. For example, one Traveller mother congratulated me on waiting to have children, unlike in her time when she was expected to marry young. This statement represented a change in Travellers' moral codes. Another Traveller showed me an old churn his grandfather made in the tinkering days, acknowledging that those days are in the past. Furthermore, all of the Travellers I interviewed are no longer nomads, in the sense that they do call a place home. When asked, all Travellers indicated that they considered themselves Irish and from Kilkenny. This, interestingly, did not impact their identity as Travellers, because these identities were not perceived as being mutually exclusive.

Travellers' acknowledgement of the changing nature of their culture represents a

perceived understanding that, while Traveller culture is an important aspect of being a Traveller, it is not innate as is the Traveller identity. The distinction Travellers made between their innate identity and their changing culture was not present in the Settled population's understanding of Traveller identity.

4.4.3 Workers

The Workers had little consistency in their perception of Traveller identity. Responses ranged from having a similar perspective to that of the Travellers of an innate Traveller identity and changing culture to similar perspective to the Settled population, representing Traveller identity as a choice. Many had a mixture of both.

The Cultural Preservationist Workers tended to represent Traveller identity as innate, particularly emphasizing Travellers as an ethnic group. They also represented Traveller culture more romantically, believing that Travellers were being forced to abandon part of their culture. A few Workers explained how Travellers often feel isolated from their community when they are moved into a neighborhood surrounded by Settled people. Through these explanations, the Workers indicate that a Traveller remains a Traveller no matter their setting. However the Cultural Preservationists describe Traveller culture and identity as being under attack by discrimination. These Settled Workers associated strongly with the anti-racist movements against Anti-Travellerism (Bryan, 2009; Christie, 2002).

The Integrationist Workers approach represented Traveller identity similar to the general Settled population. Some Workers emphasized the importance of not being "naive" when dealing with Travellers. They explained that it was important to not view Travellers romantically because the reality is that they are involved with negative behaviors such as stealing and violence, particularly amongst themselves. Other Workers described the importance of not

getting too involved with Traveller "politics" because it would "wreck your head". These Workers showed clear anger toward what they saw as the negative attributes of Traveller culture and described the work they did as hard. However, they also believe the work they do is necessary because Travellers are people in need of help; again reference to a perception of Travellers as a subculture of poverty, similar to the Dissociated Settled population. For example, the Integrationist workers appeared to truly want to assist the Travellers, but also showed great frustration at having to be surrounded by the Travellers' animal cruelty and gender inequality. On multiple occasions workers expressed sadness at the treatment of Traveller women within the community saying that it is as if they are "under house arrest". Workers also reacted very strongly to conditions with which the animals live. One worker was disgusted after we witnessed a dog being kicked and even whipped after it bit the man's little daughter.

4.4.4 Discussion

My findings indicate that both the Hostile and the Dissociated Settled population and the Integrationist Workers do not directly attribute negative perceptions to the Traveller identity as a whole, but to individual behaviors and characteristics. When Traveller behaviors and characteristics, which are undesirable to the Settled population, are attributed to identity, then the identity itself becomes negative. Therefore, as I explain further in the following section, the negative perception of Traveller identity results in discrimination.

To the contrary, the Travellers and Cultural Preservationist Workers view Traveller identity as innate and any negative characteristics are not seen as part of this identity. Therefore, the attribution of negativity to Traveller identity is viewed as an attack by arrogance on the identity as a whole, producing direct, intentional discrimination. As Campbell and Deacon (2006) explain, this misconception that discrimination is caused by simple arrogance results in

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the misunderstanding that the discrimination will cease if people are provided "the facts" about the receiving group (p. 412). As I have presented through the analysis of macro trends, this response has failed in changing public opinion.

Yet, it is clear that the creation of Travellers as a negative identity is not done maliciously, but through a discrete process of stigmatization that, inevitably, results in discrimination. The Settled population's separating of Travellers' differences and then their attribution of Travellers' difference to negative attributes is the first level in Link and Phelan's (2001) stages of the stigmatization process. Thus, I have uncovered an active process of stigmatization of Traveller identity through analysis of the different perceptions on this marginalized community.

