WHY HAS ST. PATRICK’S DAY BECOME A GLOBAL CELEBRATION?

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11:45am, & 1:15pm

UNT Denton Campus OLLI Classroom
What do you think of first when hear or read of St. Patrick’s Day?
Common responses:

- Parades
- Pubs
- Patron Saint
- Paddywhackery
- Politics
- Pugnacious
- Patriarchy
St Patrick's day is celebrated across the world, especially in America where lots of Irish people moved for work.
It's OK to pretend we're Irish on St. Patrick's Day. We pretend we're GOOD on Christmas don't we?
Why Parades?

- Observances include church services, banquets, dances, sporting activities, and drinking sessions.
- An special event while others carried out throughout the year.
- Street parades distinctive attention seeking collective behavior carried out in public space.
- Central observance in most parts of world.
- All manner of Irish and allied groups march displaying their connection with Ireland or position in their adopted society.
Why Parades?

• Offers spectacle and movement via ornate dress, colors, banners, and the like in procession, together with music and feet marching in unison.

• Beside stimulating senses it provides a narrative via images, symbols, and messages.

• Politics of performance and representation:
  – Must have a rightful claim to parade publicly.
  – Must be both lawful and unlikely to cause offence.
Irish diaspora or Diaspóra na nGaeil

- Irish people and descendants who live outside the island of Ireland.
- Emigration recorded since Early Middle Ages.
- Irish raiders settled along the West Coast of Roman Britain and recruited by Roman Army.
- Irish missionary monks pioneered a wave of emigration into Great Britain and continental Europe and helped save civilization.
- Norman invasion in 1169 marked beginning of over 800 years of English involvement.
• In 1600s, England started transporting many Irish by choice and force to Australia, South Africa, Bermuda, among other destinations.
• Others fled to Spain, France, Austria, and other Roman Catholic lands.
• Significant increase in people fleeing during Great Famine and even afterwards.
• Since 1700 over 9 million people emigrated.
  – More than historical population peak of 8.5 million before famine in the 1840s.
"I was thinking of celebrating St. Patrick's day in the old country, but then I remembered... I have no family left over there."
Today worldwide celebrations

• Millions of native Irish and their descendants plus non-Irish friends celebrate St. Patrick’s Day.

• Boisterous festival of parading, revelry, dancing, and drinking.

• Emblazoned with shamrocks and harps, etc. in emerald green.

• Often criticized for loss of religious meaning, ever-increasing commercialism, and embarrassing displays of drunkenness.
In honor of my driving the snakes out of Ireland, I beseech thee to paint thyself green and vomit in the streets.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY EXPLAINED
Sydney, Australia’s annual St. Patrick’s Day Parade and Family Day continues but the major parade has been replaced by a smaller one since 2015.
Celebrated in more countries than any other national festival

- US (Major cities), England (Liverpool, London, Birmingham), Australia (Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne), New Zealand (Auckland), Canada (Toronto, Montreal), Lithuania (Vilnius), France, Italy (Rome, Milan, Sardinia), Russia (Moscow), Argentina (Buenos Aires), Brazil, Caribbean (Grenada, Monserrat, Saint Croix), South Africa (Johannesburg), Uganda, South Korea (Seoul), China, Japan (Tokyo), Hong Kong
Tokyo, Japan’s ‘I Love Ireland’ festival takes place over two days. Parade includes marchers in colorful costumes, marching bands, and colorful floats.
About every major city

- Irish Members of Parliament participate in many celebrations across the globe.
- U.S.A. visits typically include Washington, DC, New York, Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, Savannah, New Orleans, San Francisco, San Jose, San Diego
- Local Irish aid societies, cultural groups, and pubs often organized observances.
Boston considered most Irish U.S.A. city, hosts second-biggest St Patrick’s Day parade in U.S.A.
Irish diaspora and beyond U.S.A.

• **One out of ten** U.S.A. residents claimed Irish ancestry in 2016 [32.2 million - almost five times the population of Ireland (Republic 4.8m; Northern 1.8m )].

• U. S. Congress proclaimed March as **Irish-American Heritage Month** in 1991 and President issues proclamation to commemorate month and **St. Patrick’s Day** each year.
• 15 incorporated places or county subdivisions share name of Ireland’s capital, Dublin.

