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FROM THE ELITES TO THE STREETS:
THE PSYCHOLOGY OF DEMOCRACY AND ECONOMIC INEQUALITY

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Introduction

Global economic inequality is increasing (Atkinson, 2015; Chin & Culotta, 2014; Dorling, 2015; Piketty, 2014; Piketty & Suez, 2014). This trend can generate frustration for people who are not benefitting from economic growth. In turn, this frustration has the potential to manifest in protesting. But economic protests and riots can occur due to the perception of economic inequality, not only from economic inequality itself. It is therefore becoming increasingly important to understand the psychological dynamics behind responses to increases in wealth and income disparities. The larger questions addressed throughout this dissertation are to comprehend how people experience and understand economic inequality from a psychological perspective: under what conditions can and do people living in democratic nations accept inequality without engaging in democratic activities to effect social change? And under what circumstances does their tolerance turn to protest and other forms of democratic engagement and civic discontent?

The dissertation is divided into three parts. Chapters 1-3 provide the theoretical framing. I report the empirical research in Chapters 4-6. Finally, Chapter 7 is the conclusion.

I. Preview of theoretical chapters

In the opening chapter I outline two popular narratives about contemporary capitalism. The first story focuses on the ubiquity of rising economic inequality, particularly income inequality, throughout the world since the 1970s. I discuss the omnipresence and moralizing discussion of this phenomenon among social scientists, economists, and

politicians. Rising wealth and income inequality is considered unfair and immoral: it is a phenomenon that must be alleviated. Yet we live in the most prosperous and peaceful time in human history (Pinker, 2011). That is the second story of capitalism. This second narrative emphasizes how industrial capitalism began lifting hundreds of millions of people out of poverty. It led to increased life expectancy, and the formalization of educational opportunities. I argue that these master narratives of capitalism are two sides of the same coin because both narratives co-exist and modulate one another, often through democratic processes like voting and protesting. An overemphasis on inequality belittles the substantial benefits of capitalism, yet an overemphasis on economic growth belittles the problems that associated extremes of inequality bring.

I then review social psychological literature that concludes people do not expect parity of economic distributions: they tolerate inequality, but only to a point. When people living in non-totalitarian societies become intolerant, they can engage in democratic processes, such as protests, in an effort to modulate the overemphasis placed on economic growth, at the expense of the perceived fairness of economic distributions. But social psychological phenomena – such as judgments about the fairness of distribution and access to economic resources – occur within cultural and moral contexts.

In Chapter 2 I review the literature linking culture, economics, and development. I argue that it is important to consider the role of culture in economic development because comprehending the role of cultural values, beliefs, and moral reasoning can help explain historical rates of economic growth, various reactions to financial crises, and perceptions of

fairness of economic distributions. I discuss the *Equality – Difference Paradox* that is based on the observation that culturally homogenous countries (in terms of ethnic, linguistic, and religious diversity), like Ireland, have more equal distributions of income than heterogeneous countries like the USA. The *Equality- Difference Paradox* characterizes the complex relationship between cultural diversity and economic inequality across the world.

Research in cultural and moral psychology provides frameworks for thinking through the connections between cultural and economic issues, perceptions of fairness, as well as civic engagement and discontent. I review theory and research illustrating foundational moral principles, common to people across cultures. Fairness is weighed differently among different cultural groups, but the importance of a sense of harm, justice, and equity is common across the globe (Haidt, 2012). Yet moral principles that might be universal are not applied, or made manifest, uniformly across both cultures and time (Cassaniti & Menon, 2017). Therefore, meanings and applications of moral principles, like fairness, can vary temporally and from place to place (Haidt, 2012; Shweder, 2003). Thus, the ways in which fairness and other aspects of morality are culturally conceptualized affects how people evaluate economic inequality. I introduce three key cultural psychological processes that can lead to social movements when perceptions of economic inequality are deemed to be unfair: *remembering, relative deprivation, and imagining*. I will then draw on these three interrelated psychological processes in Chapter 6 to analyze social protests. I develop a “big three of protest” to explain how social movements are galvanized and morally justified.

The third chapter focuses more specifically on the 2008 global financial crisis and on the Irish case study in particular. First, I discuss the origins of the European Union and its effect on Ireland. Next, I examine recent Irish economic history. I draw on data from the Irish Central Statistics Office to provide an objective account of the Irish economic situation before, during, and after the economic recession. I then discuss the 2008 global financial crisis. In particular, I examine the Irish context with a view to understanding the moral and cultural psychological dynamics that help comprehend how Irish people understand and experience the economic downturn from their social positions. I present preliminary evidence to suggest Ireland differed from other European countries such as Spain in its citizens' reactions to imposed austerity. In Spain, austerity was seen as unfair and some citizens protested and rioted. In Ireland protest was not observed when the economy went in to recession. I use this as justification to identify the Irish situation as worthy of an in-depth case study to investigate using qualitative methods that are aimed at understanding people's experiences in, and understandings of, social life. Taken together, the first three chapters of the dissertation suggest people living in democratic societies tolerate economic inequality to a degree, but can engage in democratic processes, such as protesting, when they believe economic inequality is unfair.

Acceptance and rejection of economic inequality, and the manifestation of (in-) action in response to it, occurs within unique socio-cultural, historical, moral, and legal contexts. I suggest the 2008 financial crisis, and the Irish case in particular where people didn't protest or immediately vote out the government, who oversaw the economic crisis,

provides an interesting pathway to understand how and why ordinary citizens of democratic countries do and do not tolerate economic inequality without protesting.

II. Preview of the empirical chapters

When the Irish economy collapsed in 2008, there were few protests. Yet, when the Irish economy began booming once more in 2014 and 2015, there were various forms of civic unrest. This illustrates a second paradox that I call the *Deprivation – Protest Paradox*, by which I mean protests can occur during an economic recovery, rather than an economic recession. Investigating this empirical paradox, with the Irish case study, constitutes the central empirical work in my dissertation. It will be discussed in Chapters 4-6.

In these chapters I explain why the Irish protested during an economic recovery rather than during a recession. I utilize multiple psychological methods, at different levels of analysis, to gather and analyze data to describe and explain the *Deprivation – Protest Paradox*. I describe and justify the choice of methods in each chapter rather than having one stand-alone chapter on methodology.

A mixed method model is applied throughout the three empirical chapters that comprise part two of the dissertation. In the first empirical study, described in Chapter 4, I conducted semi-structured interviews with a group of public elites in Ireland. I performed a thematic analysis of this transcribed interview data and revealed three interrelated themes used by this group to help explain why the Irish initially accepted austerity measures. The three

master narratives used by this group of public elites to explain the relatively passive Irish response to austerity were concerned with migration from Ireland during times of economic hardship, a strong sense of community in which everyone faced austerity together, and a controversial idea that “in life you reap what you sow.” The dissemination of these provocative research findings in the public sphere motivated a second study. I conducted semi-structured interviews with a polar opposite group of Irish people – young unemployed Irish adults. Ten interviews were conducted in this preliminary study. The dominant finding is that this group has internalized the “reap what you sow” master narrative: they partly blamed themselves for the economic crisis and did not protest because they felt culpable. The combined data from the interviews with public elites and unemployed youth led to several hypotheses that were tested using culturally sensitive experimental and correlational studies that are described in Chapter 5.

Does a belief in just desserts hinder protest, increase support for austerity, and affect where blame for the crisis is directed? And do the Irish who can’t leave the country justify the system? The results from my quantitative research produced results incongruent with the qualitative research, but a clear outcome: during the time of the experiments, which were conducted during an economic boom, not bust, Irish people did not justify the system. They no longer thought austerity was fair, did not blame the actions of ordinary people for causing the recession, and some were more likely to support protest in this new context. People no longer tolerated the status quo. Rebellion was afoot.

Taken together, the results from Chapters 4 and 5 suggest some of the cultural and moral psychological reasons why the Irish accepted hardship and suffering as austerity unfolded. The research presented in these two chapters helps account for the first half of the paradox: people do not necessarily protest during economic recessions. But that was then. As the results of Chapter 5 suggest, times change. In Ireland the economy recovered, and in this context, people began protesting. I explain why in Chapter 6. This chapter illustrates the second half of the *Deprivation – Protest Paradox*: demonstrations, clashes with the police, and the refusal to pay new charges on water all occurred in the context of an aggregate economic recovery, not a decline.

In Chapter 6 I show how people’s expectations of an economic recovery went unfulfilled in their lived realities. This led to dissatisfaction and later legitimized protest. People expected to reap the benefits of their enduring hardship, but found it was a minority of wealthy people, not ordinary people, who reaped the benefits. Data for this chapter comes from random sample interviewing at a series of national demonstrations in Dublin, Ireland. It was also informed by urban ethnographic fieldwork in a small Irish city.

