

# GOVERNMENT TIMES

The award-winning newsletter of students and staff  
in UCC's Department of Government & Politics.



Issue 75 – Monday 5 February 2018

## THE EUROPEAN NEUTRALS AND NATO



Congratulations to the Head of the Department of Government and Politics, Dr Andrew Cottey, on the publication of his latest book, *The European Neutrals and NATO*. See Page 4.



# HECTIC FEBRUARY AHEAD!

- **Monday 12 Feb – ‘The Future of Europe ‘ – see page 19**
- **Thursday 15 Feb – CLRG Public Lecture Series – see page 14**
- **Wednesday 21 Feb – Student society table quiz – see page 20**
- **Tuesday 27 Feb – Annual Government Ball – see page 20**

**..... Not to mention Politics Week and the Government Cup!**

As you will see, Issue 75 is full of details of what current students, graduates and staff of the Department of Government and Politics have been up to in recent times. Our cover story features Dr Andrew Cottey and we congratulate him on his latest book, *The European Neutrals and NATO*. Staff have been engaged in a whole host of activities with workshops, presentations and public lectures – see pages 8, 18, 19 and 20.

We have strong student participation in this issue too with thought-provoking contributions from Conor O’Carroll and Danielle Grayson (both BSc Government I) on political correctness – see pages 6 and 7. Bryan O’Shea (BSc Government I) conducted two major interviews with Councillor John Paul O’Shea (see pages 10-12) and with the Franklin County Recorder, Danny O’Connor (see pages 16 and 17). Both interviews are well worth reading.

Equally, Lee Nagle (BSc Government IV) gives a fascinating account of her work placement experiences in the European Parliament (see page 13) and we feature BSc Government graduates, Alison Donnelly, Deirdre Kingston, Eoin Weldon and Margaret Kenneally (see pages 5 and 9).

We do not only look back in Issue 75 at things that have happened – we also look forward with anticipation to a very busy February. We have the ‘Future of Europe’ event on 12 February, followed by the third Annual Centre for Local and Regional Governance Public Lecture Series on 15 February. Both should be great events.

February also brings Politics Week with a host of popular events including the Government Ball and the Government Cup.

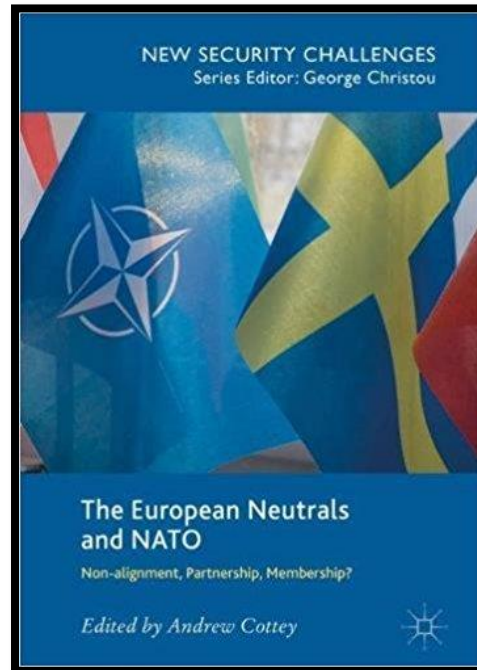
Enjoy the month ahead!

*Atodh Quinlivan, Danielle Grayson, Bryan O’Shea, James Massi and Lee Nagle.*

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# Cover story: The European Neutrals and NATO



This book, edited by Dr Andrew Cottey and published by Palgrave Macmillan, provides the first detailed comparative analysis of the unusual partnership between the main European neutral states and NATO. Neutrality and alliance membership are fundamentally incompatible, but through the vehicle of NATO's post-Cold War partnerships the European neutral states and NATO have found a way to bridge this gap and cooperate with one another. Based on case studies of Austria, Finland, Ireland, Sweden and Switzerland written by leading experts, this book explores the detail of each country's relationship with NATO, the factors shaping those relationships and whether any of these states are likely to abandon neutrality and join NATO. The book also contributes to broader work on foreign policy by exploring different explanations of the European neutral states' foreign and security policy choices. This book will be of interest to scholars of the European neutral states, NATO and European security, as well as to those interested in understanding the dynamics behind states foreign policy choices.