• 7 places or county subdivisions named Clover (in SC, IL, MN, PA, VA, WV, & WI), 6 named Shamrock (in OK, TX (two*), MN, MO, & NE). *Town & Census Division Wheeler County.

• Also, Emerald Isle, NC, township of Irishtown, IL, and unincorporated St Patrick in Missouri (only town in the world whose official postmark features patron saint).

(From U.S.A. Census Bureau’s annual detailed profile for Irish-American Heritage Month https://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2018/irish-american-month.html)
I must be half Irish ... I got all of the temper, but none of the luck!
Chicago: For the Glory of God and Honor of St Patrick
Celebrations in U.S.A.

• Why has St Patrick’s Day been celebrated with more fanfare among Irish Diaspora and their descendants than in Ireland?

• U.S.A. with largest Irish Diaspora provides some answers.
Parades came later

• Ulster Protestants and the Charitable Irish Society of Boston organized first known St Patrick's Day Celebrations in 1737.
  – First ‘parade’ was in 1775 by Irish soldiers in British army marching to King Chapel for special sermon (‘Evacuation Day” in 1776 followed).

• Celebrations in New York City began March 17, 1762
  – First ‘parade’ by Irish soldiers serving in the English military marched with Fifes and Drums through city ushering in the St’s Day in 1766.
• Irish patriotism among U.S.A. immigrants prompted "Irish Aid" societies like the Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick (officially Society of The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick for the Relief of Emigrants from Ireland, founded 1771) and Ancient Order of Hibernians (founded 1836).
• Most groups besides dinners, fundraisers, etc. held annual parades featuring bagpipes and drums.
• In 1848, several New York (NY) Irish Aid societies united their parades to form one New York City St. Patrick's Day Parade.
Religious divide

• Irish Protestants celebrated with dinners, speeches, and formal gatherings often with charitable purposes.

• Irish Catholics, public and unpretentious family gatherings, church services, and imported customs like ‘drowning the shamrock.’
'Patrick's Pot', ‘Pota Pádraig’, or ‘Drowning’ the shamrock

• At the end of the day the shamrock which has been worn on the coat or the hat is removed and put into the final glass of drink.

• After the final toast to health has been drunk, the shamrock should be picked out from the bottom of the glass and thrown over the left shoulder.
From Middle Class to “No Irish Need Apply” to Political Power

• Until mid-19th century, most Irish immigrants were members of the Protestant middle class.
• By 1840s many Irish men in respectable roles in mainstream society via jobs on police force, fire departments, and railways.
• Great/Potato Famine (1845-1852) accelerated presence of mostly poor Irish Catholics eroding sense of progress.
• Immigrants despised for their religious beliefs and funny accents by Protestant majority.
• Had trouble finding even menial jobs.
• Becoming a soldier was common.
• When Irish Americans in major cities took to the streets on St. Patrick's Day to celebrate their heritage, newspapers portrayed them in cartoons as drunk, violent monkeys.

(Hair of the Dog: Irish Drinking and Its American Stereotype by Richard Stivers)
Anti-Irish cartoon in U.S.A. humor magazine
PUCK in November 1881
Growing Political Power in U.S.A.

- Irish became significant population group in major cities (New York, Boston, and Chicago).
- Began to realize potential political power that had yet to be organized.
- Voting blocks or "green machines“ emerged.
- Often became important swing vote.
• Annual St. Patrick's Day parades demonstrated numbers and strength of Irish Americans.
• Must-attend event for political candidates.
• Before WWI parades in New York City and across U.S.A. often featured prominent political dissidents (Nationalists/Republicans) from Ireland.
• NYC became international headquarters of Irish nationalist agitation.
St. Patrick’s Day Parade, Fifth Avenue, New York, 1909
Daniel O'Connell called the Liberator or Emancipator
NYC parade celebrates all aspects of Irish culture. NYC Merrymakers are one of main attractions in what is claimed to be the largest and oldest parade in world.
Parades and Politics Continued

In 1971 only banner allowed in New York city parade in mid-1800s most common ‘We visit the sick and bury the Dead’
Irish Lesbian and Gay Organization in 1991 denied entry into NYC parade