I begin Chapter 6 by detailing the contextual shifts that occurred as Ireland transitioned from recession to recovery. This series of economic, social, and political changes sculpted the psychological landscape in Ireland. For example, in the context of an aggregate economic recovery, a new charge on water was introduced by the government. People protested because they expected to reap the benefits of an economic recovery. Instead, water became a focal point from which to galvanize a broader anti-austerity social

movement. The analysis that follows in the chapter draws on the theoretical discussion of the “big three of protest: remembering, relative deprivation, and imagining” outlined in Chapter 2. Demonstrators in Ireland remember the past and imagine the future. These two dual and core cultural psychological processes inform feelings of relative deprivation in the present. This temporal theory, possibly common to all protests and social movements, is examined in light of interviews at a series of national and local demonstrations in Ireland. I describe and justify my analytic method. The results suggest people suffered austerity together, and expected to reap the benefits of an economic recovery together as well. Yet aggregate economic growth has benefitted a minority, to the dismay for the many. People were frustrated. They took to the streets. I end the chapter by drawing parallels between the Irish case study and similar cases, such as the rise of populism in the United States.

III. Preview of the conclusion

I begin my conclusion by returning to the two overarching questions motivating the research: under what conditions can and do residents of democratic societies accept inequality without engaging in democratic activities to effect social change? And under what circumstances does their tolerance turn to protest, democratic engagement and forms of civic discontent? The two stories of capitalism as the driver of economic growth, but also as the driver of extreme inequality, serve as broad orientating frameworks throughout the dissertation. The social psychological literature indicates that people accept some level of economic inequality arising as a byproduct of historical economic growth. People do not want economic equality. They want equity: the perception of fair distribution of economic

resources. But they tolerate inequality. However, tolerance for growing economic inequality, which occurs in specific, historical, cultural, social, political, economic, and legal contexts, has limits. The empirical evidence presented throughout the dissertation, illustrating the *Deprivation – Protest Paradox* in the localized Irish case study, highlights some of the cultural and moral psychological dynamics underpinning acceptance of economic inequality and intolerance towards it. When people think economic inequality is fair, they do not engage in activities such as protesting to effect social, political, and economic change. But when a tipping point is reached, when a mass of people living in democratic countries consider economic inequality to be unfair – regardless of actual levels of inequality – those people engage by taking to the streets. In the Irish case study, the introduction of a new charge on water, in the context of aggregate economic growth, was deemed unfair. This is because the Irish accepted austerity and expected to reap the rewards of enduring austerity. Instead, they had to pay quarterly water bills. There was a gap between their expectations and actual experiences. Intolerance for economic inequality creates a need for citizens to act to try to effect change in their subjective realities. The story of unchecked capitalism as the engine of economic growth is modulated by a perceived unfairness in the inequality caused by this growth. The two stories of capitalism are actually two sides of the same coin.

Based on the empirical chapters that highlight the *Deprivation – Protest Paradox*, I develop a novel theoretical model. The “big three of protest: remembering, relative deprivation, and imagining” is proposed as a temporal framework to comprehend the psychology underlying the lifespan of social movements in modern democratic nations. I aim to

describe how protests are galvanized, motivated, and justified to achieve their aims. I discuss the potential of this temporal theory to overcome some identified shortcomings of classic relative deprivation theorizing. Moreover, I suggest the “big three” framework might be universally applied across social movements, but highlight how this universality does not manifest uniformly. I discuss strengths and limitations of the empirical research I presented throughout the dissertation and suggest pathways for future research. These potential research agendas can also be used to test, and develop, the “big three of protest” framework.

I introduce the S.A.G.E model of social psychological research in part two of my conclusion (Power, Velez, Qadafi, and Tennant, forthcoming). Encapsulated in the acronym is a proposal to have a *Synthetic* approach to social scientific research, in which qualitative and quantitative methods are *Augmentative* to one another, qualitative methods can be *Generative* of new experimental hypotheses, and qualitative methods can capture *Experiences* that evade experimental reductionism. This multi-method model is derived from the forms of empirical research presented in this dissertation. I discuss the potential utility of this model to advance social psychological research. I tentatively offer some implications of my research, but I highlight my interest in following the academic argument where it leads, rather than generating any specific policy for corporations, governments, or social movements. I end the dissertation by reflecting on the water protests, which were emblematic of what the Irish came to feel was unfair in their society. I predict the increased commodification and control of water will lead to increased conflict in other societies when people think control or access to water is unfair.

Chapter 1

Economic Inequality and Democracy

In this chapter I discuss two narratives about rising global economic inequality. The first story highlights the problems with unequal distribution of wealth and income. Rising economic inequality is seen as socially disastrous because it means the rich get richer and the poor remain poor. It is a trend that must be curbed. Yet we live in the most peaceful and prosperous epoch in human history. The second narrative of capitalist globalization highlights how global capitalism has lifted millions out of abject poverty, increased life expectancy, created economic mobility, educational opportunities, and raised global living standards in a relatively short period of history. From this perspective, increased economic inequality is a small price to pay. I review literature from multiple disciplines to understand the various perspectives on the importance of the fairness of economic distributions. Next, I examine some political consequences of perceived unfair economic inequality and the implications these perceptions have for civic discontent, democratic engagement, and the potential for social change. I integrate the two opposing narratives of capitalism and economic inequality. I argue both views of capitalism modulate one another. Capitalism may be necessary for continued globalization and economic growth, but to be conducive to democracy it must be in a form in which people feel that economic resources are fairly distributed. Rising economic inequality is not necessarily regarded as a moral issue. The central concern for democratic legitimacy is whether people think economic disparities are fair or unfair. I end this chapter by introducing the importance of understanding perceptions of fairness within localized cultural and moral contexts - a topic

I develop in Chapter 2– before examining economic inequality and democratic engagement in Ireland.

I. The rise of economic inequality across the globe

Global economic inequality is increasing (Atkinson, 2015; Chin & Culotta, 2014; Dorling, 2015; Piketty, 2014; Piketty & Suez, 2014). A report by Oxfam revealed the richest 62 people are as wealthy as half the world’s population (2016). A year later the same organization revealed the wealthiest eight billionaires have as much money (\$426bn) as 50% of the world’s population (Oxfam, 2017). The gap between the haves and the have nots has widened. It has become a chasm (Dorling, 2015).

Historical economic data illustrate some of the dynamics of income and wealth distribution in the United States and Europe (Piketty, 2014; Piketty and Saez, 2014). These data reveal a declining trend in income inequality in Europe from the beginning of WWI until the 1980’s when it again began to increase. In the US, income inequality began declining in the 1930’s and began increasing again from the 1970’s.

Figure 1 illustrates the level of income inequality for the top 10% of pretax income earners from the US and an aggregate score from four European nations (United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Sweden) from 1900 to 2010. Income is defined as the sum of labor income (i.e. salaries) and from capital income (i.e. rent, dividends, and interest). It does not include taxes and government transfers.

Income inequality in Europe and the United States, 1900–2010

Share of top income decile in total pretax income

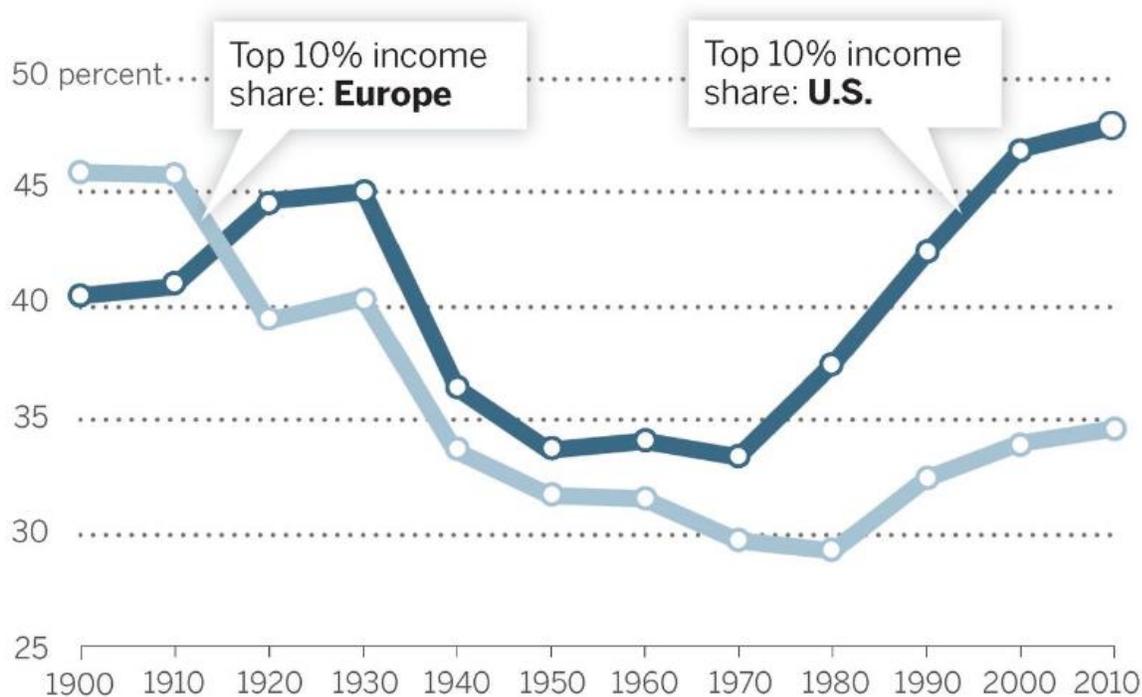


Fig. 1. The graph shows the level of income inequality for the top 10% of pretax income earners from the US and an aggregate score from four European nations from 1900 to 2010. Source: Piketty and Saez (2014).