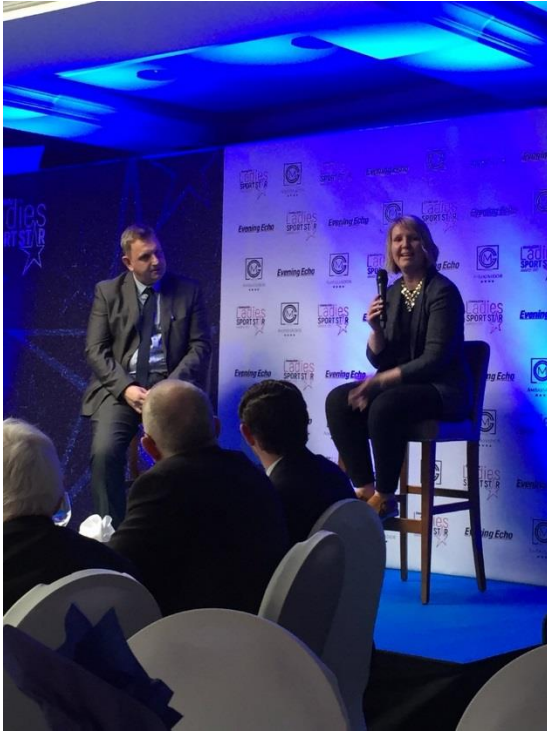
<https://www.palgrave.com/gp/book/9781137595232>



**Andrew Cottey** is Senior Lecturer and Jean Monnet Chair in European Political Integration, Department of Government and Politics, University College Cork, Ireland. His research focuses on European security and his publications include *Security in 21st Century Europe* (Palgrave Macmillan).



## BSc Government graduate, Alison Donnelly, is a star!



BSc Government graduate, **Ali Donnelly**, was the invited guest speaker at last week's *Cork Evening Echo Sports Star Awards* at the Ambassador Hotel.

Ali is heavily involved in rugby as a coach and advocate and runs the award winning women's rugby website [www.ScrumQueens.com](http://www.ScrumQueens.com).

She is the Deputy Spokesperson to the British Prime Minister, Theresa May and runs the Downing Street Press Office. She began her career as a journalist for the *Evening Echo* in Cork, and has also worked for the BBC and HM Treasury.

See also Issue 72 of *Government Times*.

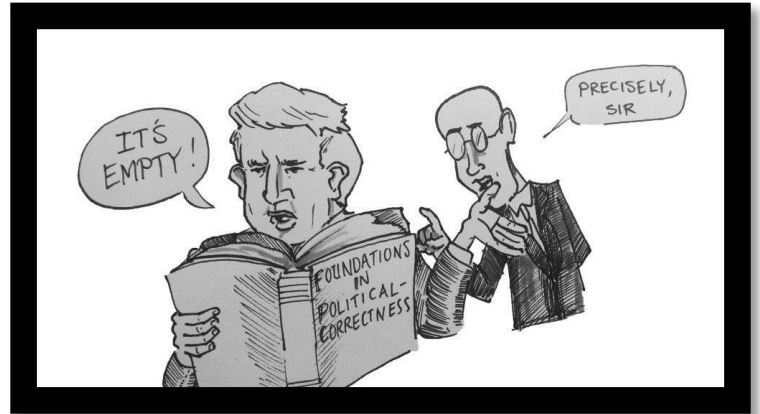
## Deirdre Kingston to the fore in opposing the dissolution of the Board of Management at Clonkeen College



BSc Government graduate, **Deirdre Kingston**, is a Labour Party councillor on Dún Laoghaire/Rathdown County Council and she has been vocal on a local issue involving Clonkeen College. See link below.

Deirdre has been selected to contest the next General Election for the Labour Party in Dún Laoghaire.

<https://www.labour.ie/news/2017/07/07/minister-must-act-in-the-interest-of-clonkeen-stud/>



# Debating Political Correctness

## *Political Correctness is Destroying Democracy*

**By Conor O'Carroll, BSc Government I**

In recent years the term 'Political Correctness' has become more and more prevalent in mainstream society. Some would see this a good thing, a progressive step towards a better world. I, however, do not. Political correctness has, in my opinion, extended beyond its dictionary definition. Nowadays, uttering 'Bless you' after someone sneezes is seen as a micro-aggression in many US colleges. Welcoming 'ladies and gentlemen' to the Commonwealth Games is no longer permitted for fear of offending someone. Political correctness has even invaded the battlefield with British soldiers prohibited from using 'Sir' or 'Ma'am' when addressing their superiors as to avoid assuming their gender. But how does this hurt democracy? Should we not be striving for a society where no one gets offended? Most certainly not.

The problem with political correctness nowadays is that it can be used as a weapon. A powerful weapon. Political correctness is often used to shut down and silence opinions that differ from others. No longer can you question the validity of the 31 genders legally protected under New York State law nor can you suggest tighter immigration policies in an attempt to curb terrorism without the outraged masses baying for your blood. You can't even say 'manhole cover' without an angry Twitter mob calling you sexist. It all gets a bit tiring really. At the end of it all, it seems we are left with a list of things we can't say that's longer than the list of things we can say. Unfortunately, or rather worryingly, the latter only seems to be getting shorter by the day. Freedom of speech and expression has been stabbed in the back by political correctness and the knife is beginning to twist. If free speech dies, democracy will crumble soon after and we will be left in a world where those who challenge ideas and 'offend' others will be silenced forever. Sounds a bit bleak if you ask me.