Therefore, I argue that disconnect between the Settled people's perception of Traveller identity and the resulting discrimination and anti-racist movements must be mended. In order to do this, I argue that the static concept of prejudice alone does not accurately reflect the effect of historical oppression and marginalization on an identity. Rather, I focus on the broader system through the process of stigma (Dovidio, Link & Phelan, 2008). In the following section, I assert that we can clearly understand how Traveller identity has become a barrier to social services by understanding discrimination as part of the process of stigmatization.

4.5   PROCESS OF STIGMATIZATION

"One of the most troublesome issues in the study of stigma emerges when social scientists seek to articulate the real constraints that stigma creates in people's lives, and in doing so they end up portraying members of the stigmatized group as helpless victims... The simple fact that these

forms of resistance exist suggests there is something out there to avoid and there are powerful

containing forces at work" (Link & Phelan, 2001, p.378)

In the previous section, I alluded to Link and Phelan's (2001) first stages of the stigmatization process when the Settled population associating Traveller differences with negative attributes. Therefore, it follows that I should analyze the final steps in the stigmatization process: status loss and discrimination and, finally, social distancing.

According to Aggleton and Parker (2003), the concepts of stigma and discrimination should be understood for their "conceptual adequacy and their usefulness in leading to the design of effective programmes and interventions" (p. 13). Accordingly, in the following section I first examine Settled discrimination against Travellers as a stage in the stigmatization process that we uncovered in the previous section. Second, I analyze the resulting resistance and internalization of the Travellers' and discuss their reactions in terms of barriers to social services. Finally, I end with an understanding of stigma's effect of further marginalizing the Travellers in a cyclical process of barrier reinforcement.

4.5.1 Discrimination

Travellers' behavior represents a threat to the Settled population. For example, many of the Settled population show a range of opinions, from disgust to discomfort, at the mention of the informal, self-employed economy in which Travellers' work. In Kilkenny, part of this informal economy has come to include "protector's pay": when a shop or enterprise pays Traveller families in exchange for the promise of not violating or stealing from the business. A Worker explains that her friend does not give the protector's pay and so he has had many financial problems because Travellers keep harassing his business, such as by stealing the mechanical

equipment. One Settled man admits with exacerbation that he "doesn't know what to do with a culture like [the Travellers]."

The Settled people with the hostile approach were very verbal in their anger at being considered discriminatory. One Settled man scoffed when describing one Traveller woman he saw on a bus; she had been explaining to her children that just because the Settled population treats them like animals, it does not mean they have to act like animals. He exclaimed that she was falsely "making her children think they are being treated badly." Those who took a dissociated approach, the majority of the interviewed Settled population, only expressed frustration at the thought of being considered discriminatory. These Settled people showed many hesitations in expressing what they viewed as negative aspects of Traveller identity and always accompanied any critical opinions and statements with further explanation of the reasoning behind why they were, in fact, not being discriminatory. None of these Settled people ever clearly stated their frustration; instead, most discriminatory thoughts were well disguised by these rushed explanations. For example, one Settled woman appeared to become flustered as she felt the need to quickly balance every characteristic from the Travelling community that she named as negative, such as when she hurriedly followed her suggestion of "mind your purse" with the words, "like any culture." Another young Settled man approached me, embarrassed, after he heard me interview his mother. He sincerely apologized for his mother's "anti-Traveller opinions"; however when explaining why he felt his mother was wrong to have expressed herself as she did, he did not mention that her opinions were wrong, rather that she should not have expressed them.

Thus, both the Hostile and the Dissociated Settled population engage in discriminatory thoughts and behaviors in their separate ways. Almost all Settled people mentioned, referenced

or indicated not wanting children to play with Traveller children so they that would not be influenced, not wanting Travellers to move into the neighborhood and affecting the community atmosphere, not renting out a wedding reception hall to Travellers so it will not be destroyed or watching Travellers carefully in shops in case they try to steal an item.

All the Settled population justified their opinions on the grounds of necessity and practicality; therefore, they reason, they cannot be discriminatory. They seemed to fear the Traveller culture inside the Settled population because, as I discussed previously in section 4.4, to have a Traveller identity, is to have what the Settled population deem as negative, unsocial, attributes. The Settled population's rationalizations are in conformity with the common sense ideology. "Common sense" ideology implies that a behavior or policy is not perceived as being "extreme" or "unreasonable" because it is imbedded in public thought and a shared rationalism (Hall & O'Shea, 2011, p. 8). The rationale in Irish society follows that, if Travellers engage in certain negative activities and behaviors, then distance and caution toward the group is not discrimination, but common sense.