The total net private wealth for the top 10% in Europe and the US decreased in both Europe and the US from 1910, and began increasing in both regions from the 1970s. Wealth, in this case, is used interchangeably with capital, and is defined as the “as non-human net worth, i.e., the sum of nonfinancial and financial assets, net of financial liabilities (debt)” (Piketty and Saez, 2014, p. 842).

Wealth inequality in Europe and the United States, 1870–2010

Share of top wealth decile in total net wealth

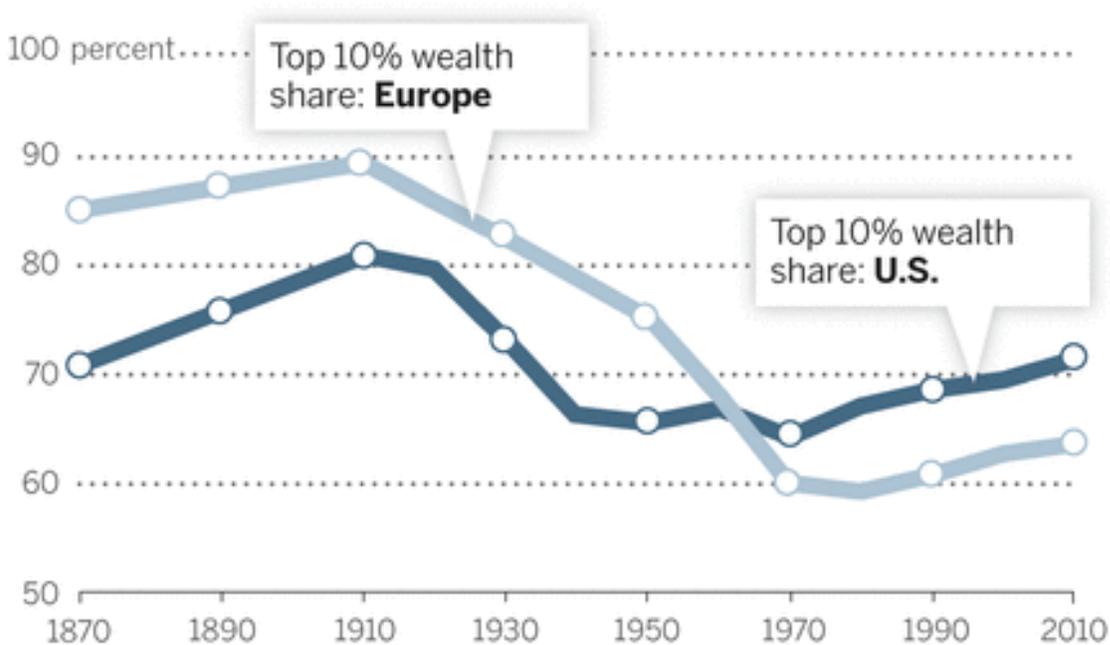


Fig. 2. The graph charts private wealth distributions in Europe and the United States from 1870 – 2010. Source: Piketty and Saez (2014).

Income inequality is also on the rise in emerging economies. Piketty (2014) discusses six countries to illustrate growing inequality outside of the West. Growing inequality within emerging economies has been slowly rising for the past thirty years (Ravallion, 2014). Fig. 3 examines income distributions over a 100-year period, from 1910 to 2010, in South Africa, Argentina, Colombia, Indonesia, India, and China.

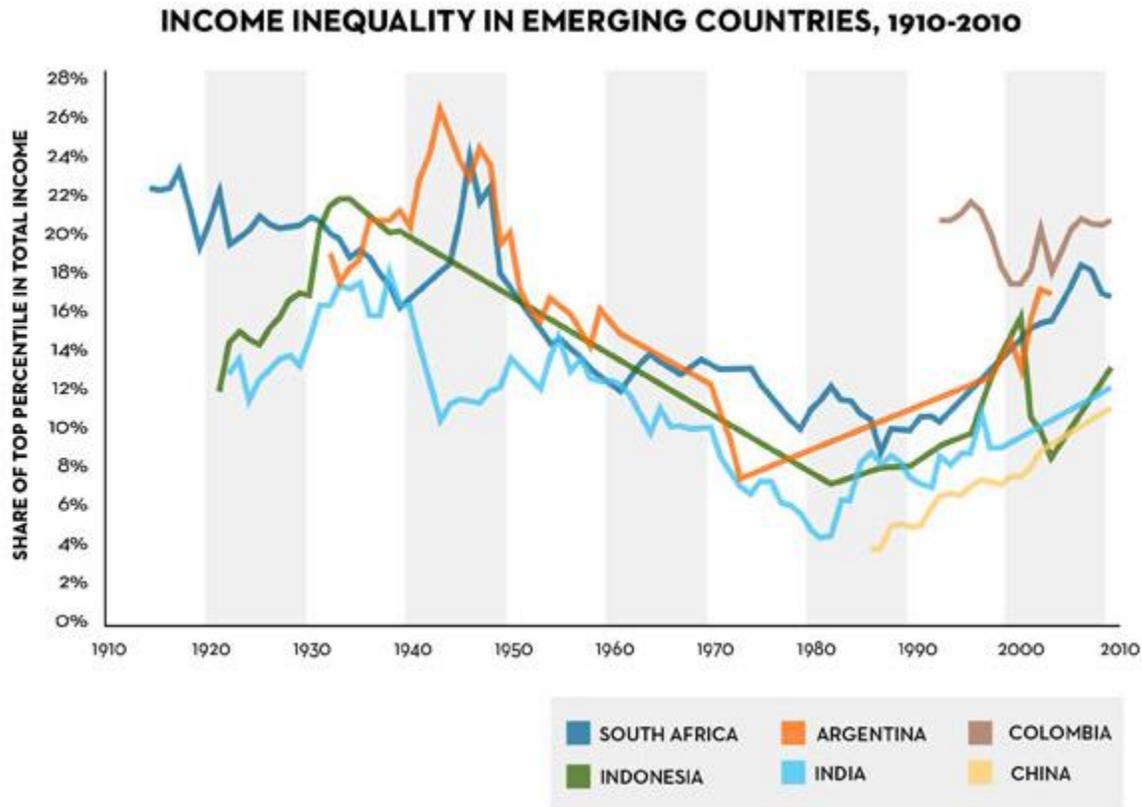


Fig. 3. Reveals a U-Shape curve illustrating patterns of income inequality in six emerging economies. Source: Cassidy (2014).

Global wealth and income inequality has been rising since the 1970s. Economists have documented this emerging trend (Atkinson, 2015; Chin & Culotta, 2014; Dorling, 2015; Piketty, 2014; Suez & Piketty, 2014). The gap between the richest and the rest has become a political and public policy issue (Moghaddam, forthcoming; Shweder, 2017).

These economic analyses have gained notoriety in the public sphere. U.S. President Barack Obama, for example, called rising economic inequality “the defining challenge of our time” in 2013. According to the US Census Bureau between 2008-2012, those people in the highest fifth quintile earned 51% of the US national income (Underwood, 2014). Recent U.S.

Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders frequently talked about this type of disparity between high and low earners. In a tweet sent out to his 3.5 million followers on January 13th, 2017, he stated, “Grotesque levels of income and wealth inequality is not just an American issue. It is a global issue. We can do better. We must do better.” The tagline on his website states boldly: “The issue of wealth and income inequality is the great moral issue of our time, it is the great economic issue of our time, it is the great political issue of our time.”