- In 2016, NYC’s 5th Avenue/Manhattan Parade dropped ban on gay groups marching under their own banner.
  - **St. Pat’s for All Parade in Queens** started as alternative in 2000; now focus on diversity of all forms (celebrates 20 years March 3, 2019)
  - Theme "cherishing all the children of the nation equally" taken from the 1916 Easter Proclamation of the Irish Republic.
  - [http://www.stpatsforall.org/](http://www.stpatsforall.org/)
Disappearing Irish Soil in Chicago

• In U.S.A. in 1920, President William Taft addressed the St. Patrick’s night banquet.
• Sign of political power of Irish-American electorate.
• Taft was to speak while standing on ‘a piece of the ould sod’ brought from Ireland.
• Was put on public display where many souvenir seekers, many crying, contributed to its complete disappearance before the speech.
Shamrock Ceremony started in 1952

• In 1948, President Harry Truman was first U.S.A. president to attend major parade in NYC (primarily to honor Irish-American WWII Vets).

• Irish ambassador later dropped off bowl of shamrocks at White House but Truman out of town; inauspicious inception of event.

• Ever since President receives a cluster of Ireland's most famous greenery on the feast day of Ireland's patron saint.
• During the Troubles in Northern Ireland ceremony emphasized.

• In 1985, Friends of Ireland (U.S.A. Congress members including T. O’Neill & G. Mitchell) initiated peace process.

• Ceremony and related events in Clinton White House (1993-2001) played a major role in the Northern Ireland peace process resulting in The Good Friday Agreement on 10 April 1998.

• The British-Irish Agreement came into force on 2 December 1999.
St. Paddy's or St. Patty's?

• What is the proper nickname or abbreviated form for St. Patrick's Day?

• Patty/Paddy confusion arises from the fact that the Irish name Padraig is Anglicized Patrick.

• Patty is usually a shortened form for "Patricia" more often than for "Patrick"
  – though many Patricks are called "Pat," adding confusion.

• St. Paddy's is the most acceptable choice.
Local Parades & Festivals

• North Texas Irish Festival, March 8-10, 2019, in Fair Park, Dallas – largest in DFW.

• 40th Dallas St. Patrick’s Parade & Festival on 16th with estimated 125,000+ Attendance, 90+ Float Entries, and 1,700+ Participants - largest parade in the Southwest.

• St. Paddy’s Texas Style, March 16, 2019, 1:00 - 9 PM, Wayne Ferguson Plaza, Lewisville.

• Cowtown Goes Green, March 16, 2019, 11:00 AM - 10:00 PM.
Fort Worth Stockyards National Historic District Parade that follows the 4pm cattle drive. Or thousands of other parades, pub crawls, fun runs, festivals, concerts, etc. near you.
New Orleans

• Annual Parades include walking groups, often dancing to accompanying music, from various clubs in the city dressed in costumes of green and giving out flowers, beads, and kisses to lucky parade goers along the route.

• Floats and truck floats respond to the call, "Throw me something, Mister!" Historically, the main parade's most famous throws were cabbages, carrots, onions, even potatoes...and moonpies!
Critics of Paddywhackery

• Celebrations and parades increasingly considered as annual homage to hedonistic celebration and alcohol.

• Occasion for trotting out unpleasant Irish stereotypes.

• Extravagant parades, flaunting of cheap and garish mementoes, everyone wearing green, maudlin Irish-American songs on the radio, and green beer considered objectionable by many Irish.
Mischievous Leprechauns

• Original Irish fables portrayed the pint-sized creatures as ugly, mean, and wearing a red, richly laced with gold, plus cocked hat, and shoes with buckles.

• Shoe-makers who hid money made from their craft in pots hidden at the end of rainbows.

• Wearing green was at 20th century invention, when green used as a short-hand for everything Irish.

• When you catch one, in exchange for freedom, the fairy-folk will grant three wishes.

www.livescience.com/37626-leprechauns.html
Epitome of ‘wearing’ green: Dyeing Chicago River

• The tradition started in 1962, when city pollution-control workers used dyes to trace illegal sewage discharges.

• Realized the orange powder was turning a bright green when mixed with water.
  – Note colors involved.

• Provided opportunity for an unique celebration.
Dyeing Other Bodies of Water

• Spread to other U.S.A. cities including San Antonio, Texas.