The Travellers' reaction to this discrimination can be best described through analysis of the differences in behavior I found between the three studied sites: Heborn, Rosbercon and the Wetlands. Travellers at all three sites maintained the same identity, but exhibited notably different behaviors. I argue that each site represents different levels of 'resistance' and 'internalization' in response to the Settled population's discriminatory perceptions. I further assert that these varying reactions are largely the result of the Travellers' relationship with the dominant Settled society at each site.

I acknowledge that I am at risk of over simplification by making such a clear distinction between sites. I am overlooking the differences among individuals, between genders and various

age groups, which, indeed, exist. I also risk ignoring the close ties that the Travellers have with each other, even between sites. However Travellers themselves explained to me how stark the differences are between sites. For example, one Traveller likened the difference in sites to the difference between New York and California in the USA. The Workers also confirmed this fact when introducing me to the individualities of each sites. I argue then, that the analysis of differences between sites should be viewed as one of the main possible entryways to understanding the dynamic process of stigma and not the only entryway.

4.5.2 Differences Between Sites

The Heborn Travellers presented three general behaviors: the ability and comfort in dealing with the Settled population, a strong sense of pride and a strong sense of familism. Familism is a concept that describes the strong importance and prioritization of the commitment to immediate and extended family members (Barrus, England & Jacobson, 2008). The Travellers I observed often portrayed their familism in the form of collective toughness to defend or protect their family. In general, Travellers typically portray themselves as being tough because to be "soft", meaning to be weak, vulnerable and emotional, is one of the worst names a Traveller can be called in the Travelling community. The Settled population often interprets the Travellers' collective toughness as a sign of aggression used for the purpose of intimidation. However, here I use the term 'collective toughness' to avoid the pejorative connotation of aggression while still respecting the Travellers' chosen representation of themselves.

The Heborn site is highly visible because it is located near the main road within the town of Kilkenny. The inhabitants have many interactions with the Settled community, both in schools and in the town. They appeared more comfortable being around those from the Settled community and showed no hesitations in speaking to me when they chose or in ignoring me if

they did not want to speak. The KCTM office is also next to their site, providing a space for most of the women to act as health care workers and advocates for their community. The Heborn Travellers presented a very strong sense of pride in their Traveller identity by showing great adherence to their cultural norms. I was surprised when older children repeatedly asked if I was a boy because of the clothes I wore because I knew that these children have many interactions with other people from the Settled community who wear similar clothes as me. Multiple Traveller women proudly demanded I take photos of them and one Traveller man wanted to show off his old churn. Another Traveller explained that he is happy to always live in his caravan and that he wants to build another caravan site for his children in the future. All the caravans on the site were extremely clean. Finally, the Heborn Travellers expressed a strong collective toughness. For example, all the children jumped to the defense of a peer who felt that I was demeaning her by not telling the answer to a homework question. Furthermore, one Worker explained that the Heborn Traveller men had stolen all the tires on her car the first time she came to visit the site. Another Worker explained that the Heborn Travellers burned their garbage as a stance against paying the Settled society to have it removed when I asked why they were lighting a fire by the side of a busy road.

The Wetlands site was located far off a main road in worse conditions. Their behaviors appeared to be the opposite of the Heborn site: they showed little comfort in dealing with the Settled population, presented little pride in their identity and had weaker, although certainly existent, collective toughness. The Wetlands inhabitants interacted less with the Settled community and showed great discomfort and avoidance in speaking with me. The few Wetlands Travellers who cared about the condition of their homes and site indicates a low level of pride. Everyone threw their garbage on the ground and expressed strong desires to leave the site. The

adult Travellers did not appear to have the same wish to show off their belongings as in the Heborn site, until I expressed a clear interest in their sulkies. Finally, they appeared more timid in expressing criticisms of the Settled community in terms of any perceived unfairness or discrimination. However, they also at times showed defiance of the Settled community. For example, they punched a hole through the door of the community center, which possibly represents the symbol of the Settled people within their community, after their animals were taken away during a police raid.