Concern with rising global income and wealth inequality is not confined to the US. Speaking in May 21st, 2016, Jeremy Corbyn, the leader of the Labour party in the UK stated “inequality is not falling, it’s rising.” The World Economic Forum states that rising wealth and income inequality pose a risk to the global economy in 2017 and this growing gap helps explain the British vote for Brexit and the election of Donald Trump in the US (Elliot, 2017; The Guardian).

Economic analyses, coupled with political support, and media attention, have put the issue of increasing economic inequality at the forefront of public debate. The “Occupy” protests following the unequal recovery in the US spread throughout Europe. The trope of “the 99% versus the 1%” became common on both sides of the Atlantic. In Ireland, with the anti-austerity demonstrations, activists shouted “Whose streets?” to which the crowd would bellow “Our Streets!” And the widening gap between the rich, super rich, and the ordinary worker is increasing (Moghaddam, forthcoming). On average, this is the wealthiest period in human history. But inequality is rising and people are unhappy. They are on the streets.

Economic inequality of some type is thought to have existed among hunter-gatherers before the rise of agricultural societies (Pringle, 2014). Archeological evidence suggests some hunter-gathers might have gained power and influence by taking control of concentrated areas where food was abundant. Controlling valuable resources, and having an ability to distribute them, created inequality. A competing theory posits that inequality could have derived during times of food shortages. During shortages of food people could have prevented access to resource rich areas, creating inequality by depriving others and maintaining their own food supply. Both cases have archeological evidence and both could be factors in initial causes of inequality. Aizer and Currie (2014) illustrate the ways in which economic inequality can be transmitted over generations. They review evidence suggesting that maternal disadvantage leads to worse health at birth, an impediment that is an important predictor of long term-outcomes, including education and income levels. As such, it becomes more likely, though not inevitable, that those at the bottom on the income distribution will have children who are also at the bottom. In a related literature review, Haushofer and Fehr (2014) detail evidence suggesting contemporary poverty might have psychological consequences, such as being risk averse in long-term decision-making, and focusing on short-term goals, habits that help form a feedback loop which help to perpetuate poverty. It is one explanation to help comprehend why the poor often stay poor. But intractable problems can end (Power, 2014). Realities change.

Throughout history wealth inequalities became starker (Piketty, 2014) as precious metals were used to embody wealth that could also be transmitted across generations. Recent evidence suggests that inequality – and the social perceptions of being lower on the social

hierarchy – are correlated with increased risk of mortality in contemporary societies (Underwood, 2014a). The gap between what one needs, or thinks one needs from a socially ideal perspective, and what one can afford and what one’s lived reality is, impacts one’s health. African-American youth in the U.S., for example, who could afford to live up to their community’s norms, showed lower blood pressure than those who couldn’t (Sweet, referenced in Underwood, 2014a). Inequality is not inevitable. Some evidence details how the *!Kung* tribe in the Kalahari Desert live in egalitarian groups who share resources equally (Pennisi, 2014). Yet this is an exception: the weight of evidence suggests inequality is growing in an increasingly globalizing world.

II. The other side of the coin – a rising global floor of wealth, income and access to goods and services

There is a clear, and often uncontested, condemnation of growing economic inequality from the left (Krugman, 2013). But in an increasingly globalizing world, the rich are getting richer; leaving the rest in their wake. Liberal media, politicians, charities, left-leaning economists, and social scientists highlight and oppose this growing economic inequality. For these observers, it seems there is nothing left to say: rising economic inequality is bad; unchecked industrial capitalism pollutes the planet and jeopardizes democratic processes and ideals (Moghaddam, forthcoming).

But is rising economic inequality really concerning? A closer look at Fig 1 shows income inequality in 2010 in Europe is below pre-WWI levels. Although income inequalities in

Europe declined when the continent plunged in to a menacing war which aided the realignment of social power, only to increase from the 1970s, income inequality remains more equal now, than a nearly a century ago. The same trend for Europe holds true of wealth inequality: the top 10% of wealth owners in Europe owned 25% more wealth just before WWI than they did a century later in 2010. The trend illustrates growing income and wealth inequality since the 1970s. But considered in a broader historical context, this upward trend does not seem as stark.

Income inequality is higher in the US than before WWI. A look at the top 10% share of income in the US reveals an increase of about 3% in income earned by this decile in contrast to those a century before. Income inequality since the 1970s is far starker than the rate of inequality in Europe. Congruent with the trend in Europe, wealth inequality is increasing since the 1970s in the US, but it remains on a near parity with levels in 1870 when the top decile owned 70% of wealth. Current levels of wealth inequality in the US, when the top decile owned over 70% of wealth are below the over 80% of wealth owned by this decile in the lead up to WWI.

Viewing these figures in a broader historical framework helps contextualize current debates about growing economic inequality. Economic inequality waxes and wanes: there is not an inevitable march towards increased or decreased wealth and income inequality in contemporary capitalism societies. Seen in this light, contemporary debates surrounding the rich getting richer, and the emergence of a global super rich, are problematized. This raises some questions: is the globalization-powered growing economic inequality in

Europe, the US, and throughout the world morally wrong? Does it matter that a small minority accrue vast wealth and income compared to the majority of the world's citizens?

An under-acknowledged line in Piketty's (2014) *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* says: "Inequality is not necessarily bad in itself: the key question is to decide whether it is justified, whether there are reasons for it" (p. 19). Piketty's tome, with its call to introduce a global tax on capital to decrease the growing rate of income inequality, has been interpreted as a call to curb rising wealth disparities. However, other commentators have questioned the immorality assigned to rising income and wealth inequality.

Frankfurt (2015) in *On Inequality* thinks income inequality is an overhyped phenomenon that is problematic; this focus deflects attention from a more serious issue: the alleviation of poverty. Frankfurt argues that the disproportionate attention given to the increasing accumulation of wealth and income by a small minority of people is not as important as the absolute condition of those at the bottom, and attempts to stem this overall inequality trend mean that the state of the poor is neglected. Why are people more worried about the rich and super rich than the poor? The moral attention, although well intentioned, is, he claims, misguided. A consequence of alleviating the poverty of hundreds of millions might have the side effect of reducing global economic inequality. Poverty reduction, not inequality reduction, ought to be the aim.

This line of thought is controversial, but important. It deflects attention from the debates surrounding rising inequality. It points our attention towards rising global income and wealth, regardless of how unequally resources are distributed.

A rising tide raises all boats. Some people own yachts, most don't. Frankfurt's (2015) argument highlights the need for everyone to have access to the proverbial boat to escape the dangers of the open sea: to escape poverty, to have the means to live a decent and comfortable life, to have access to education and health care. Does the rising tide raise all boats, regardless of type and occupant?

We currently live at the most prosperous point in human history. Although the march towards The Enlightenment is not linear, inevitable, or even desirable for all (Shweder, 1991), and although countries can turn from democracies to dictatorships (Moghaddam, 2013; 2016), millions have been lifted out of poverty, global literacy rates are rising, and child mortality is decreasing (Roser, 2016 reports based from "Our World in Data"). Some claim that we live in the most peaceful time in human history in terms of physical violence (Pinker, 2011). Although we may live in a world with less direct physical violence, cultural and structural violence have arguably increased with increasing economic inequalities (Galtung, 1990). Still, most people underestimate how good this contemporary epoch is (Pinker, 2011).

Throughout most of human history when compared to the present, most people were poor in material goods, there were high levels of infant mortality and a low average life

expectancy, and there were far fewer formal educational options for the vast majority of people. If you consider this progress, then the rate of increased education, health care, and income growth is staggering. This progress is not occurring evenly, or necessarily fairly, according to some. Yet locating these inequalities within broader historical time periods is important in order to comprehend human development.

The graphs at the beginning of this chapter show increasing income and wealth inequality since 1970. These should be comprehended within a broader historical context. Figure 4 presents a “hockey stick” graph of increasing global prosperity that has persisted for a millennium.

