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## **O Say Can You See? Irish Advertising Agents Look to America, 1895-1936**

**Colum Kenny (Dublin City University)**

Two photographs tell a story about Ireland in general and about Irish advertising in particular. The first was taken in Dublin, the second in New York. They personify the expansion of Irish media from the late nineteenth century, and signify factors crucial to the reach of contemporary communications .

The first photograph, from the mid-1890s, is that of a family slowly rising in the world. Proud parents Catherine and Michael Kenny will not sink into the poverty on their doorstep. Dublin was then one of the most deprived cities in Europe, with a high rate of infant mortality. One of their own sons, Michael Angelo, had died of whooping cough. Catherine is a book-folder (cloth checker) and Michael is a printer. A Fenian during the brief revolt of 1867, he has carefully cleaned and reframed a printed sketch depicting the national hero Daniel O'Connell on his deathbed. It is a sketch that his own father, a baker, left him and that his son Kevin will pass to his son.

Catherine and Michael's eldest boy John has followed Michael into printing. Two other boys and one of the girls will work at advertising. This is a family

benefiting from the rapid growth in publishing related to greater literacy and to technical innovations such as the rotary press and offset printing.

Kevin is seen in the photograph with one hand resting on the shoulder of his mother Catherine and another on that of his sister May. He will found what was said to be Ireland's first full service advertising agency. His siblings Willie and May will work alongside him in Kenny's Advertising Agency (also known as K.A.A.).



Dublin about 1895: Future adman Kevin J. Kenny (back left) stands beside his brother Patrick and sister Della. One of his hands rests on his mother Catherine Fleming and the other on his sister May. May will also work in advertising. Seated centre is John, a lithographic printer. Willie, another future adman, is seated between John and their father Michael who is a printer too.

It is Kevin too who features in the second photograph, taken at a New York studio in 1936. By then an established member of the Catholic commercial class of the Irish Free State, he will have familiarized himself with the American way of advertising and, along with other Irish admen, have adopted some of its methods. The incorporation of US advertising techniques into Irish practice, so evident late in the twentieth century and today, may thus be seen to have deep roots.

Tracing the story of Kevin's career as an adman, events organizer and small publisher one finds that more than a decade before the Irish Free State came into existence (in 1922) the emerging advertising sector was already looking to the United States for inspiration. Later, after independence, it was actively encouraged to adopt US methods, in particular by the first chief executive of the American Association of Advertising Agencies who was himself the son of an Irish emigrant from Co. Galway.

The fact that early Irish admen looked across the Atlantic was not surprising. From the turn of the century, there had been much talk of developing indigenous Irish industries. Among those actively promoting such development was the new Sinn Féin, and the Industrial Development Association of which Kevin was an active member. People deeply resented certain suffocating British restrictions on both trade and financing that had long prevented Irish entrepreneurs developing and dealing freely or directly

with foreign countries instead of having to work through English channels. Following the extinction of an Irish parliament by the Act of Union in 1800, both Dublin and Cork 'saw the manufacturing share of their workforce halved between the famine and the early twentieth century' (Daly, 1992: 3). Like Arthur Griffith himself, who was known as 'the father of Sinn Féin', some Irish business people looked to the United States as a rising world economy that was likely one day to eclipse Britain. They saw no reason not to learn from and benefit from its growth, and there was an existing widespread network of Irish transatlantic contacts due to mass emigration from Ireland in the nineteenth century.

If consumerism was secondary to the concept of the state as a driver of modernity in some European countries, as one study of Italian advertising suggests (Arvidsson, 2003: 13), the consumption of Irish-made products was conceived in Ireland as a driver of independence and of the achievement of statehood by the struggling Irish people. Ireland seems to have had something in common at that time with Russia, which Sally West describes as both recipient and distributor of the process of consumerism, 'villager and urbanite' (West, 2011: 128).

No single Irish product was associated with this push to promote Irish manufactured goods in the way that Michelin, for example, is said to have helped to create 'a certain idea of France' (Harp, 2001: 2; Share, 1998: 31-4).

Ironically, even as Guinness stout later came to be seen by some as the preeminent Irish product it shifted its headquarters to London in 1932 — allegedly to avoid the possibility of expropriation by the new Irish state once the Republican opposition party (Fianna Fáil) came to power. The prospect of nationalized beer was clearly alarming.