Although I spent much less time in the Rosbercon site, I also noticed behavioral trends comparable to both the Heborn and the Wetlands site: they showed similar ability and comfort in dealing with the Settled population and showed a strong sense of pride as the Heborn Travellers. The Rosbercon Travellers appeared very comfortably when they openly allowed me into one of their houses and to join their conversations, although I am not certain how often the Rosbercon Travellers interact with the Settled community. They also represented a strong pride in their identity; the Travellers' house I entered was as clean as the caravans in the Heborn site and this woman's neighbor, another relative, proudly kept an old Traveller Barreltop Wagon in the back of his house. However, the Rosbercon Travellers presented a weak association with cultural norms like in the Wetlands. For example, one Traveller woman explained with pride about how she worked with Settled people. Finally, the Rosbercon Travellers showed no collective toughness. Rather, both children and adults interacted very cohesively with me and other Workers.

4.5.3 Discussion of Resistant Identities

Howarth (2006) explains that culture and identity must be described as active entities that are continuously produced, rather than simply possessed as if they were fixed objects.

Stigmatization creates a conflict of identity when the stigmatized identity clashes with the recipient's self-identity. Thus a "space" is created for the "struggle and negotiation" of these identities, expressed through various behaviors, which in turn are again attributed to a larger culture, race or ethnicity (Howarth, 2006, p. 443). Resistant identities are described as acts of cultural defiance to an opposing pressure that exists in different degrees and forms, such as increased collective toughness and invisibility of the stigmatized group toward the 'outsiders', as well as stronger social cohesion among the 'insiders' (Breakwell, 2010).

Travellers' resistance to social pressure is usually only spoken of in terms of adaption. For example, Power (2003) and Gmelch (1977) both discuss Travellers' resistance to the growing wage labor. Ethnic resistance has been found in multiple forms such as, for example, through the portrayal of toughness (Joanisse & Synnott, 1999) and the presentation or exaggeration of group-identity (Takeyuki, 2000). The Heborn site clearly presented strong collective toughness and the exaggeration of identity. Furthermore, the Rosbercon site showed resistance through group confidence in pride of their group identity. In contrast, the Wetlands site presented very little of any outward form of resistance, as I will explain in the following section.

Different levels of resistance at various sites can be explained through Branscombe, Jetton and Spears' (2002) argument as to the effect of marginalization on group confidence. Their research indicates that those marginalized populations that feel a stronger sense of future security amongst the prototypical group have far more self-confidence in their self-identity and in their group-identity. The Travellers at the Heborn site and the Rosbercon site appear to have a relatively co-existent relationship with the Settled community, and therefore have a higher self-

esteem and pride in their Traveller identity. Furthermore, they are significantly wealthier than the Wetlands site and have a higher standing in Kilkenny society.

The difference between the Heborn and the Rosbercon site can be analyzed through the Mastery of Stigma theory. This theory explains that those who have been more exposed to stigma build necessary coping mechanisms in order to protect their identity (Giugni, 1998). I propose that the Heborn site has been far more susceptible to discrimination in the center of Kilkenny city than the Rosbercon site has been in the countryside. Therefore, the Heborn Travellers have built stronger resistant identities over time in response to higher levels of discrimination.

A question remains as to why resistance appears to take the form of Settled stereotypes. One form of resistance occurs when members of a marginalized group select a preferred stereotype of the many with which they are inflicted. Kabachnik (2009) explains that many Travellers "prefer the criminal stereotypes over the romantic or victimized image as they would rather be associated with some sort of power…which commands respect and/or allows Irish Travellers to avoid… the psychological internalization of inferiority" (p. 56). Therefore, the emphasis on the aggressive stereotype is preferable to internalization, a concept I explain in the following section. However, as stated before, any forms of Traveller resistance are then attributed again to the Settled population's perception of general Traveller identity. An endless cycle is created.