Thankfully, there is hope on the horizon. Victories for the 'politically incorrect' campaigns of Trump and Brexit has shown that the chokehold political correctness has on speech can be loosened. The American and British electorate refused to be silenced despite the media's best efforts. They painted the Leave and Trump voters as racists that belong in the dark ages, but this is simply not true. They are normal citizens sick and tired of being told what they can and can't say, sick of being called racist, sexist or God forbid, Islamophobic. These people are the last line of defence that free speech has. Should Brexit be abandoned or Trump removed from office for fear that political correctness will engulf the world. One only hopes that if that day comes there is space on Elon Musk's shuttle heading for Mars.

## ***What is political correctness and is it benefitting or destroying our society?***

**By Danielle Grayson, BSc Government I**

A topic that has become the main headline of international media in the last number of years can be defined as “conforming to a belief that language and practices which could offend political sensibilities should be eliminated”. Is this new ‘fad’ as some call it, limiting our free speech or just encouraging the members of our society to become better people?

Political correctness became widely known in the 1980s when people felt that those who offended others should be punished. However, it has been noted by many journalists and authors that it grows worse and more widespread with each generation. Controversial topics such as feminism, sexuality, the term ‘rape culture’ and a long list more are often shunned, banned or censored with fear of insulting others. Is this raising generations to be more kind and considerate towards others or is it setting them up to be hurt when comments are made about these topics that mean a lot to many people?

Some people such as Milo Yiannopoulos, a self-proclaimed free-speech activist is world renowned for ignoring political correctness and almost intentionally seeking to offend others, have made their fame by undermining political correctness where as many have suffered severe verbal abuse for believing in and encouraging a society of political correctness.

So now, is this era of political correctness a manufactured left-wing tool to shut down the right or is it a clause in generational development that is either going to make us stronger and build social immunity or cause us to become a society made up of members who are easily offended?





# UCC in the Community

Dr Emmanuelle Schön-Quinlivan  
EU and Brexit



**BFGtoEU** @BFGtoEU · 6d  
Senior and 1st class pupils assembling the European flag in our second @BFGtoEU class. Lots of enthusiasm! @EU\_Commission @UCCResearch @CACSSS1



1 4 10



**What does Brexit mean for Ireland and small rural communities?**

Public talk by UCC's

**Dr Emmanuelle Schön-Quinlivan**



Independence Museum Kilmurry

Wednesday 7 February 2018 at 8:00pm

**All Are Welcome!**



**IIEA**

Emmanuelle's **Big Friendly Guide to the EU** project is continuing with weekly classes in national schools in Kilmurry and Fermoy. The classes have been very well received by students, parents and teachers alike.

On 7 February, she will be presenting a public lecture in the Independence Museum, Kilmurry on Brexit and the impact on small rural communities.

On 22 January, Emmanuelle spoke at an event organised by the Institute of International and European Affairs (IIEA). She discussed French politics, Brexit and the future of the EU.



# Success for BSc Government graduates at annual Cork Business Association Awards



Four BSc Government graduates featured at the Cork Business Association (CBA) Gala Dinner in Páirc Uí Chaoimh on Saturday 20 January. These included **Eoin Weldon** (top left) who won an award and **Margaret Kenneally** (top right) who was nominated for an award. Eoin works in AM O'Sullivan PR and the company won the award for best professional services. Margaret works in her family business in Cork City Gaol which was highly commended for its success in heritage and tourism.

Also present at the Gala Dinner were BSc Government graduates, **Clara O'Neill** and **Gregory Loughnane-Walsh**. Dr Aodh Quinlivan was invited as a guest of the CBA and was recognised for his contribution to local governance in Cork and, in particular the recent debates about the boundary controversy.

**Cork Business of the Year Awards 2017**

Event Sponsor: 

Main Awards Sponsor: 

Media Partner: **Irish Examiner**

# THE BIG INTERVIEW



## Councillor John Paul O'Shea Cork County Council

### Interview by Bryan O'Shea, BSc Government I

**Q. You were elected the Cork County Council in 2009 at the age of 25, one of the youngest elected representatives in the country. Why did you decide to run for election in your local Kanturk/Mallow district? Did you always intend on getting involved in politics?**

**A.** I never intended on getting involved in politics. Growing up at home, we were always involved in the community helping out in the local groups etc. I accidentally became the PRO of the Save Lombardstown Post Office Committee one night at a public meeting which was trying to get the Government of the day to automate our local post office at Lombardstown. For what was supposed to be a few weeks work ended up in a nearly four-year battle with Government Departments to get our local post office automated. Such was the success of our campaign that all remaining rural post offices were automated. It was during this time that I was approached to run as an Independent Community Candidate for my local area in the 2009 Local Elections.