### **Irish developments**

Kevin J. Kenny had founded his agency by 1902, in which year he celebrated his twenty-first birthday. During 1901 he worked also as the advertising manager of D.P. Moran's provocative *Leader*. That paper's success has been credited not only to Moran's 'vigorous writing' and 'candid criticism' but to Kevin's 'effective marketing' (Maume, 1995: 13). Moran himself understood it to be the case that Kevin had run an advertising agency from the age of thirteen (*The Leader*, 11 March 1905: 37). Oram states that this venture was located in Amiens Street, across the road from Kevin's family's home at that time, and that his motto there was the Latin 'Multum in Parvo', meaning 'Much in Little'. I have been unable to find any evidence of such an agency, and Oram misidentifies an old photograph of Kenny's premises as being of a building in Amiens Street. It is in fact a picture of Kevin's agency in Middle Abbey Street before 1916 (Oram, 1986: 13, 40; Kenny, 2011a: 30-31). This is a minor error in a large volume, and Oram's book remains the most valuable single resource for the history of Irish advertising.

There were Irish agencies before Kenny's, including Wilson, Hartnell & Co. The latter from 1890 produced for a grocery group the *Lady of the House* journal for women consumers (Strachan and McNally, 2012: 108-36). This was one of a growing number of successful titles aimed at emerging bourgeois mass-markets, titles that included the American magazines *Munsey's* from 1889 and *McClure's* from 1893 (the latter so named by its immigrant Irish editor Samuel S. McClure).

However, it has been said that Kevin was the first agent in Ireland to start offering clients a full range of services (Oram, 1986: p. 54). These came to include art, copywriting, planning and design. He was a friend of Tom Grehan, who had returned to Dublin from England and brought with him to his new job as Advertisement Manager at the *Irish Independent* the latest London advertising techniques (Kenny, 2012: 52-66).

In 1909 Kenny was invited to lecture before the All Ireland Industrial Conference in Belfast on 'the best methods of advertising' for 'the more progressive advertisers' (*Ir. Ind.*, 7 Aug. 1909). That same year Arthur Griffith asked Kevin to look after the business side of Sinn Féin's annual *Irish Year Book* and to become its publisher. His clients by 1910 included Locke's Whiskey and the Royal Irish Constabulary (Oram, 1986: 31-2, 52).

The issue of the Sinn Féin *Irish Year Book* that Kenny produced for 1910 includes a lengthy and anonymous article on advertising, almost certainly

written by Kevin himself or by his friend Tom Grehan. It has recently been reprinted in full. The author of the piece, entitled ‘The advertising problem’, lauds American methods of advertising (Anon, 1910: foreword, 309-17; Kenny, 2011b: 13-17; Kenny, 2014d). While acknowledging that there is some resistance to advertising, the article is enthusiastic. Its author — having observed that it is perfectly true of advertising that ‘When it is good it is very, very good, and when it is bad it is horrid!’— noted that,

It is not necessary to have studied the advertising problem to know that American methods of publicity are years ahead of the best yet devised in any part of the Old World. It is equally true that American firms spend a far greater amount of money on advertising than is spent in any other country, and, ‘as every schoolboy knows’, that is proof that American advertising pays.... In default of more direct means of acquiring a working knowledge of American advertising methods, frequent perusals of the advertisements appearing in the standard American magazines, such as *Munsey’s*, *McClure’s*, the *Cosmopolitan*, etc., will prove not alone distinctly profitable, but also highly interesting. It is not, of course, to be supposed that good advertising is confined solely to America, or that American magazines have a monopoly of readable advertisements, but as the standard is undoubtedly higher in that country, we can learn more from a study of such methods than is possible from the closest observation of less brilliant and less uniform methods nearer home. American advertising should be studied for



the good that is in it — for the depth of experience it contains, for its power of convincing expression, its extraordinary breadth of views, its expressiveness and its suggestiveness. Merely to turn over the pages of a single number of *Munsey's Magazine* is to realize the extraordinary fertility of the American brain as applied to advertising. Articles the most dull, inanimate and uninteresting, are made to glow with life and power; things which in this country would be supposed to offer the least chance to an enterprising advertiser are treated in such a manner as to capture the instant attention of the reader and create an immediate desire to purchase. And yet all this is accomplished without exaggeration or misstatement of any kind; nothing but straightforward, honest facts, couched in language at once interesting, convincing and reasonable. The writing and designing of these advertisements has, within recent years, taken its place amongst the most highly-paid professions in the country; the chief copy-writer in a famous Chicago advertising agency is paid £10,000 a year, and there are hundreds of others securing proportionally large salaries. Advertising is increasing enormously, and the American businessman entirely believes in the doctrine of paying much to get more.