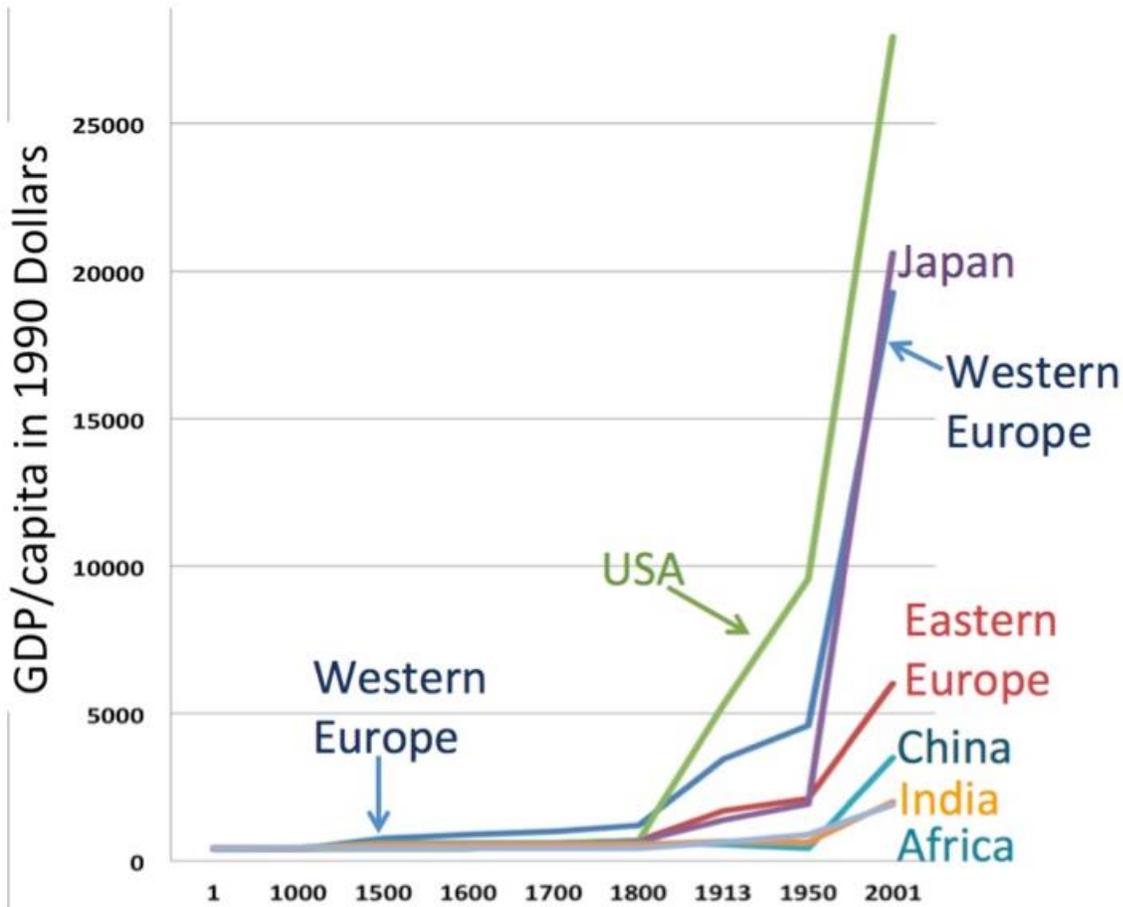


Fig. 4. Measure of historical growth of per capital GDP. Source: Thompson (2012). It is based on Angus Maddison data. This graph was also featured in Haidt (2015). It is adjusted for inflation.

Merchantile capitalism developed in parts of 16th Century Europe when Europeans, particularly the British and Dutch (Woodard, 2011) began building nautical fleets, capable of transporting goods for trade. This gave them a competitive advantage over the Chinese (Landes, 1999). The development of merchantile capitalism explains the increase in G.D.P in Europe from the beginning of the 16th Century (Haidt, 2015; Landes, 1999) as indicated in figure 4.

However, arguably the most impressive rise began in the 1800's, in the US and Western Europe with the development of industrial capitalism (Haidt, 2015; Smith, 1776/2000). The self-interests of the butcher, the brewer, and the baker, Smith told us, drove modern capitalism, increased wealth, incomes, and prosperity for a minority. Haidt (2015) has argued industrial capitalism was often brutish and favored the elite. Smith (1776/200) said "under capitalism the more money you have, the easier it is to make money, and the less money you have, the harder. Wherever there is great property, there is great inequality. The affluence of the rich supposes the indigence of the many." But after several generations, as indicated in figure 4, the G.D.P. of western Europe, Japan, and the U.S.A. dramatically increased, with resultant comforts for the vast majority of people in these regions. Haidt (2015) predicts a continuation of a global trend that lifted hundreds of millions out of abject poverty over a short historical period. He suggests that in the near future, citizens of emerging economies in Africa, China, India, and Eastern Europe will enjoy higher living standards than present due to globalization and international trade. This is because contemporary capitalism creates more economic value than traditional small-scale farming.

Globalization, the increasing economic, cultural, and technological interdependence between different countries and regions of the world, has accompanied increased global wealth and increased incomes. Yet the internal distribution of wealth and income is skewed, favoring a minority of people in all capitalist societies. Increasingly, as illustrated in the Oxfam reports, there is a global super-rich groups of elites. This small group has more money than the poorest half of the world (Oxfam, 2016; 2017).

Greatly improved levels of general well-being in combination with huge and increasing disparities between individuals creates an ethical paradox which is interpreted from political viewpoints (Frankfurt, 2015; Haidt, 2015). The global economy is getting better; hundreds of millions of people are exiting poverty; there are increased living standards; and life expectancy. Yet, wealth and income are being highly concentrated in the hands of a decreasing number of people and corporations (Oxfam, 2016; 2017). Some people believe income and wealth should be more equally distributed: the 99% deserve a larger share of resources that are accumulating in the top 1%, or even in a more narrowly focused percentile. Liberals believe capitalism exploits workers, endangers the planet, and creates a super elite that unduly influences democracy, and therefore exerts disproportionate control over society. Growing income and wealth inequality, as Piketty (2014) and others describe, is unjust, and must be opposed.

Conservatives interpret increasing economic value and the aggregate rise of wealth and income levels, as evident in figure 4, as highlighting the importance of the global spread of capitalism in generating increased wealth, income, and standards of living for hundreds of millions of people since the 19th century (Haidt, 2015, forthcoming).

III. Perceptions about the fairness of economic disparities

Social psychological research suggests people do not want completely egalitarian societies based on economic equality (Norton & Ariely, 2011). Rather, people want more equal, but not fully equal distributions of income. The research also suggests reasons why people

tolerate and even legitimize growing economic inequality. These findings have implications for comprehending the conditions under which people accept or reject economic inequality. These findings are also related to the concept of Pareto Efficiency. This is a form of allocation from which it is impossible to distribute resources so as to make any one person better off without making one other person worse off. The concept is therefore used to determine when the allocation of economic resources – wealth and income – is optimal. A distribution is not optimal if income and wealth can be more evenly distributed to improve the lives of one person without adversely affecting another person's well being. Research in social psychology can help us understand how people think about Pareto-type efficiency in the allocation of economic resources. People do not want a completely even distribution of economic resources. They want fairer distribution of economic resources. But concepts of fairness vary.

Not all inequality is experienced or judged in the same way. As economies develop, inequality grows (Hvistendahl, 2014). This is true in China, for example, when the egalitarian communist rule of Mao gave way to contemporary capitalism, with resultant income and wealth inequalities. The Gini index of income inequality, in which a score of zero means everyone has the same income, and a score of one hundred means a single person gets the country's entire income, was 28 for China in 1980, after the end of Mao's reign. It was 46.2 in 2015 (World Bank data, 2017). However, the Chinese accept growing economic inequality.

A 2004 survey by Whyte et al. (quoted in Hvistendahl, 2014) found that 61% of a large, randomly sampled, group of Chinese participants attributed poverty in China to lack of ability among those who are poor (far higher than any other developed nation polled). In further research undertaken by Xie et al. (2006), a study found that relative to other developing nations, such as Brazil and Pakistan, Chinese individuals mistakenly think the most developed countries have the highest economic inequality, and see increasing inequality in their country as a natural and inevitable part of economic growth. They conclude by suggesting this is one reason why the Chinese accept economic inequality and do not feel resentment, or protest on the streets. Another reason is that China is an authoritarian regime that punishes protests (Moghaddam, 2013).

The Chinese case highlights the importance of cultural cognitions, and the social structure of political power and military force, and their influences on economic thought and expression. South Africa is also a developing nation with increasing economic inequality (Piketty, 2017). Unlike the Chinese, however, South Africans did not meet rising economic inequality passively. Instead, they took to the streets (Hvistendahl, 2014). Although aggregate and absolute economic mobility increased – those living below the absolute poverty line of \$60 per month fell from 57% in 2006 to 46% in 2011. Yet economic inequality rose, from a Gini coefficient of 66 in 1993 to 70 in 2008 (Hvistendahl, 2014). In the South African context, white people – who, from a pre-apartheid legacy, were more privileged in terms of health and educational opportunities – increased their relative wealth and income. In South Africa, cultural context influences how people comprehend economics. According to results from a poll undertaken by the South African Social

Attitudes Survey, about 91% of people feel income differences are too large. This cultural history, coupled with a different political structure, might help explain large-scale protests in that country since 2009 (Hvistendahl, 2014).