**Q. You ran as an Independent in the 2009 and 2014 local elections, and again in the 2016 general election. Why did you choose the independent route?**

**A.** I have never been affiliated with a political party, so it was the obvious choice for me when I ran for the local elections. My parents would not have been party political either so that made it easier I suppose. I succeeded in my first attempt in 2009, getting an impressive 1,859 first preference votes. This gave me the second seat from a total of 5 seats in the 2009 elections. From my involvement at the beginning in 2009 right up to 2014, at local government level, it didn't really matter if you were a member of a party or not. You still represented your area to the best of your ability and your party affiliation didn't hinder you getting the local work done. It was likewise in the development of policy. If you proposed something worthwhile, all members regardless of political affiliation would support the motion and would progress. This led to the 2014 local election where I received a first preference vote of 4,374, the third highest in the country. It was only natural I would run in the general election as an Independent and if you recall, Independents were rating high in the polls at that time too.

**Q. Since your election in 2009, do you feel you have been able to make a difference in your local area as a local representative?**

**A.** I believe I have made a significant difference in my local area. I am a strong believer in local democracy and I believe lots more can be done through local authorities and we now see this happening, be it at a snail's pace. Our function as local representatives has changed quite significantly since I was first elected in 2009.

Since then, we (the local authority) have now become lead agencies for Enterprise & Economic Development, Tourism and Community Development – areas which we didn't have until 2014.

**Q. What would you consider to be your proudest achievement to date?**

**A.** My proudest achievement would have to be becoming first citizen of Cork County. It was a great honour for me to be elected as Mayor of the County of Cork in 2015/2016. I was one of the youngest ever mayors to be elected at 31 years of age sharing this with former Councillor Paula Desmond who was also 31 when she was elected Mayor. It was also a great honour to be elected as the first Independent Mayor of Cork County in the Council's 116 years in existence and it was made even more special by being the year of the centenary of the 1916 Easter Rising.

**Q. What is day to day life as an elected councillor like? Do you work solely as a councillor or do you also have a job outside of being a politician? How do you juggle the two?**

**A.** I have noticed since my involvement in local politics began nearly 9 years ago to now, that it is becoming ever more demanding of my time. This has resulted in my opinion by gaining such powers like the lead agency for Enterprise & Economic Development, Tourism and Community Development along with the abolition of town, district & borough councils. We have seen in recent times in Cork County Council that several resignations have occurred due to the fact that elected members are now finding it impossible to do two jobs. If this continues, I would worry considerably about electing young innovative people to Council's into the future if they cannot maintain their other professional role also. I myself have worked for the Health Service since 2004. I maintained both roles on a full-time basis up to 2013 when I took a career break from the HSE. I returned in 2017 to the Health Service but I am now working a shorter week to accommodate the requirements of being a local representative.

**Q. How would you assess the current state of local government in Cork and throughout Ireland? Do you agree with the 2014 Local Government act which abolished many town and urban councils?**

**A.** The current state of local government in Cork and indeed the entire country is as I would call it, at a crossroads. I know for a fact that many exiting members will not put their name forward for re-election in 2019, simply due to the job being too time consuming for the time afforded to them to do this work and for the remuneration given to members (representational payment of €16,750 per annum which is fully taxable). Many younger members have a hard decision to make on whether they continue with local politics or pursue their career that will offer them a more sustainable and concrete future. The 2014 Local Government Reform Act "Putting People First" was a good document. Like all documents and reports, you don't agree with everything but there was good description of reform processes in there. Some were followed through such as the abolition of town and urban councils which I agree with. Most if not all of them had very little powers and limited budgets and were so considerably out of date, it was frightening. In my own experience in Mallow, I didn't run for the Town Council in 2009 - even though I could have, which did not make sense because I live 10 miles outside the town - in the country! The actual boundary of the Town Council only covered 85% of the present town as the boundary had not moved with the ever-developing town. So how could the Town Council effectively represent the town? Furthermore, when elected in 2009, I was more involved, as a county Councillor, than town Councillors were in approving larger scale projects as this was done through Cork County Council rather than Mallow Town Council.

**Q. How would you like to improve/change/reform local government in Ireland?**

**A.** We need to urgently address the role of a local representative. They have changed so much since they were first introduced and need to now reflect the current workload. My fear is, if this system continues, we will find it hard to field candidates in local elections sooner rather than later. I think we also need to continue to devolve powers from central government to local government. This was very strong in the 2014 Act but little of it has been implemented. We need to continue this reform.

**Q. What is your position on the ongoing issue of the city boundary? How would you like to see it progress?**

**A.** I supported the original decision of a merger of both authorities and this remains my view. However, the political decision nationally has been made now to legislate for a boundary extension which I will, as a member of Cork County Council, work to progress before the 2019 Local Elections.

**Q. You ran as an independent candidate in the 2016 General Election and narrowly lost out on a seat. How was the experience of running a General Election campaign for you? Did you enjoy it? Did the loss feel bitter due to the fact there was only a couple of hundred votes in the difference between winning the final seat and losing out?**

**A.** I enjoyed every minute of it! When you enter politics, you must have two things. 1. Resilience and 2. Patience. I put in a good campaign over a relatively short period of time and just lost out by 249 votes. The

initial reaction is one of disappointment of course because coming so close was heart-breaking in one sense but on the other side of it, it was heart-warming that so many people put their faith in me to become a national politician and indeed, to receive that many votes. Having 9 years of experience in local politics, I know the difference between local and national politics and the challenge it can be to become one!