• Other bodies of water like the White house fountain on the south lawn.
  – In 2009, then first lady Michelle Obama, Chicago native, decided to bring a version of her city's tradition to the capital.

• In Dublin the same family from Chicago started to color the River Iffy green.
Fountain in front of the White House
St. Patrick's Day: U.S.A. national holiday?

- In U.S.A. only a public holiday in Suffolk County, MA (includes Boston).
- In 1941 officially recognized Evacuation Day, the day the British evacuated Boston in 1776.
- Day is special to many not just in MA so going national should be thoroughly discussed.

St Patrick’s Day In Ireland

- Initial religious feasting celebration of Patrick’s life on the day of his death.
- Later stuffy secular dinners for Ireland's elite.
- During Christian season of Lent, Irish families traditionally attended church in the morning and celebrate in the afternoon.
- Lenten prohibitions against consumption of meat were waived and people would dance, drink, and feast—on the traditional meal of Irish bacon (not Corn Beef) and cabbage.
Happy St. Patrick's Day
Commemorates life of St. Patrick

- Apostle credited with converting pagan Irish to Christianity.
- Spirited debates about basics aspects of Maewyn Succat’s life and transformation into Patricius cleric and sainthood.
- Most likely born in Roman Britain, probably Wales, perhaps Scotland or even France.
- Most likely born at beginning of the 5th century (perhaps 416 AD/CE).
- Most likely died on the 17th of March between 461 and 493 AD/CE.
Why Patrick?

• Other priests already there but only have documentary evidence for his experiences.
• Over time religious scribes identified him as founder.
• Cast as an ancient superhero able to perform miracles.
• Status as Ireland’s saint by the 8th Century.
From Patricius’ *Confessio*:

- Abducted by Irish marauders and enslaved around age 16.
- Worked as shepherd.
- After six years an angel came to him in a dream prompting him to escape and seek out his homeland.
- Soon after returning to Britain he moved on to France to assume the life of a monk.
Patricius’ *Confessio*:

- Another celestial visitation directed him to return to Ireland with a mission as a priest and convertor.
- Upon ordination he was given the title Patricius and may have travelled to Ireland under the direct order of Pope Celestine.
Croagh Patrick

• Patrick reportedly fasted for forty days atop this mountain most likely in 441 AD/CE
• Where he banished snakes from Ireland.
• Considered holiest mountain in Ireland.
• Thousands of pilgrims climb St. Patrick’s Mountain annually.

Regrets His Decision?

St. Patrick driving the snakes out of Ireland.
• Ireland like New Zealand, Iceland, Greenland, and Antarctica have no snakes because they are islands and no snakes can migrate or survive there.

• Myth believed to be part of Patrick introducing Christianity to Ireland with the snake being a symbol for paganism plus the snake was the tempter of Eve in the Garden of Eden.
Road to Sainthood

- Seventh-century Armagh church biographer promotes local cult figure as national apostle.
- Ninth-century Book of Armagh directed all monasteries and churches in Ireland to commemorate Patrick ‘falling asleep’ in mid-spring with three days and nights of feasting on every kind of good food excluding meat.
- Primarily a religious event that included a lengthy sermon each day on Saint’s glorious deeds.
• By the 17th century the celebration had transformed into St. Patrick’s Day.

• Widespread efforts for conversion of Irish from Catholicism to Anglicanism during the reign of Protestant King James I (1603-25).

• Limited success especially in the Irish-Gaelic speaking west.

• Patrick was proclaimed a Catholic saint by the Vatican in 1631, part of a wider counter-Reformation strategy.
• Did not deter the support of the Irish Protestant Ascendancy for the celebration.
• The Church of Ireland (Anglican) claimed Patrick as important in their local origins and commemorate the day as well.
• During the second half of 17th century a clear Catholic-Protestant divide existed.
• The former being unofficial and illegal under Penal Laws and the latter sanctioned officially.
Celebrations primarily for elite

- Under the Williamite parliament* in 1695, day was no longer recognized as religious holiday.
- Dublin Castle hosted largely private and genteel banquets and fancy balls for the upper crust, primarily for the Protestant Ascendancy.
- Official recognition of 17 March as religious holy day in Ireland did not return until late in eighteenth century.