Norton and Ariely (2011) examined idealized, actual, and perceived wealth inequality – defined as the net of what a person owns minus debt – in a large sample of residents in the US. They found their respondents underestimated the actual level of wealth inequality in the USA. Moreover, when detailing their idealized wealth distributions, study participants described a far more equal state of affairs than their estimates of actual inequality in the USA. The findings also indicate these perspectives are shared across demographic groups, such as between more and less wealthy people, and between Republicans and Democrats. These participants preferred an economic system closer to the parity achieved in Sweden – where there is a relatively equal distribution of wealth between quintiles – rather than a perfect distribution across all quintiles. Some inequality is preferable. But not as much as there currently is in the US.

Ariely (2017, January 17th, personal communication and reported on the RTE program “Ireland’s Great Wealth Divide, aired July 18th, 2016) replicates these findings in the context of the Republic of Ireland. A poll of 1011 Irish respondents reveals the Irish think that in an ideal world, the richest 20% should have a little more wealth than the poorest 20% of people in Ireland. The Irish respondents are congruent with their US counterparts; they wish for a more equal, though not completely even, distribution of wealth. They do not want a distribution approximating Pareto optimality: but they want an allocation of

resources closer to this ideal. The Irish respondents know there is a gap between their ideal world and what they think the actual distribution of economic resources in Ireland is. Study respondents thought that the wealthiest 20% had nearly 60% of the wealth and the poorest 20% just 11% of the wealth. Irish people think the gap is unfair. But the actual gap is worse than respondents predicted. In Ireland, the richest 20% own 73% of the wealth. The poorest people, rather than owning 11% of the wealth, own just 0.2% of the wealth. The top 5% in Ireland own more than the poorest 60% of the population.

Norton and Ariely (2011) discuss four reasons why people in the US are not demanding greater wealth equality. First, their results indicate people are unaware of the reality of wealth inequality. Second, people maintain the status quo because of a belief in social mobility within the US. People in the top quintile have a disproportionate amount of wealth, but others believe in social mobility, and therefore in the idea that they, or their children, might reach the upper wealth echelons. Third, although liberals and conservatives agree there is too much wealth inequality, the two groups often disagree about the causes of the unequal distribution, and are unable to act together to combat it. Fourth, there is a disconnect between people's attitudes and their voting preferences: people often vote against their own reported self-interests.

Further work develops these insights. Research conducted by Davidai and Gilovich (2015), for example, illustrates that people in the US seem to tolerate economic inequality because they have a deeply ingrained cultural belief in the American dream: people can move up the economic ladder and be financially successful regardless of their starting point. Study

results indicate that people believe there is more upward, rather than downward, social mobility in the US; people overestimate upward mobility and underestimate downward mobility. The less wealthy people are, the more likely they are to believe in the possibility of social mobility. And, conservatives, in contrast to liberals, believe there is greater social mobility in the US. These findings are supported by cross-cultural research undertaken by Shariff, Wiwad, and Aknin (2016) who demonstrate that a belief in social mobility leads people to tolerate economic inequality. Moreover, using experimental methods, these researchers illustrate how thinking about higher levels of economic inequality leads to greater support for economic inequality. People in the study believed that a wider income or wealth range signifies better prospects for their children, and a belief in social mobility leads people to believe their place on the economic ladder is a result of their own hard work. Kiatpongsan and Norton (2014) illustrate how people across 40 countries underestimate income disparities, and the fact that reported ideal pay gaps between unskilled workers and CEOs are further from reality than people expect. Moreover, Laurin, Gaucher, and Kay (2013) find that people are more likely to tolerate inequalities when they perceive the systems in which they are embedded as legitimate and unchanging.

Davidai and Gilovich (2015) argue these perceptions help explain the status quo: how and why people might accept and even justify economic inequality in their societies. The authors suggest that focusing the public's attention on downward social mobility might highlight unfairness in the US economic system. In turn, this focus might generate democratic engagement to mitigate increasing economic inequality.

In sum, social psychological evidence suggests people are misinformed about economic inequality. People generally want more equality of wealth and income distribution than actually exists. Yet neither do people want a fully equal distribution of financial resources across societies. Moreover, people tolerate current economic inequalities because they believe in social mobility. When people believe in social mobility, they also believe that they, or their children, can reach the top of the economic ladder, and enjoy these benefits. The American dream is a risk worth running. The research on economic inequality and social mobility suggests some level of inequality is fair. This is why it is tolerated, people are inert, and the status quo is maintained, to the relative disadvantage of the vast majority of people.

In the U.S., Liberals weigh issues of fairness more heavily than conservatives, but a sense of fairness is a fundamental moral principle (Haidt, 2012; 2013). The perception of what is and is not fair is important to consider in understanding how people comprehend their economic systems and growing wealth and income disparities.

People respond negatively to someone being over or under paid for equal work. They have a preference for equal pay for equal work (Adams, 1965). However, there is more evidence, aligning with commonly held intuitions, that people feel more aggrieved when they are paid less for the same work rather than getting paid more than others for the same work (Shaw and Choshen-Hillel, 2017). The well documented pay gap between women and men in the US for doing the same work but for unequal pay is one example. These insights dovetail with evidence gathered from research with non-human species. Brosnan and de

Waal (2003) illustrate an aversion to unequal “pay” with capuchins. In their experiments, two caged monkeys gladly preform the same task for the same reward. But, when one is given a cucumber and the other is given a more highly prized grape for doing the same task, the former gets frustrated as evidenced by throwing their “pay” away and aggressively rattling their cage. This research has been replicated in other non-human species (Brosnan and de Waal, 2014).

Tyler (2011) proposes an interesting distinction that can help make sense of how people comprehend economic inequality. He argues one answer lies in understanding how people view distributive and procedural justice. Distributive justice is concerned with the allocation of resources, such as wealth and income, between people. Procedural justice is concerned with the processes through which distribution occurs. Tyler argues that people evaluate institutions, such as their economic systems, in terms of procedural rather than distributive justice. This helps to explain why Pareto optimality is not realized. The central implication of this distinction is that people don’t necessarily want equal distribution of economic resources. Rather they want to know the procedure by which the distribution occurs is fair. If the procedure by which the distribution occurs is deemed fair, there is less motivation for civic discontent, regardless of how unequal wealth or income distribution actually is. The American dream does not suggest equality of outcomes, but equality of opportunity.

This phenomenon is not localized to the US context. Rising economic inequality in developing nations can be accepted or resisted. Cultural cognitions, steeped in historically

ingrained, institutionally and legally legitimized, political, legal, social, and moral contexts influence whether people accept or reject their positions within developing nations experiencing rapid economic growth, and emergent economic inequality. One case study illustrates the complexity of these forces.

Chua (2004) in *World on Fire* illustrates how free market democracy and liberalization of economic practices in economically developing regions concentrate wealth in the hands of a minority of people and how this can ignite ethnic hatred. For example, she details how Sino-Indonesians benefitted disproportionately from economic liberalization in Indonesia since the 1970s. Free-market trade, driven by Chinese entrepreneurs, resulted in aggregate economic growth and an increase in aggregate income throughout Indonesia. But these increases were not equally distributed. Overall the indigenous Indonesians did not experience aggregate economic increases subjectively as personal gains. A Sino-Indonesian minority of 3% had 70% of the nation's wealth.

An ethnic Chinese timber tycoon, Bob Hasan, with close ties to wealthy senior government figures, used environmentally ruinous methods to clear forest land using fires that greatly polluted the atmosphere in Indonesia in 1997. This was a tipping point. Ethnic Indonesians, whose grievances of unfair economic inequality were increasing throughout the 1970's and 1980's, violently protested in May 1998. Looting of ethnic Chinese businesses and rape of ethnically Chinese women occurred. Following this outbreak, Chinese people and capital fled Indonesia. The Sino-Indonesians who remained stockpiled arms to protect themselves. Sales of steel chastity belts also soared, a product developed by a Chinese entrepreneur.

Chau's (2004) case studies illustrate how aggregate economic improvement, distributed disproportionately, can lead to civic unrest. Violent protest against a wealthy minority can occur when the perception is of unfair and unequal wealth gain. It is also important to highlight the tipping point for protest occurred when a fundamental element of life was jeopardized: the air was quickly being polluted.

Perceptions of what is, and is not, fair economic inequality is important to comprehend in order to determine whether people accept or reject it. It is important to examine these perceptions to understand the dynamics of democratic engagement and civic unrest. How far can the processes of globalization disproportionately increase income and wealth before tolerance turns to social action, either democratic, or violent?

A global discourse on rising wealth and income inequalities highlights the growing gap between the rich, super rich, and the rest. Yet the entire globe is becoming wealthier, healthier, and better educated. Uneven progress is still progress. These are two opposing global trends.