Finally and crucially, the sites with the highest levels of resistance are also the sites that indicated the most independence from social services in section 4.2. This is no coincidence. An exaggerated pride in identity and collective toughness serves to assert independence from the dominant group. Kenny (1997) explains this cyclical phenomenon of Traveller resistance when

attempting to answer the dissonance between the high expectations Travellers perceive for education services and their actual poor performance in schools. He explains that resistance acts as a barrier to these children accomplishing their intended goals. The result of this expression of independence, as discussed in section 4.2, is that the Travellers with high resistant identities both refuse to access social services or to use them to their full extent, and deny or downplay the services they do receive.

I conclude, that the Travellers with higher confidence will exhibit levels of resistance equivalent to the level of discrimination they face. One method of resistance is to assert a clear independence from the Settled community and, therefore, assert independence from social services.

4.5.4 **Discussion of Internalization**

My findings show that 'internalization' is another reaction to the Travellers' stigmatization process. Many researchers have linked internalization to the loss of status and self-esteem. Internalization is characterized by when group members accept negative attitudes about the group and themselves (Herek, 2007). "Faced with multiple layers of social disadvantage, it may be difficult for people to (outwardly) challenge their stigmatized status. This is particularly problematic because 'power is seldom conceded without a demand' " (Campbell & Deacon, 2006, p. 413). It is important to note that there is a very thin line between internalization and resistance; in fact, internalization can certainty be coupled with a type of covert resistance. James C. Scott in his book *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Resistance* (1985) claims that less obvious behaviors to outsiders of the community such as "rumour, gossip, disguises, linguistic tricks, metaphors, euphemisms, folktales, ritual gestures, anonymity" can all be seen as forms of resistance (p. 137). Within internalization, resistance can

be "disguised, muted and veiled for safety's sake" (p. 137). Therefore, in describing the internalization of Travellers, I am by no means asserting a type of weakness among the Travellers nor indicating that internalization is a direct opposite to resistance. Rather, by making a distinction between resistance and internalization, I intend to represent different reactions that are visible to the Settled population, which are then used in different ways to continue the process of stigmatization.

The Wetlands site appeared to represent the largest amount of internalization. One Worker used the concept of internalization to describe why the Wetland Traveller children have problems with concentration and studying at the Homework Club. Furthermore, one male Traveller stated that Travellers should stop fighting because they are not on the roads anymore. This represents a far more prototypical, Settled approach to Traveller behavior because the blame for perceived negative behavior is on the Travellers. Moreover the quieter, distant attitudes of the Wetlands Travellers also illustrate the internalization of discrimination. For example, the mothers sometimes approached me to ask for help reading letters from their children's school. On these occasions, they rarely made eye contact and hardly spoke, instead simply using body language to show what they wanted. It seemed they desired to have as little interaction with me as necessary. Furthermore, when I asked whether they would be willing to be interviewed, although they vocally agreed, usually they immediately started walking away or quickly changed the topic. Campbell and Deacon (2006) explain that internalization, much like resistance, is not only represented in the verbal realm alone. For example, Travellers are often known, among the Settled community and the Travelling community alike, to pride themselves on the cleanliness of their caravans. However, the Wetlands site and the caravans lacked the same level of cleanliness and perfection of the other sites, which possibly tells of a lesser pride. Regardless of Travellers'

behaviors when directly speaking to me, I found from my colleagues and the children with whom I worked that the Wetlands men often joked about me amongst themselves, even sexualizing me, when I was not there or within ear shot. Only when I started to show a willingness to laugh about myself as well, did they start joking about me *with me*. With this, I reiterate that internalization does not indicate a lack of internal resistance within the community itself, even if it is not heard or seen by the Settled population. The trend of internalization and internal resistance was more evident to me within the Wetlands site simply due to the large amount of time I spent at the Wetlands, however, although my findings on internalization within the other sites described below did not indicate an internal resistance, it was surely present.

The Rosbercon site also showed some level of internalization. One Traveller woman blamed Travellers' poor conditions on the fact that girls dropped out of school to get married. Thus, in saying this, she puts the blame entirely on the Travelling community for their social conditions. Furthermore, after I asked how discrimination makes her feel, another Traveller woman explains, "I just accept it". She appeared resigned to the existence of discrimination against the Travellers.