**Q. Will you run in the next General Election and if so, will you continue as an Independent?**

**A.** It will very much depend on timing! I would like to think I could have another shot at it so watch this space! I have been an Independent Councillor since elected in 2009. I am quite content as an Independent, but I am always open and have a proven track record of working with the party system to develop my area further. I won't be contacting anyone seeking membership. If the parties wish to do so, I am always willing to talk!

**Q. What, in your opinion, are the major issues facing rural communities in Ireland? Also, in terms of urban vs rural development, do you feel that rural communities have been somewhat forgotten about?**

**A.**, I believe the main issue facing rural communities at present is the life and soul of our country towns and villages. Many of the businesses in these towns and villages will need to adapt significantly to cater for the needs of people in rural Ireland post 2020. There is huge work involved in this and I strongly believe we need a national strategy to assist us with this. Likewise, the residential parts of our towns and villages need to be looked at and policies need to be amended so we can rejuvenate them. Many people in our country would love to live in a town centre or village above a shop or business but these premises are not readily available. Likewise, there are a lot of independent residential properties available in our towns and villages and they just remain idle which is a shame given our current housing need.

**Q. How would you describe the relationship between central and local government in Ireland?**

**A.** The relationship is at best, fractured. Central Government still hold the power in many instances and are not leaving local authorities to their own devices. Yes, there should be national targets in terms of housing but why does the Department need to approve every aspect of design, tender and construction of such units? The current process in relation to building new social homes for families and those on our housing list is delaying the delivery of these units because of the bureaucracy of central government.

**Q. What are your plans for the future?**

**A.** The plan presently, is to continue the work I am doing for my local area in Kanturk/Mallow Municipal District which I love. However, I will look out for further opportunities and I will grasp them if the time is right!



**MANY THANKS TO COUNCILLOR JOHN PAUL O'SHEA FOR TAKING PART IN 'THE BIG INTERVIEW'.**



# European Parliament Work Placement Report

by Lee Nagle, BSc Gov 4

Walking on the beach on a rainy January afternoon, I received a phone call from my work placement coordinator. 'You have been offered the work placement in Brussels!' I had not prepared for this. The interview was great practice for the future, I had assured myself, and as much as I would have liked the opportunity, I never thought I would be offered the position. But there I was – and I had to give my answer by Monday.

What seemed like a fantastic opportunity was tainted by feelings of guilt – leaving my daughter with my mother for around four months was going to damage her for life, I convinced myself. All common sense flew out the window and I spiralled into a panic. After reassurance from my more level-headed friends and relatives, I realised that all was going to be fine – I had been offered this opportunity and wanted to take it.

Travelling to Brussels is not fun. Climbing into the signature blue Aircoach was the start of a roughly eight-hour journey, which culminated in dragging my overweight suitcases up seven flights of stairs to my - let's call it 'eclectic' - apartment in the attic of an old building (that was extremely cold in March and far too hot in July). As a somewhat apolitical person, I had never been involved in a political party before. I had paid a little bit of attention in history class at school, and liked to watch the news, so I knew a bit about Sinn Féin in general - but the desire for a United Ireland had never really been coursing through my veins. I was worried that I wouldn't fit in.

But they were a great bunch of lads. The European Parliament can be a stressful place to work in, but I never felt like I couldn't ask my colleagues for advice or help. In true Irish fashion, a few drinks and a sing-song led to me making some friends for life. During one particularly noisy session, when people had stopped for a breather in between songs, one of the MEP's cried 'Careful now lads, we don't want to scare Lee off!' Banter and camaraderie like this made Brussels feel more like home.

Strasbourg was where the real magic happened though. This was when I truly got to experience the European Parliament at work. I was assigned 'vote lists', whereby you research what your MEP will be voting on and then advise whether or not it is in line with party policy. There are niggly clauses that can sometimes be a bit difficult to read, but I don't think my advice caused any major political incidents, so I think I can say that it went well! All-in-all, working in Brussels with Sinn Féin was incredibly rewarding. I had access to meetings and events that would make other political nerds jealous and got to meet some very interesting people. Brussels as a city didn't quite capture my heart, but the amount of work carried out there is phenomenal. I have a much greater understanding now of how it all works, I just wish I hadn't gained such a fond appreciation of Belgian beer and chips!




***Gerry Adams with Lee Nagle on work placement in Brussels and Strasbourg.***

The third Annual Public Lecture Series of the Centre for Local and Regional Governance takes place on Thursday 15 February at 6:30pm in Boole 1.

The event is **FREE OF CHARGE** and **ALL ARE WELCOME**.