There is much else in the same vein in the article, albeit together with an acknowledgement that every particular market is unique and that 'good as American advertising undoubtedly is, and great as are the benefits derived

from it, a considerable modification is necessary in adapting it to Irish needs.’

During the following year Tom Grehan delivered an address to the Dublin Chamber of Commerce on ‘The Position of Advertising in Modern Commerce’, explaining ‘in a succinct and practical way, the great part which advertising at present plays in the commerce of any country’ (*Connaught Tribune*, 6 May 1911). On 31 July 1911, the *Irish Independent* carried some further reflections by Grehan on the ‘Science of Selling’. In this, he was critical of Irish educational institutions for the absence of training in —and the study of— salesmanship. He noted generally that ‘America’s bounding prosperity is due to the extraordinary attention they give there to every aspect of salesmanship’. While admen such as Kenny or Grehan could not foresee the world through the lens of Ireland in the late twentieth century and while the advertising copy of their time may well have included some ‘quaint little verses’ (Fanning, 2003: 7), their professional practices were appropriate for the cultural and social contexts in which they found themselves and were by no means naive. The fact that Irish agencies were also small before the foundation of the Irish Free State may mislead some into an underestimation of their role in the development of media. In fact at the start of the twentieth century even agencies in New York city appear to have usually employed fewer than half a dozen people (Norris, 1990: 43).

## **US admen in Ireland**

A number of persons for or with whom Kevin J. Kenny had worked to promote either their particular publishing activities or the cause of Irish-Ireland in respect to industrial growth died during the Rebellion of 1916 or in the Great War. They included Patrick Pearse, Seán Mac Diarmada and Tom Kettle. He also worked commercially with Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington, whose husband was a pacifist murdered by a British officer in 1916 (Kenny, 2011a).

Yet life went on for Irish people trying to make a living, even during such troubles and during the war of independence that followed. Just weeks after 'Bloody Sunday' in 1920, when British forces opened fired on spectators and players at a Gaelic football match in Croke Park, Kevin and his sister May were found among a small number of Irish advertising agents who went to London to attend the International Advertising Exhibition at the White City. His agency's stand there was reportedly visited 'by an exceptional crowd of people.' Charlie O'Connell, thought to have worked for both Kenny's and Eason's before establishing his own agency in Dublin, had a small stand at the London event (*Ir. Ind.*, 17 Dec. 1920; Oram, 1986: 41).

Kenny and others had continued to be inspired by American examples. Some months before the Civil War erupted in 1922, he gave a talk to the

Dublin Industrial Development Association, entitled 'How Advertising Can Build Irish Industries'. It was reported thus in part:

Quoting a little saying from the Kodak [US camera company] house organ, 'Everything comes to him who waits, but he who doesn't advertise waits longest,' Mr. Kenny said the businessman who didn't believe in advertising his goods would soon be advertising his business for sale.... Advertising raised the standard of living in America.... It was a matter of advertising in the right way. Advertising was salesmanship *in excelcis*, and presupposed a knowledge of psychology (*Ir. Ind.*, 17 Feb. 1922).