I found internalization was a far more common concept used by the Settled population, Travellers and Travellers' rights group to describe Travellers. Internalization fits within the linear discrimination as opposed to one that is encapsulated in the process of stigmatization. I argue, that people often think of internalization as the only effect of discrimination because linear discrimination creates a plane of simplistic, liberal uniformed diversity on which Travellers' human rights are discussed and fought among the discriminators, the Settled population, and the discriminated and those who represent them, the Travellers and Travellers' rights organizations. In fact, as mentioned before, the Cultural Preservationist Workers were

more likely to romantically view Travellers as passive victims of internalized discrimination, although both types of Workers certainly referred to it. Therefore, the consequences of internalization, such as fear and low self-esteem, are popularly viewed as the only barrier to Travellers' services. I propose that while internalization occurs and does create barriers, this opinion is short sighted because it does not take into account resistance or the resulting cycle of identity stigmatization.

4.5.5 Cycle of Stigmatization

This chapter has shown that both reactions within the stigmatization process; resistance and internalization, result in further separation from the Settled population, or in other words, marginalization. Research has shown that the effect of the marginalization of a peripheral group in the prototypical society is very damaging, both mentally and physically, due to the uneven power structure between the marginalized and the dominant group (Bransombe, Jetten & Spears, 2002). In the Travellers' case, marginalization is linked to drug and alcohol abuse as well as the increased likelihood of suicide (Van Hout, 2011), thus, feeding into the Settled populations negative attributes of the Traveller identity, excusing discriminatory thoughts and behaviors in the cyclic process of stigmatization.

Therefore, I conclude, that the process of stigmatization involving discrimination from the Settled population, response from the Travellers through resistance and internalization and, finally, the reinforcement of Settled perception, causes a cycle of marginalization thereby impeding access to social services. Those who react to discrimination with resistance do not access social services due to their fight for independence, while those who internalize the discrimination do not access social services due to fear of further discrimination. The resistant identities particularly serve to strengthen past perceptions of Traveller identity as violent and

aggressive. Furthermore, Travellers' denial of use of social services also creates a barrier by reconfirming the Settled population's negative perceptions of Traveller identity of ingratitude toward the resources that they do use. Thus, the cycle of stigmatization is perpetuated.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1.1 Summary

I have argued throughout this thesis that Traveller identity has become a barrier to Traveller's social services through the active process of stigmatization. First, I outlined the current need to better understand the dynamic nature of stigmatization on the Irish Travellers in Ireland by illustrating the inadequacy of the common understanding of linear discrimination. Secondly, I discussed how the process of stigmatization of Traveller identity can be understood as a barrier the Irish Travellers' access to social services.

My findings show a clear disconnect between the Settled population, the Traveller and the Worker perceptions of Travellers' social services. The Settled population asserted that Travellers either have enough services or that they have too many. Through analysis of the Settled population I distinguished between two types of Settled people: those who are hostile toward Travellers and their services and those who take a more dissociated approach. The Travellers, on the other hand, mainly denied needing social services, thus asserting their independence. The Workers' perceptions of Travellers' services fall into two categories: the Cultural Preservationist or Integrationist approach. They further explain that, while the Travellers do use some resources such as unemployment assistance and housing, there are many others, such as health services and education, which remain underused. Therefore, I assert that there is a far more complex process than the linear discrimination of the discriminator against the

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discriminated.

As a result, I analyze two dimensions of stigma: the macro and the micro, demonstrating that the stigmatization process is present at both levels. First it comes from the macro level of global contemporary economic developments of neoliberalism that has had a socio-economic impact on Ireland. The socio-economic impacts result in ideological shifts in Irish society, leading to moral paradoxes between the notion of equality and the practice of inequality. I, therefore, reveal an economy of stigmatization.

Then, I analyze stigmatization as a process at the micro level. First I turn my attention to Traveller identity. The Settled population perceived Traveller identity as consisting of what they consider to be negative characteristics of Traveller culture. Meanwhile, Travellers perceive their own identity as innate. The Travellers make a distinction between their permanent identity and their changing culture. Finally, Workers vary between the Traveller perception of innate identity and the Settled perception of changing characteristics, however they both, especially the Cultural Preservationists, describe Travellers as passive victims to discrimination. During this level of analysis, I identify the first stages of stigmatization.