IV. The Political Consequences of Economic Inequality

The collapse of the global economy in 2008 highlighted problems with globalization, financial systems, and the experiences of regular citizens within these shifting and unequal economic systems. Several countries protested the implementation of austerity in Europe following the 2008 economic crash. But this was just one phenomenon. Unfairness with the

distribution of wealth, income, and economic resources was a factor in other global uprisings, revolts, and political turmoil. A Tunisian market worker self-immolated in response to police confiscation of his wares (among other grievances), helping to trigger civic unrest through North Africa and the Middle East known as the Arab Spring. Dictators in this region fell, only to return in other forms (Moghaddam, 2016, forthcoming; Wagoner et al., forthcoming). Occupy protests started in 2011 in the US in response to the “99%/1%” disparities, and spread to Europe. In the run up to the 2014 football World Cup, street protests occurred in Brazil, aimed at highlighting economic inequalities, government corruption, and the plight of ordinary workers who were being exploited and glossed over as the country presented its best possible face to the global public.

Economic inequality can have profound implications for democracy. But there is not a zero sum game and there is no formula for understanding tipping points for acceptance or rejection of economic inequality. It matters how people understand and experience economic disparities (Chua, 2004). One important issue is whether people think economic inequality is the outcome of a fair or unfair process of acquisition. Perceptions of unfair economic inequality can lead to democratic engagement. One form of engaging democratically is street protests.

V. Integrating opposing views of capitalism and inequality

The two stories of capitalism are outlined above. The first is that capitalism enslaves people, damages the planet, maintains social inequalities, creates massive wealth and

income disparities that make the rich richer and the poor poorer, and stacks the deck against the ordinary person. The second story is that aggregate global incomes and wealth have increased since the dawn of industrial capitalism, and spread throughout the world because of rapid globalization; that the spread of capitalism globally has led to increased life expectancy, lower child mortality, increased education, greater opportunities throughout the life-course, the lifting of hundreds of millions out of abject poverty, and an increase in the standards of living of the vast majority of people on the planet.

The interaction between the two stories of capitalism is a fundamental driving force, which has taken humanity to unprecedented levels, but more needs to be done for continued economic growth and the perceived fair distribution of economic resources. The concentration of wealth and income in the hands of a few has given the super elite privilege, status, and political power.

This has become a salient issue in recent US politics. It costs billions to become president of the USA (Moghaddam, forthcoming). Speaking in Chicago on January 10th, 2017, Barack Obama highlighted the issue of rising economic inequality and the effect it has on politics when he stated: *“Stark inequality is also corrosive to our democratic ideal. While the top 1% has amassed a bigger share of wealth and income, too many families in inner cities, and rural counties, have been left behind. The laid-off factory workers, the waitress, or health-care worker who is barely getting by and struggling to pay the bills, convinced that the game is fixed against them, that the government only serves the interests of the powerful, that’s a*

recipe for more cynicism and polarization in our politics. There are no quick fixes to this long-term trend. I agree that our trade should be fair, and not just free.”

Those with more wealth generally have more political power to influence policy to protect, hide, or increase their wealth (Moghaddam, forthcoming). Economic inequality therefore has profound implications for democracy because some people, with vast economic means, can have disproportionate influence over who runs for office and who gets elected. One central issue for democracy is how people perceive inequalities to be fair or not. Obama highlights the connection between perceptions of unfair economic inequality and civic discontent. Trump’s nationalist ideology entails protectionist economic policies: “Buy American and hire American,” as Trump tweeted just after his inauguration on January 20th, 2017 showing his protectionist policies. Populism sometimes trumps globalism (Haidt, 2016). Although one might not be the desirable answer to the other, both can be understood as conversing with, and ultimately, modulating one another. Modulation takes the form of democratic engagement: perceptions of unfair distribution of economic goods can be highlighted by discourse and demonstrations aimed at effecting policies to alter the accumulation of wealth and income in the hands of the few at the expense of the many. The integration of the two stories of capitalism is necessary for continued globalization and economic growth, yet in a form where people think economic resources are fairly distributed.

This modulation can be considered within democratic countries. This is because interactions can more easily be observed. Democracies, as opposed to dictatorships, are

more open societies that can foster dialogue, such as debate and demonstrations, in a broad sense. In democracies, there is more freedom of speech and assembly than dictatorships (Popper, 1966; Moghaddam, 2013, 2016; Power, forthcoming). Therefore it is easier to study these issues in a democratic country, such as Ireland.

In 2015, the EU ruled that Apple owed the Republic of Ireland \$13bn in tax. Despite protests from members of the Irish public, the Irish government refused to pursue this tax. The logic was that taking money from Apple would increase the likelihood that Apple, and other corporations located in Dublin, would leave, having a detrimental effect on the Irish economy. It would be a short-term gain and a long-term loss. The Irish Minister for Finance, Michael Noonan, explained the decision in colloquial terms, “to do anything else (i.e. if Ireland were to take the tax) it would be like eating the seed potatoes” (see O’Toole, *The Irish Times*, August 30th, 2016). Taxing vastly wealthy corporations, like Apple, didn’t garner government support. But it did add to anti-austerity protests in Ireland because it became another concrete example that generated anger. Piketty’s (2014) policy suggestion to curb increasing inequality doesn’t hold enough sway with the current Irish government at least to offset the immediate concerns. Unequal rates of taxation between corporations and individuals are often deemed unfair. It can galvanize civic engagement. It can motivate people to protest. This example foreshadows a deeper investigation in to protest in Ireland during at economic recovery that is presented in Chapter 6.

VI. Protest, as a democratic process, can modulate the distribution of economic resources

Protest is just one of a number of democratic activities that can be used to affect socio-political change. Voting, lobbying, signing petitions, legislating, are all conventional forms of democratic engagement. Leaking of sensitive materials, such as the Panama Papers, which revealed some of the depth of offshore tax havens, is another. Protest has a long history of association with the potential for political change (de Tocqueville, 1857/1955; Le Bon, 1903; Power, 2014). More contemporary work highlights the dynamics of demonstrations and the behaviors of protesters as they seek to effect social and political change (Reicher & Stott, 2011; Warren & Power, 2015). It therefore has a special role as a challenge to the legitimacy of the current system. It is important to understand the temporal unfolding of protest and other forms of civic discontent within broader historical, cultural, economic, political, and legal contexts. Democratic engagement is not abstract; it unfolds in shifting contexts that are at once new, yet bound to the past, with implications for the future.

An idealized version of democracy is a worthy goal, but the impact social scientists can have in generating future societies with actualized democracies lies in examining the actual contexts in which democratic activities occur (Power, forthcoming). Idealized versions of democracies provide powerful cognitive alternatives of how one ought to act in society, and the best way to organize societies to promote peace and prosperity within a culturally pluralizing and globalizing world (Moghaddam, forthcoming). Imagined futures also impact

how democracy is interpreted and understood in the past and practiced in the present. It has implications for understanding the dialogue between two narratives of capitalism and how an integrated story can be formed, articulating versions of societies when globalization continues, but economic resources generated by capitalism are more equally shared, with less harm done to the planet.

In his visionary work on the psychology of democracy Moghaddam provides an ambitious theory to conceptualize actualized democracy (2013, 2016, forthcoming a, b; Power, forthcoming). He articulates an idealized framework to guide understanding of what actualized democracy is, what it means, and why it can be so elusive.

First, Moghaddam (2016) outlines a simple continuum for thinking through forms of government based on extensive historical evidence and in-depth case studies. His broad conceptualization dovetails with Popper's classic characterizations of more closed and open societies in *The Open Society and its Enemies* (1966). At one end of Moghaddam's spectrum are pure dictatorships (2013, 2016, forthcoming). These governments are characterized by oppressive and myopic leaders, privileged and corrupt elites, and intimidation and aggression from agents of the state used to control the population. In contrast, at the opposite end of this spectrum are actualized democracies. Moghaddam argues no society has ever achieved a fully actualized democracy according to his criteria.

There are multiple and interrelated reasons why countries have not reached idealized democracies. Moghaddam (2016) outlines a broad structure to summarize the three ways

in which social change can, but very often does not, occur, and how maintenance of the status quo inhibits the progression towards an actualized democracy. First order change – involving major international shifts, such as the failure of a dictatorship, or a global financial crisis - occurs without any transformation to either the formal law or informal norms and behaviors within a region. Second order change involves creating new, or altering existing, formal documents and laws. However, this can, but does not necessitate, changes in social norms or behaviors. Third order change, according to Moghaddam, is far more elusive, but is fundamental to achieving an actualized democracy. It involves transformation in both the formal system and informal normative behavior.

