

‘A Peculiar Society’? Ireland, 1970-1990s

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The long-term impact of ‘growing-up’ during ‘the Troubles’ on coping behaviours.

Conference Abstract

This paper will present the rationale for a study of the long-term impact of the Troubles on individual coping behaviours. Aldwin (2007) defines coping as ‘the use of strategies for dealing with actual or anticipated problems and their attendant negative emotions’ (p.125) and she highlights the importance of socio-cultural factors in determining individual coping behaviours. Individuals do not exist in isolation, but are ‘nested’ in the wider ‘families’ and ‘tribes’ to whom they belong (Hobfoll, 2001). To understand coping we therefore need to understand the socio-cultural context in which individuals are ‘nested’ as coping is embedded within this wider context which determines the demands we encounter, our access to coping resources, and which coping behaviours and emotional responses are considered appropriate and which are not (Aldwin, 2007; Hobfoll, 2004).

The aim of this study is to explore the coping behaviours adopted by a sample of participants who ‘grew-up’ during the Troubles and to explore if these behaviours have become embedded in their sense of self (Hobfoll, 2001) and therefore continue to influence their coping behaviours and emotional responses. The research will adopt a visual narrative methodology encompassing a range of methods including photographs (Collier & Collier, 1986; Emmison & Smith, 2000; Pink, 2006, 2007, 2012) video and ‘lived’ data (Pink, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2012) and arts practices, visual displays and drawing (Bagnoli, 2009; Hogan & Pink, 2012; Kearney & Hyle, 2004; O’ Neil, 2012; Pink, 2006).

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