I continue to study the stigmatization in terms of a self-excused discrimination from the Settled population, that initiates a response from the Travellers. This response takes the forms of resistance and internalization; presented at different levels in all three Traveller sites. Both responses lead to a negative perception of social services and a mistrust of the Settled population, regardless of any actual reliance on and use of social services. The response is then used in 'common sense' ideology to perpetuate the cycle of stigma; further marginalizing the Travellers, strengthening the resistance against misperceptions of their identity and, therefore, strengthening the barriers to social services. I conclude this thesis with the understanding that, through process

of Traveller stigmatization at both the macro and micro level, Traveller identity has indeed become a barrier to Travellers' access of social services.

5.1.2 Limitations

My research had multiple limitations. My sample may not be representative of the entire Kilkenny Travelling community or the entire sites I studied because of my use of convenience-sampling techniques. The information I gathered during interviews also may have been influenced by my outsider status, as I am not a member of the Travelling community. Furthermore, I mostly only interviewed Traveller women and mostly only observed Traveller men. This is a limitation because I only had access to information about Traveller women that they were willing to share with me over the span of a short interview. Alternatively, data I collected from the men often lacked specificity in regards to their perceived identity and their opinions of social services, possibly due to not being asked direct questions and also due to the fact that they were conscious of their friends and families being around them within hearing distance. Another limitation in my research was that, although I interviewed an equal amount of Travellers and non-Travellers, I was able to collect more information from the interviews of the Settled population than the interviews of the Settled population and Workers. I can attribute this to Travellers' resistance and apprehension in speaking to me as a non-Traveller, Perhaps I would have been able to overcome some of my outsider status if I had longer time of engagement in the field.

5.1.3 Implications for the Travelling Community

Many academics have expressed solutions to solving the barriers between Travellers and social services. These solutions generally consist of increased education of Settled people in

respecting and understanding Traveller identity, particularly in the case of service providers (Cemlyn, 2008; Dion, 2008; Cavaliero, 2011). Yet, based on my findings, the result of cultural education will only be further confusion, fear, frustration, and, therefore, stigmatization of the Travelling community, without adequate understanding of what this identity is, where it comes from and the extent the Travellers will defend it.

My research has unveiled the linear perception of discrimination as a far deeper and more complex process of stigmatization; a process that creates a power struggle of identities and perceptions, rendering Traveller identity as a barrier to social services itself. Therefore, as Aggleton and Parker (2003) explain, through this understanding of identity and stigma, solutions to better interventions and practice in improving Travellers social indicators and life can be better understood.

Therefore, I recommend that service providers, as well as the rest of the Settled population, are not simply taught culture, but are taught to understand the existence of this stigmatization process from a strengths-based perspective, viewing Travellers as a group of people who react rationally to the threat of discrimination. I further recommend that the focus of Traveller organizations not just be on eradicating anti-Travellerism, but also on breaking the cycle of stigmatization of Traveller identity because anti-Travellerism is not the cause of stigmatization and, thus, is not the solution. Finally, I suggest further research to analyze the effects of this process and effective strategies in implementing the above suggestions. For example, further research may be on the differences between the Cultural Preservationist and the Integrationist perspectives among Workers, as to what it means for Travellers access to services.

5.1.4 **Global Implications**

These implications reflect on the global level. The dominant neoliberal trend renders the provision of social services a judgmental process. Those who are not thought to deserve social services will find multiple barriers between them and access whether in the form of obvious physical restraints and ultimatums in strong Anglo-Saxon States, or emotional and mental barriers caused by the process of stigmatization, such as in Ireland's case. However, the question remains that, if the behaviors that render a group 'undeserving' are, in fact, the coping mechanisms to the wider trend of social exclusion, then how can this ideology survive the scrutiny initiated by the very paradox it creates? In light of this question, I recommend further research into how Travellers and those working for Travellers' rights are resisting the larger neoliberal discourse and how this resistance can be accomplished in a manner that is sustainable.

Some academics have recommended grassroots movements to create a dependency reversal on neoliberal policies (Moran, 2011). The effort Travellers' organizations have put into campaigning for Travellers' legal right to ethnicity over the past few years is testimony. However, these organizations are still working with policies created by an undermining State. Therefore, I suggest that it is vital for the survival of true equality of the Irish Travellers and other marginalized groups to move away from the neoliberal economic discourse. As I have laid out in this thesis, it is an economy that cascades from the macro level of global and state functions to the micro level of the Irish Traveller and the Settled population. Solutions at the micro level alone cannot fully break the cycle of stigmatization as long as an economy of stigmatization persists.