#CLRG18







**CENTRE FOR LOCAL & REGIONAL GOVERNANCE**



**THIRD ANNUAL PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES**  
**Thursday 15 February 2018**  
**6:30pm, Boole 1, UCC**

## Making Local Government Better

- **SIR STEVE BULLOCK**, Directly elected mayor of Lewisham, London
- **CLLR TOIRÉASA FERRIS**, Kerry County Council
- **PROFESSOR COLIN COPUS**, De Montfort University, Leicester
- **DR FRANK CROWLEY**, School of Economics, UCC







Opening remarks by the Lord Mayor of Cork, **Councillor Tony Fitzgerald**.

The event will be chaired by **Dr Fiona Buckley**, Department of Government and Politics, UCC.

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**ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2017**




Published January 2018

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At the 20th anniversary Philip Monahan Memorial Lecture, sponsored by the CLRG, were (from left to right): Dr Eadwile Cotter, Head of Department of Government and Politics, Carol Monaghan MP, guest speaker; Councillor Tony Fitzgerald, Lord Mayor of Cork; and Aine Hennessy, Chair of Government and Politics Society.


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### DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Centre for Local and Regional Governance (CLRG) has had a busy and successful year. There have been many highlights but one which stands out in the launch of *Disenfranchisement: The remarkable story of how Cork lost its Corporation in 1824* (see pages 10 and 11). This is the first book publication which bears the logo of the CLRG. We take great pride in this and thank Cook City Libraries and Cook City Council for their support. The CLRG Second Annual Public Lecture Series was held in February and attracted a great crowd to UCC. We were privileged to have tremendous contributions from Michael Martin TD, Dr Theresa Eaddy, Rachel Wall, Professor Colin Copus and the Lord Mayor of Cook on the spot, Councillor Des Cahill. As part of the night, the inaugural CLRG Annual Essay Award was presented to Lena O'Brien for his work on directly elected mayors (see page 14 below on left). The CLRG was also honoured this year to sponsor the 20th Anniversary Philip Monahan Memorial Lecture at UCC. Carol Monaghan MP delivered a fascinating lecture which was very well received (see page 14). Earlier in the year, I had the privilege of presenting evidence to the House of Commons All-Party Parliamentary Group examining collaboration and devolution in international local government. This was a tremendous experience and it reflected well on the CLRG.

Throughout 2017, our research and training project with the Cook City Public Participation Network (PPN) continued, as did our relationship with Cook City Council with the award of a bursary for a staff member to undertake a local government Masters with us. Partnerships and collaborations are key to what we do and I am extremely grateful to my international and national advisory board members for their guidance and support during the year.

2018 promises much for the CLRG, with two new book publications on the horizon (see page 15). In February, we will hold the third Annual CLRG Public Lecture Series and a fantastic line-up of guest speakers will be revealed in the New Year. In April, Dr Simona Eakovic (quote below on right) will be visiting us from Slovenia on a Erasmus Mobility Learning Agreement and we look forward to her contribution. We also hope to develop our national and research collaborations in 2018. Whilst UCC, we plan to work closely with the likes of Frank Crowley (Spatial and Regional Economic Research Centre, UCC) and Wil Brady (Centre for Planning and Sustainable Development, UCC) and participate in the European Regional Science Association Annual Conference which is coming to UCC.



Dr Aislin Quailivan  
Director  
Centre for Local and Regional Governance

As part of the event, UCC's new Registrar, **Professor John O'Halloran**, will officially launch the CLRG Annual Report for 2017.



# Memories from #CLR17



**Top, left to right:-** Micheál Martin TD and Dr Emmanuelle Schön-Quinlivan.

**Middle, left to right:-** Dr Aodh Quinlivan and Lewis O'Shea (BSc Government I); the panel of speakers, including Micheál Martin and Dr Theresa Reidy.

**Bottom, left to right:-** Dr Aodh Quinlivan, Rachel Wall and Professor Colin Copus; Lord Mayor of Cork, Councillor Des Cahill.

## **Former Department of Government and Politics student, now working in local government in the US, returns to speak to BSc Government first year class**



### **Report by Bryan O'Shea, BSc Government I**

On Thursday 18 January, Dr. Aodh Quinlivan's Local Government and Politics of Ireland (GV1215) first year class had a special visit from Daniel J. O' Connor Jr. – the Franklin County Recorder in the state of Ohio, USA. Daniel gave an interesting and engaging presentation to the class about how he got involved in politics and local government as well as giving us an insight into the workings of local government in the United States of America. It was a particularly topical presentation given the current state of local government in Ireland and the challenges that it faces going forward. It allowed us to draw on comparisons between local government in the USA vs. local government here in Ireland. Daniel kindly gave his time to the Government Times after his presentation and gave me the chance to sit down with him and discuss all things local government and of course, the burning issue of the day, Donald Trump!