These were not the best of times for advertising agents to practise their profession. However, Grehan and Kenny and some others tried to make the most of things. As the Great War ended in 1918 they had formed the council of a new 'Irish Association of Advertising Men' (*Ir. Independent*, 4 Oct. 1918, 31 Jan. 1919 & 15 May 1920). This first effort at association seems to have sputtered out, for less than six months after the Irish Civil War the *Freeman's Journal* reported on 16 November 1923 that Kevin Kenny, Brian O'Kennedy, Tom Grehan and Charlie McConnell were among fifteen members of a committee of 'advertisers and advertising men' created to 'inquire into and report on the nature of the organisation that should be formed in Dublin to look after the interests of the Free State, in connection

with the International Convention of the Associated Advertising Clubs of the World.’ That convention was about to take place in London. The organisation that they thereafter formed was the Publicity Club of Ireland, and Kevin became one of the most active members of its Promotions Committee. Early in 1924 the Promotions Committee successfully applied on behalf of the club for membership of the Associated Advertising Clubs of the World, and circulated among all such clubs in the United States an invitation and offer of hospitality to entice their representatives to travel on to Dublin after the British event. Kevin and J. C. M. Eason had already gone over from Dublin to attend an advance banquet of the International Convention in London (*Ir. Independent*, 27 Feb. 1924).

Among leading Irish-American admen who accepted the invitation to come to Ireland in 1924 were Homer J. Buckley (known as ‘the father of direct mail’ and said by some even to have coined that term ‘direct mail’ itself); Bernard J. Mullaney (a brilliant publicist who worked for both the US energy industry and the state of Illinois); and James O’Shaughnessy (appointed in 1918 first chief executive of the newly formed American Association of Advertising Agencies — or the ‘4A’s’) (Kenny, 2014a: 179-81). Direct selling was of course a mixed blessing for the public, and some humorous verses referred to Buckley in this context (Anon, 1923):

Oh, here is the man who invented  
The one-cented drive and two-cented,  
And clutters the mails  
With bushels and bales,  
Till the mailmen are Buckley-demented.

The visitors were warmly welcomed to Dublin, being officially greeted at a special reception by William T. Cosgrave, the Irish prime minister (or 'president of the executive' as the post was then known). Buckley and O'Shaughnessy both responded to Cosgrave, the latter recalling that his own father had 'left this country in dark days.' O'Shaughnessy promised Irish advertising agents that, 'All the secrets they had in New York were at their disposal. No man could fix confines to advertising or its expression ...' O'Shaughnessy was said by one Irish reporter to be regarded in the USA as 'the prince of advertising men' (*Ir. Ind.* 22, 29 and 31 July 1924; *Ir. Times* 26 July 1924; *Weekly Irish Times* 26 July 1924). The Advertising Hall of Fame of the American Advertising Federation today includes both Buckley and O'Shaughnessy.

Before he left Ireland O'Shaughnessy also addressed the Dublin Rotary Club, of which both Kenny and Grehan were early members and future presidents. It had been the first Rotary Club to meet outside the United States. O'Shaughnessy told his listeners at another event that he wished to see

advertising grow in Ireland. He said that advertising in America was now a national service, not simply because of the skill of the advertising agency or the vastness of their markets or the media, but due to ‘a happy fusion of the interests of all.’ He believed Ireland had a circulation for her markets proportionately equal to America’s and that there was no city of its size that had come under his notice that was better equipped for productive circulation than Dublin: ‘The circulation of the daily newspapers and periodicals was a big factor in the promotion of advertising, and in a national advertising service that helped to create new wants and so to advance civilization’ (*Ir. Ind.* 29 and 31 July 1924; *Ir. Times*, 1 Aug. 1924).

While O’Shaughnessy was in Ireland in 1924, Tom Grehan on behalf of the Publicity Club presented him with a Claddagh gold ring. Claddagh, a small fishing village in Galway has given its name to a distinct form of ring that is a token of affection. Grehan later wrote, ‘The effect of this was remarkable. He simply broke down and wept. When he pulled himself together he just said one thing which I shall never forget. “Gentlemen”, said he, “I want to tell you that not all of the money I have ever possessed could buy me anything I would value as highly as that ring”’ (*Connacht Tribune*, 6 Feb. 1926).

During the 1920s Irish admen continued to take some advice from O’Shaughnessy, who had earlier been a ‘star’ journalist on the *Chicago*

*Tribune* and subsequently ran his own advertising agency in Chicago before being appointed to the '4A's'. He was closely associated with the Irish Fellowship Club in Chicago, which was instrumental in arranging the first visit of an Irish premier to North America.