* Result of conflict between supporters of the Catholic King James II of England and Ireland, and James VII of Scotland and supporters of the Dutch Protestant Prince William of Orange over who would be monarch of Kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland.
First Irish Parade in 1785

- Related to the delay in Dublin Castle celebrations.
- On the 17th group of “true patriots” gathered at the Rotunda in Dublin.
- Prior to their banquet they marched in a grand procession around the garden dressed in true blue (St Patrick’s color).
Role of Temperance Movement

• Lead by Father Mathew in Ireland and U.S.A. from 1830s through 1850s.

• Increased popularity of parades.

• Credited with development of carnivalesque parades with bands, decorations and large numbers of marchers and spectators.

• Promoted a morally upright vision of St. Patrick’s Day.
"The Wearing of the Green“ ‘premiered’ in 1864 Ireland

- Street ballad lamenting repression of supporters of Irish Rebellion of 1798.
- Proclaims "they are hanging men and women for the wearing of the green".
- Revolutionary Society of United Irishmen adopted green as its color, and supporters wore green-colored garments or ribbons.
- Considered sedition and often resulted in prosecution by authorities or violent reprisals by loyalist mobs.
People’s Festival in 1870 in Ireland

• Grand celebration of St Patrick Day in Dublin.
• To encourage ‘Irish’ form of festivity (music & literature) and promote dignified behavior.
• Product of city trade guilds.
• Included some political messages supporting Irish independence.
• Only held once.
• Rising concern about nationalists and conflict with unionists (e.g., Orangemen of Ulster).
Saint Patrick’s Day national bank holiday in Ireland, 1903

• All public houses (pubs) and licensed premises were closed by law for the day (until 1970s).

• Emphasis on church services and military processions.

• Irish language mass at Pro-Cathedral (St Mary’s) attended by government ministers.

• Most businesses closed.
Despite earlier condemnations, Irish start to emulate U.S.A. practices

• Early 1950s National Agricultural and Industrial Development Association started staging annual week long pageant with a parade in Dublin.
• Coincided deliberately with St. Patrick’s Day.
• Promoted Irish produce and industry.
• Drew unashamedly on successful U.S.A. model of parading.
Effort to move St. Patrick Day

• In 1960s Irish officials considered moving Day to later in the year to avoid regularly bad weather and surrounding lent restrictions.
• Questioned if St. Patrick died on 17 March with the hope of a more weather friendly date.
• Results inconclusive and no attempt made to change date.
• Helped stimulate interest in ‘Patrician Studies.’
Dublin’s Industrial pageant superseded

• In 1969 switched to general theme with major attraction being American bands, drum majorettes, and cheerleaders.

• Spiced up parades and entourages significantly increased tourist income.

• By 1990s most considered parades poor copies of U.S.A. and lacking Irish distinctions.

• Several Irish companies ran competition with winner being flown to NYC for their parade.
St Patrick’s Festival: Dublin’s latest

• Initiated 17th March 1996, as a major annual international festival around the national holiday.

• ‘Revival’ of People’s Festival in 1870 Dublin.

• A multi-day celebration featuring parades, concerts, outdoor theater productions, and fireworks shows.

• [http://www.stpatricksfestival.ie/info](http://www.stpatricksfestival.ie/info)
Dublin celebrates with a huge parade during the Festival including lots of different floats and pageants with unique themes plus many marchers.
Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamil), a special Guest of Honor in 2018, is being greeted by President Michael D. Higgins and First Lady Sabina Coyne. They are wearing the traditional cluster of 'shamrocks' (young clovers).
Danny Boy

• Frederic Edward Weatherly (1848-1929) purportedly wrote 'Danny Boy' with the intention to bring together the Unionists and Nationalists of Ireland.
• The song appealed very much to the Irish people - and later, to people all over the world.
• Legend and History of the Song 'Danny Boy': http://www.h2g2.com/approved_entry/A3826136
"May the love and protection Saint Patrick can give... Be yours in abundance as long as you live."

- Irish Blessing
Noble Dream of Unity

• Coming together to celebrate St Patrick Day and self-reflection will ultimately instill belief that more holds the Irish together than drives them apart.

• Glimpse of what might be, in best of all possible worlds.

• Efforts to encourage unity: Tri-color flag 1848 & Danny Boy song.

• Success: Good Friday Peace Agreement, 1998