Daniel J. O' Connor Jr is Franklin County's 30<sup>th</sup> Recorder. A native of Sidney, Ohio, but more importantly, with close links to Mayo, Daniel graduated from Lehman Catholic High School and went on to complete his undergraduate studies in political science in Wright State University, where he was President of the College Democrats. It was also during his undergraduate studies that Daniel came to University College Cork for a semester in 2007, which Daniel remembers with fond memories. He then went on to the Syracuse University College of Law, where he was a law alumni scholarship recipient, member of the Dean's List, Vice President of the Student Body, and recipient of the General Electric Student Leadership Award. In between his undergraduate studies and law school, Daniel served in the Jesuit Volunteer Corps as a legal advocate at Part of the Solution Legal Clinic in The Bronx, New York. In this capacity, Daniel worked with veterans, immigrants, homeless individuals, and individuals stricken by poverty and it was this experience for which he credits his passion for community and his drive for change, a drive which he now brings to his own city of Columbus, Ohio where Daniel explains there is a large youth homelessness problem and reveals that Columbus is the second most economically segregated city in the United States.

He was elected in November 2016 to his first four-year term which was, in comparison to Irish local politics, no small feat. Daniel tells me he had to raise 300,000 dollars for his election campaign which took place over



the course of 18 months. He required 65,000 votes to win the primaries and a mere 294,000 votes to win the election. These are staggering figures when you compare it to local politics in Ireland where anyone can effectively run for local office on a budget of a few thousand euro, a decent team of canvassers and around 1,600 votes. The huge amounts of money involved, Daniel says, is a major problem in US politics and has a toxic effect on politics. It leads to corruption and bribes and must change.

The role of the County Recorder in Franklin, which has a population of 1.25 million, is a large and diverse one. Responsibilities of the Recorder include the verification and indexing of all real estate documents in the County, the issuing of veteran I.D. cards, affordable housing, homelessness, a depository for health care documents and County development. For this workload, Daniel has a team of 60 staff working in the Recorders office. Daniel also practices law with his partner, Amy Weiss and is a partner in the law firm Weis and O' Connor. Local government in the United States is vastly different from Ireland. It plays a much more in depth and proactive role in local communities and has many more decision-making powers than here in Ireland. I asked Daniel how he would reform Irish local government and his immediate answer was to reverse the 2014 abolition of town councils. He explains that in the States, local government should mean immediate action. It is locally accessible to everyone and is a great point of contact between government and citizens. The abolition of town councils removes that close contact and only widens the gap. Citizens are the most important part of politics, Daniel says, and it is always important to remember those who vote for you but also, to remember those who do not. Politicians who do not have an idea about how to help people and be involved in community issues will not continue to be elected.

Moving on to national politics, I then ask Daniel about the current state of politics in the USA and what his opinions are on President Donal Trump to which he replies, without hesitation, he was a supporter of Hillary Clinton and publicly endorsed the former Secretary of State. Daniel tells me that President Trump has achieved almost nothing in his first year in office but on the plus side, his election has appeared to ignite a movement of women towards politics and he tells me that more women are getting involved in politics now, than ever before which is a very positive movement. Daniel also recognises that in his own state of Ohio, which was a big victory for President Obama in the 2012 election, there is much work to be done. President Trump won Ohio in a convincing victory in 2016 and picked up vast amounts of the rural vote. Daniel recognises the challenges facing him and indeed, the Democratic Party, to connect with and win back those voters next time around.

To conclude, I asked Daniel about the future and if he has any aspirations to get to Washington. He tells me that currently, he has no desire to go to Washington and remains focused on his current role and the many challenges it brings. On a lighter note, Daniel revealed he was back in Ireland to visit some friends and after this interview, was heading to Killarney for a stag party. Perhaps we can follow up this interview with a review of Daniel's experiences in Killarney and its many scenic attractions! Thanks to Daniel for a great presentation and for an interesting and engaging interview.



**Dr Clodagh Harris, who was instrumental in organising this talk, with Danny O'Connor and Bryan O'Shea.**

# Digital Technology and Youth Political Participation Workshop with Dr Theresa Reidy



On Thursday 1 February, Dr Theresa Reidy of the Department of Government and Politics, ran a highly successful workshop in Dublin on Digital Technology and Youth Political Participation. A high calibre international set of speakers included:

- Gabriella Melis
- Narisong Huhe
- Mark Shephard
- Anne Kaun
- Karolina Koc-Michalska
- James Dennis



**Art O'Leary** @ArtOLeary · 16h

Replying to [@AodhQuinlivan](#)  
[@theresareidy](#) and 2 others

Agree – a really interesting event....I have to go and lie down in a dark room to have a think about how to use all that great info.....

**Art O'Leary, Secretary General to President Michael D. Higgins, reacted positively on Twitter to yesterday's workshop organised by Dr Theresa Reidy.**

# SNI PP ETS

## Welcome to Dr Jonathan Evershed



**Dr Jonathan Evershed** has joined the Department of Government and Politics as an ESRC Postdoctoral Researcher. He will be working with Dr Mary Murphy on a three-year ESRC project 'Between Two Unions: The Constitutional Future of the Islands after Brexit'. Welcome, Jonathan!