### **Going to New York**

William T. Cosgrave set sail for the USA in 1928, on the first transatlantic trip of any Irish prime minister. It was one designed substantially to focus the attention of Irish-American and other financiers on opportunities for investment in Ireland, rather than on political issues. Three months before he departed, Cosgrave stated that,

To-day world competition in industry and commerce is so highly organised and actively pursued that our producers and exporters cannot afford to neglect any opportunity that presents itself of advertising, and thereby helping to win favour for their products in the home and foreign markets (*Ir. Independent*, 11 Oct. 1927; Kenny, 2014a: 188-99).

Cosgrave was one of the first Irish politicians to understand the value of promotion. As a politician he personally availed of the services of Brian O'Kennedy, formerly an employee of Kenny's agency. The O'Kennedy-Brindley advertising agency published an illustrated booklet celebrating Cosgrave's visit to North America in 1928. It is said that O'Kennedy had been inspired to go into advertising by an American magazine



advertisement that claimed readers could first learn the techniques by post and then earn \$5 a month from applying them (O’Kennedy-Brindley, 1928; Oram, 1986: 54).

In 1929 James O’Shaughnessy returned to Ireland again, and on this occasion was guest of honour at a lunch organized by Kevin and other founding members of the new Irish Association of Advertising Agencies. The IAAA elected him then its first patron. The association was later reorganized from 1964 as IAPI, the Institute of Advertising Practitioners in Ireland (*Ir. Ind.*, 21 May 1927, 19 Feb. and 7 Sept. 1929; *Ir. Times*, 6 Sept. 1929).

Kevin J. Kenny himself visited the United States in 1936. Until the later advent of commercial flights, the journey across the Atlantic was long and sometimes unpleasant due to storms. However, in 1936 Kevin together with Tom Laurie, managing director of the Irish-American Oil Company, brought a pioneering promotion of Irish goods to the United States. Because of protectionist regulations, they had to display these goods in New York harbour in a saloon on board the *SS California*, the vessel on which they had crossed the ocean. Laurie had told the Dublin Rotary Club that they would engage ‘a high-pressure American window-dresser’ to display the goods ‘in the manner in which the Americans would like to see them.’ Among well-wishers present when they left Dublin had been the then

advertisement manager of the *Irish Press* newspaper. This was Erskine Childers, a future president of Ireland (*Ir. Ind.* and *Ir. Press*, 11 May 1936; Kenny 2011a: 90-93).



Kevin J. Kenny in New York, 1936.

My grandfather did manage to slip ashore at some point in New York, where a studio photographer took a formal portrait of this early Irish adman. He stands proud, a long way from the terrible slums of Dublin on the precipice of which he had grown up. But he did not forget his origins, for he worked to improve Dublin's wretched housing conditions as well as participating in various charitable activities. Not alone had he developed his own business, but he was also —along with a future president of Ireland Sean T. O'Kelly and a future Taoiseach John A. Costello— one of those who established in Ireland an order of Catholic 'knights' based on the American Knights of Columbus. The Irish Knights of Columbanus intended to counteract what was seen as Protestant masonic preferences in business and banking, and to support one another in other ways also (Kenny, 2014a: 32, 68).

In going to New York with Tom Laurie, Kenny was with someone to whom he was commercially close. Laurie's Irish-American Oil Company had traded until 1934 as Pratts and after that as Esso in Ireland, and was long one of Kenny's most important clients (Oram, 1986: 69). A striking advertisement that the agency prepared for Pratts was placed in a special volume of record that Kenny had been asked to produce to commemorate the centenary of Catholic Emancipation. Emancipation, the winning of votes for Catholics in 1829, was a triumph for Daniel O'Connell, who was popularly known as 'The Liberator'. Where Kevin's grandfather had framed and his father lovingly

reframed a printed image of O’Connell’s deathbed scene, this centenary advertisement placed for Pratts nods in the direction of O’Connell while inviting citizen motorists to sweep by his monument in O’Connell Street and into the future — thanks to American gas. That’s ‘the spirit of freedom’!

THE SPIRIT OF FREEDOM  
**PRATTS**

The monument is worthy of the great Emancipator. It reflects the achievement of his lofty ideals—it is the very Spirit of Freedom.

Motorists have always looked on Pratts as their Spirit of freedom—the freedom from engine troubles that makes motoring a pleasure.