[INTERVIEW TABLE]

Interviewee	Age *	Gender *	Interview Location	Interview Date
Settled #1	Middle-Age	Female	Interviewee's house	May 2nd 2014
Settled #2	Young Adult	Male	Interviewee's house	May 25th 2014
Settled #3	Middle-Age	Male	Interviewee's house	May 10th 2014
Settled #4	Young Adult	Male	Interviewee's house	May 11th 2014
Settled #5	Middle-Age	Male	Interviewee's car	May 21st 2014
Settled #6	Middle-Age	Female	Interviewee's house	June 7th 2014
Settled #7	Middle-Age	Male	Interviewee's house	June 9th 2014
Wetlands' Traveller #1	Young Adult Married	Male Father	Wetland's Community Center	May 21st 2014
Wetlands' Traveller #2	Middle-Age Married	Male Father	Outside in Wetlands	June 11th 2014
Wetlands' Traveller #3	Middle-Aged Married	Female Mother	Interviewee's Caravan	May 21st 2014
Wetlands' Traveller #4	Young Married	Female Mother	Outside in Wetlands	May 21st 2014
Heborn Traveller #1	Older Adult Married	Female Mother	Heborn Community Center	May 23rd 2014
Heborn Traveller #2	Middle-Age Married	Female Mother	Heborn Community Center	May 23rd 2014
Heborn Traveller #3	Middle-Age Married	Female Mother	Heborn Community Center	May 23rd 2014
Heborn Traveller #4	Middle-Age Married	Female Mother	Outside Heborn Community Center	May 23rd 2014
Heborn Traveller #5	Middle-Age Married	Female Mother	Heborn Community Center	May 23rd 2014
Heborn Traveller #6	Young Adult Married	Female Mother	Heborn Community Center	May 23rd 2014

Heborn Traveller #7	Older Adult Married	Female Mother	Heborn Community Center	May 23rd 2014
Heborn Traveller #8	Young Adult Married	Male Father	Interviewee's Caravan	May 27th 2014
Rosbercon Traveller#1	Middle-Age Married	Female Mother	Interviewee's house	June 3rd 2014
Rosbercon Traveller#2	Young Unmarried	Female	Rosbercon community center	June 3rd 2014
Worker #1	Middle-Age Adult	Male	Community Center	Duration of Stay
Worker #2	Middle-Age Adult	Female	Interviewee's Workplace	Duration of Stay
Worker #3	Middle-Age Adult	Female	Interviewee's home	May 20th 2014
Worker #4	Middle-Age Adult	Female	Interviewee's friend's home	May 16th 2014
Worker #5	Middle-Age Adult	Male	Interviewee's car	May 27th 2014
Worker #6	Middle-Age Adult	Female	Interviewee's house	May 29th 2014
Worker #7	Middle-Age Adult	Female	Wetland's Community Center	June 10th 2014

*   The interviewed Travellers have extra descriptions under the Age and Gender category. I did this in sensitivity to their different ways of classification that gives attention to martial and parental status.

APPENDIX B

[INTERVIEW QUESTIONS]

Background:

1. How old are you?

2. Tell me about your family

    a. Where are they from?

    b. Where do they live?

    c. Are you married?

    d. How many children do you have?

3. How long have you lived in the site/in this house?

    a. Do you like it?

Identity:

1. What makes someone a Traveller?

2. What makes a Traveller different or the same to a Settled person?

    a. Are there different types of Travellers? Settled vs non-Settled? Between different sites?

3. What have your experiences been with Settled people?

    a. Do you have examples?

    b. Have the experiences been different over time?

Resources:

1. Do you have everything you need to be able to live well?

    a. Are the children's schools understanding and helpful?

    b. Would you be able to find work if you wanted?

    c. Can you go to the doctor when you are sick?

    d. Does a veterinarian help with the horses?

    e. How are the organizations that work with you? Are they helpful?

2. Have there been any specific problems?

    a. No: Why?

    b. Yes: what do you think is the solution?

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