**Dr Mary Murphy** has recently delivered a number of high-profile Brexit talks, as follows: -

- To the Houses of the Oireachtas Principal Officers Network in Dublin on 12 January.
- To the Killarney Economic Forum on 13 January.
- To the House of Lords EU Committee during their visit to Dublin on 30 January.

Mary has also been instrumental in the following event: We welcome Linas Linkevičius, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lithuania and Simon Coveney, Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ireland to UCC on Monday 12 February. Both Ministers will deliver speeches and engage directly with four UCC undergraduate and postgraduate students during a moderated discussion on the Future of Europe. The event takes place on Monday 12 February, 12:00-1.30pm in the Creative Zone of the Boole Library. This initiative is a collaboration with the Institute for International and European Affairs. **ALL ARE WELCOME.**



**Linas Linkevičius, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lithuania**



# REPRESENTATION, GENDER AND POLITICS: PAST AND PRESENT

Reflecting on the centenary of the  
Representation of the People Act (1918)

1 FEBRUARY 2018

Royal Irish Academy, 19 Dawson St, Dublin 2  
Booking: [ria.ie/events](http://ria.ie/events)

1918 | Vatail 188  
2018 | Mna san Oireachtas

Acadamh Ríoga na hÉireann  
Royal Irish Academy

@OireachtasNews @RIAadawson #foraill100



## PROGRAMME

8.30 Registration  
9.00 Welcome: Michael Pezar Kennedy,  
President, Royal Irish Academy  
Introduction: Seán Ó Fearghail, TD, Ceann Comhairle  
9.30 Panel 1—Historical perspectives on women's  
activism and the early suffrage movement  
**Women's activism for women's rights in  
nineteenth-century Ireland.**  
Mara Luddy, Department of History, University of Warwick  
**What happened at Westminster? Men, women  
and the Representation of the People Bill.**  
Mari Takayanagi, senior archivist, Houses of Parliament UK  
**Suffragists and suffragettes: debates and  
activities within the Irish suffrage movement.**  
Margaret Ward, Department of History,  
Queen's University Belfast  
Respondent: Myles Dungan, RTE Radio 1 and  
University College Dublin. Chair: Steven Ellis,  
NUI Galway, Chair, RIA Historical Studies Committee  
11.00 Tea/Coffee  
11.30 Panel 2—Suffrage in historical context  
**Problematic sisterhood: the British and Irish  
suffrage movements, 1910–16.**  
Senta Paleta, Faculty of History, University of Oxford  
**A definite cry for political freedom: the Ulster  
suffrage movement.**  
Diane Urquhart, Institute of Irish Studies,  
University of Liverpool  
**'Make men of you all': the inconvenience of  
suffrage in Irish nationalist and labour movements.**  
Sonia Tiernan, Department of History and Politics, Liverpool  
Hope University  
Respondent: Mary E. Daly, MRIA. Chair: Catherine Martin, TD

13.00 Lunch  
14.00 Panel 3 – Women in Parliament  
Senator Iana Bock; Fiona O'Loughlin, TD;  
Senator Alice Mary Higgins; Clare Daly, TD;  
Louise O'Reilly, TD; Senator Gabrielle McFadden  
Chair: Jane Suiter, Dublin City University  
15.30 Tea/Coffee  
16.00 Panel 4 – Politics and gender in Ireland today  
**Unfinished business—women and political  
representation on the island of Ireland.**  
Yvonne Galligan, School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy  
and Politics, Queen's University, Belfast  
**Gender quotas—a catalyst for change in Irish politics?**  
Fiona Buckley, Department of Government and Politics,  
University College Cork  
**When and what women talk about when they speak  
in the Dáil.**  
Gail McElroy, Department of Political Science,  
Trinity College Dublin  
Respondent: Sarah Childs, Department of Politics, Birkbeck  
College, University of London. Chair: John Morrison, School  
of Law, Queen's University, Belfast; Chair, RIA Ethical, Legal,  
Political and Philosophical Committee  
17.30 Reception



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Acadamh Ríoga na hÉireann  
Royal Irish Academy

Image by Norman Jacobson (1885–1949) courtesy of the National Women's History Project.

Congratulations to **Dr Fiona Buckley** of the Department of Government and Politics who spoke at this prestigious event on 1 February in Dublin. Fiona presented on the topic '**Gender quotas – a catalyst for change in Irish politics?**' and her talk was very well received.



- We are encouraging students to contribute to the *Government and Politics Review*. The theme for the 2017/2018 issue is 'New Politics for a New Age'. Interested students should contact the journal editor, Evan Barry-Colnat, BSc Government III.
- The Government and Politics society is holding a quiz in the Old Bar on Wednesday 21 February. The theme will be general knowledge and some great prizes will be on offer.
- The GOVERNMENT BALL is taking place on Tuesday 27 February and the theme is 'Political Intrigue'. The GOVERNMENT CUP will also be held that week! Stay tuned.