Never say “petrol”—say  
**PRATTS**

IRISH-AMERICAN OIL CO. LTD., 1 & 2 UPPER O'CONNELL STREET, DUBLIN

K.I.A.A.  
(6)

Kenny’s 1929 advertisement for Pratts petrol.

In one recent study of Irish media, its author writes that, between the foundation of the Irish state and the beginning of the state's economic revival from 1960, US practices and messages contributed to the technical style and content of Irish advertising and thus informed Irish women's view of American consumerism in particular. She suggests that Irish society was more open to external influences than is sometimes thought to be the case, and challenges the narrative of Ireland as a closed society before 1960 (Whelan, 2014: 159 –182). Looking at advertisements such as this one by Kenny's for Pratts it is easy to see such influence at work.

#### **Irish-Americans and the 4A's**

There is much scope for research into the development of Irish advertising, and scope too for exploring further the role of Irish-American admen. For example, Patrick F. O'Keeffe of Massachusetts is credited with having by 1926 coined that great slogan 'Say It With Flowers' (*TIME*, 8 and 22 March 1926, 13 Aug. 1934). His bookplate graces a copy of Presbrey's classic history of US advertising that the present author managed to acquire from a Connecticut bookseller for the DCU media archive. Boston-born John P. Cunningham, founder of Cunningham & Walsh, was associated with another well-known slogan, 'Blow some my way'. This was for Chesterfield cigarettes, 'whose ads were among the first to show women smoking' (*New*

*York Times*, 26 Feb. 1985), and dates from an era when ‘passive smoking’ might have been understood to signify smoking in bed.

Another much more recent subject for possible study is John J. Dooner, whose grandparents emigrated from Co. Clare and who became chief executive of the McCann-Erickson Worldgroup as well as chairman of Interpublic, one of the foremost global advertising holding companies.

My interest in James O’Shaughnessy, first chief executive of the American Association of Advertising Agencies, and in his energetic brothers drew me into much research that finally resulted two years ago in a book published by the press arm of the University of Missouri, —which was the first university in the world to award a journalism degree. In the course of writing that book it was necessary to conduct some research in the United States, notwithstanding the fact that a remarkable amount of documentation and works of various kinds are now available online. DCU covered some of the costs of going to Manhattan and to Raleigh, North Carolina, where Duke University has advertising archives. The American Association of Advertising Agencies (the 4A’s as it is known), in the person of Marsha Appel, its vice-president for research, welcomed me and found some relevant files in its New York offices. Ms Appel herself has given advice to the *Madmen* series in respect to contextual details and takes a personal interest in the history of the sector.



James O'Shaughnessy, first chief executive of the 4A's.

In 2013 the American Association of Advertising Agencies invited me to present some of my research findings at its headquarters, because a significant part of my work on O'Shaughnessy deals with unwritten aspects of the history of 4A's that he did so much to establish on a formal basis. And so, on a cold March morning, I emerged from the subway into Times Square during a snowstorm and made my way to the sixteenth floor of a skyscraper on the Avenue of the Americas. To my delight 4A's executives turned up to hear my talk and to engage in discussion.

I was in New York then primarily to present a paper at the Joint Journalism and Media History Conference of the American Journalism Historians Association and the AEJMC. My journey was a deliberate step towards finding a publisher for the O'Shaughnessy book. Academic publishing opportunities in the area of the humanities in the United States are not what they used to be. Moreover, while tens of millions of Americans claim Irish ancestry, those who do so do not constitute a large or distinct Irish-American market for academic works.

On a separate visit to Raleigh, among the Duke University advertising archives, I also stumbled on a thin connection between James O'Shaughnessy and Peregrine Acland, who was the author of one of Canada's most renowned novels about World War I. Acland was a literary disciple of the Irishman George Bernard Shaw, and sought him out in



London when a member of the Canadian forces sent to Europe in 1914. However, Acland later abandoned his promising career as a novelist to become an adman with J. Walter Thompson and was later political advisor to Canada's most famous prime minister, William Lyon Mackenzie King. This was such a good and untold story that I could not resist writing it up for publication (Kenny, 2014c: 165-85).

## **Conclusion**

There is much scope for further research into the history, structure and content of Irish advertising. Steady perseverance is required. Pressure on academics to appear in some journals that are highly rated according to debatable rubrics can be disheartening. It is vital for one's welfare to do work that one finds interesting, and important for society to do something that helps others by enhancing their understanding. The world of Irish advertising offers such opportunities.

There are various ways in which advertising research matters. It is relevant to art, business, cultural and media studies among other fields. It also throws light on aspects of Irish history. The case of Arthur Griffith, founder of the original Sinn Féin, provides an example in that respect. Griffith was a man of considerable insight and foresight whose practical patriotism and readiness to compromise appears to have resulted in his being marginalised within this nation's pantheon of patriots. He was, amongst other things, a

prolific editor and journalist (Kenny, 2014b) and the incidence of advertising in his successive publications provides clues not only to his support-base but also to reasons why the authorities repeatedly suppressed his publications. Griffith cut and pasted stories from other papers into his twice-weekly but short-lived *Scissors and Paste* of 1914-1915, in an attempt to avoid the suppression that had befallen two of his own earlier papers, *Sinn Féin* and *Éire-Ireland*. So why, when he was republishing what had been permitted elsewhere, was *Scissors and Paste* also suppressed by the British? Look to the small but original advertisements that it carried. They had both a commercial and an ideological significance, and exacerbated the careful choice of certain published stories that were rearranged in a way likely to irk the authorities.

Advertising was an activity that fascinated James Joyce, as it has intrigued many others, and his work is suffused by its influence. Leopold Bloom in *Ulysses*, for example, works as a Dublin adman of his day. While employed at a Rome bank in 1906 Joyce himself made analytical notes about contemporary advertisements and concluded these private musings with the cryptic suggestion that, 'Institute of Advertising would be open to educated men'. Among the books later in Joyce's library in Trieste was *The Art of Selling Goods*, written by E. M. Woolley and published in Chicago in 1907 by the American Business Man venture (Joyce, 1906; Leonard, 1998: 10).

Indeed Dettmar has argued that Joyce was a dab hand at shrewdly promoting his own works, describing him as ‘an enthusiastic and energetic, if cleverly disguised, amateur advertiser himself’ (Dettmar, 1993: 795).

A ghostly advertising sign painted on the gable end of the long-gone Finn’s Hotel in Dublin, where Nora Barnacle once worked, still connects a passerby on Leinster Street with James Joyce. The hotel features in *Ulysses*. But it is not just Finn’s Hotel that is gone. After Kevin died, Kenny’s Advertising Agency continued first under the management of his son Michael and then under that of his grandson Stuart. Michael became president of IAPI for 1972/73, at which time the agency was funding a research fellowship at UCD. However, later in the twentieth century it met the fate of a number of other independent agencies and was subsumed into one of those multinational companies that first competed aggressively with and then absorbed smaller national agencies, with Irish advertising practitioners then adopting an attitude that may best be described as ‘pragmatic but ambivalent’ (O’Boyle, 2011: 43). In 1988 Kenny’s was taken over by Lopex (now known as Diversified Agencies Communications) and was merged with Arks, one of that group’s other Irish acquisitions (*Ir. Ind.* 19 & 22 Oct. 1988; *Ir. Press* 2 Sept. 1963 & 21 Oct. 1988).

Irish advertising was part of the visual culture of twentieth century Ireland (Garvey, 2000). Notwithstanding resistance in some quarters to the practice

of advertising, it was acknowledged by Ireland's first prime minister as being also an activity of economic significance. It was perhaps inevitable that once Irish advertisers began to emulate American methods, incorporating aspects of US sales techniques into their services for Irish clients, US and global advertising agencies would eventually take a closer look at Ireland and ask how they might either absorb Irish agencies into their own operations or bypass them by selling space in Irish media from outside Ireland. Such is the process of a globalisation that has been by no means confined to one sector or one particular state, and that has cultural and ideological as well as structural implications. What this essay demonstrates is that early Irish admen were not afraid of embracing change or adopting ideas from outside Ireland. Their flexibility and energy in doing so was no less than they felt their clients deserved, and their dedication to the commercial development of an independent Irish state is an example of creativity and enterprise harnessed to contemporary socio-economic needs.

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