Third order change is necessary for achieving actualized democracy, but history is replete with examples of failures to make these types of changes, even when opportunities to do so are created by first and second order change. Expanding his theory, Moghaddam outlines three prerequisites for realizing third order change. First, when moving from a dictatorship, leaders must want to move towards actualized democracy. Second, there must be institutional support, through media and education, to help achieve the actualization of a pure democracy. However, the third prerequisite is for a population to become democratic citizens. This involves acquiring, both through education and informal learning, the social and psychological skills to think and act democratically. Moghaddam, based on his empirical research, articulates a series of interrelated, idealized, and potentially contradictory, abstract propositions that characterize a perfect and actualized democratic citizen (Power, forthcoming).

A democratic citizen is at once open to new experiences, must seek to understand others and learn from them, create opportunities for these others yet also realize not all experiences are equal. Democratic citizen opinions must be informed by multiple sources, and consequently these citizens must revisit and be willing to revise their opinions. Finally, democratic citizens must question their own deeply held beliefs, know there are fundamental moral truths of right and wrong, and realize they themselves could be wrong in their worldviews. Democratic citizens, therefore, must engage in the dual narratives of globalized capitalism. Working through contrasting conceptualizations of capitalist progress and economic inequality can lead to increased understanding of the conditions in which people accept inequalities without engaging in democratic activities to effect social change, and under which their perceptions of fairness change, leading to increased civic discontent and democratic engagement.

Psychology needs more visionaries like Moghaddam. But idealized theoretical abstractions also need to be grounded in everyday, lived realities. The meaning and realization of any actualized democracy is forever linked to the past. This is because people use the past to make sense of the present and orient towards imagined futures (Bartlett, 1923; Halbwachs 1925/1992; Wagoner, 2017). One consequence of this for generating an actualized democracy is acknowledging there are many potential forms of democracy (Held, 2006). These are informed by legal, economic, and constitutional charters, which are institutionalized within countries, and are formed in, and cemented by, cultural, historical, social, moral, and economic norms. And even within democracies there is no guarantee of peaceful co-existence. The majority might tyrannize minorities, as Mann's (2005)

documentation of ethnic genocides in democratic countries reveals. Visions for actualized democracies are more numerous than is possible to realize. This is why Moghaddam's framework is at once necessary - for people to strive towards more open and peaceful societies - and incomplete.

The global financial recession of 2008 focused attention on the place of economic inequality in a democracy. Economic recessions and subsequent recoveries provide a context in which to examine the dynamics of economic inequality when made particularly salient within the democratic public spheres. Changing economic conditions provide a context in which to examine beliefs about what constitutes fair and unfair distributions of wealth and income in contracting and expanding economies. Moreover, beyond issues of perceived fairness, the global financial crisis of 2008 also provides a context in which to explore how people think economic inequalities relate to democratic societies and how citizens of democracies act in response to their perceptions of inequality. Under what conditions can and do citizens accept inequality without engaging in democratic activities to effect social change? And under what circumstances does citizen tolerance turn to protest and other forms of civic discontent? This research informs larger theoretical issues concerning how people relate to one another, and how they organize, in an increasingly culturally plural and globalizing world. It also informs how citizens comprehend the two stories of capitalism and how these proponents of each narrative interact and modulate one another in globalizing capitalist democracies.

The two stories of capitalism, as well as democratic modulation of each, occur in specific socio-cultural, moral, historical and legal contexts. In the next chapter I develop the issues introduced in this chapter.

Chapter 2

Culture, Economics, and Psychology

In this chapter I review the literature on culture and economic development. I argue that by understanding the connections between the two we can better comprehend how people perceive and respond to economic crises and what constitutes for them fair or unfair economic inequality. Next, I locate the 2008 financial crisis in historical context. I draw on economic history to illuminate the ways in which economic inequality waxes and wanes over time. This pattern is linked to the opening and closing of borders, and increased or decreased cultural and ethnic heterogeneity, which affects perceptions of perceived social injustices and the fairness of wealth and income distribution. I discuss the *Equality – Difference Paradox*. This is the observation that countries that have high levels of diversity also have high levels of economic inequality. By discussing the paradox, I want to highlight the connections between cultural diversity and income inequality.

I also review the literature on three fundamental cultural psychological processes that can be used to understand this paradox. First, I elaborate upon classic relative deprivation theory to understand the dynamics of protest in the Republic of Ireland. I reveal the ways in which demonstrators expected to reap the benefits of an economic boom, having suffered harsh austerity beforehand. But this economic growth was perceived to be experienced unequally – a minority of people benefitted - which created frustration that manifested in civic discontent, particularly against a new charge on water. Moreover, second, I apply theories of collective remembering to comprehend how protesting in Ireland is linked to overcoming historic social and political injustices in the form of

uprisings and armed rebellions. Connecting relative deprivation and collective remembering informs the ways in which social groups compare and orientate themselves to one another and decide on what is and is not fair in terms of economic distributions. Next, third, I review literature on the psychology of imagination. I locate this cultural psychological process as an extension of collective remembering. People use the past. And they also use the future. Protesters often demonstrate against their forecasts of a more dystopian future. They use these projected images of a possible future world to galvanize, organize, and legitimize social movements in the present in order to re-write their projected futures along their envisioned morally utopic societies. Unchecked economic growth can lead to the accumulation of vast wealth for a few, at the expense of the many. But people can act to alter their realities.

I: Culture, Economics, and Development

The global economy collapsed in 2008. Different countries and regions experienced the economic crisis in multiple ways for interrelated economic, political, financial, geographical, legal, and cultural reasons. Economic and financial analyses dominate how people view what happened during the 2008 financial crisis. However, understanding how culture is interconnected with economic analyses can provide a richer, more nuanced, and detailed explanation of financial and economic crises. In order to place the localized Irish scenario within a broader framework, it is important to understand the more general interaction between culture and economic development.

Recent and historical work has illustrated the importance of understanding culture in relation to economic development (Banfield, 1958; Harrison, 1985; Harrison & Huntington, 2000; Landes, 1999). In *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* Weber examined the impact of religious values on economic prosperity (Weber, 1905/2009). The basic values of Catholicism—sin followed by confession, redemption, and repeated sin—led to a less strict work ethic because forgiveness was always at hand. In contrast, Protestants, unlike Catholics, valued an austere and entrepreneurial life. He discussed how the Calvinist belief in predestination impacted attitudes towards work. He argued economic prosperity for believers signaled they were predestined for heaven. Over time the idea of predestination faded, but the ethos of displaying prosperity was maintained, and it lay at the basis of contemporary capitalism regardless of religious affiliation.

Weber developed these ideas in two further studies exploring the effects of religion on culture and economic development. *The Religion of China* (1951) and *The Religion of India* (1958) further highlighted the importance of understanding culture to explain stunted economic development. He argued that Confucianism in China and Hinduism in India led citizens to explain natural phenomena with supernatural belief systems. In these religious systems, the family is central and valued at the expense of the broader community, leading to a lack of entrepreneurial enterprises because people didn't not organize beyond the family level, and, by extension, this hindered economic development. Institutions capable of developing and sustaining economic growth were lacking. This theme was developed in further research concerning culture and economic growth.

For example, In the edited volume *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress* (2000), the editors - Harrison and Huntington- have assembled a group of insightful contributors, most of whom argue in one way or another for the importance of understanding cultural values as a means to understanding diverse economies and economic development in various regions of the world. For example, in the opening chapter, Harvard historian David Landes summarizes the motif of the book: "Culture makes almost all the difference." With this chapter title, he echoes the dominant theme of *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations* (Landes, 1999), which provided a historical analysis of varying rates of global economic development. Landes explains how different cultural values, such as exploration of new trade routes, generate different forms of economic development in different regions throughout the history of the world. Both books emphasize the development of specific economies and ways of understanding trade, patterns that are influenced by much broader configurations of cultural values and ideologies about what is good, true and efficient. For example, the Europeans, unlike the Chinese, were more adventurous, innovative, and aggressive in colonial expansion and accumulation of wealth. In short, cultural ideologies and values lie at the base of, and are entwined with, conceptualizations of economic thought and development throughout history.

Banfield (1958) conducted one of the foundational studies in this area. His investigation into the poverty and lack of economic progress in a small village in southern Italy revealed the moral foundations and cultural outlook at the basis of this community. He introduced the term "amoral familism" - which originates from high death rates, harsh land conditions, and the large absence of extended family - to explain why these Italian villagers could not

motivate themselves to organize politically, or economically, for the overall good of the community, and, by extension, for all individuals. By detailing the systemic problems in one rural village, he convincingly argues for the importance of understanding cultural and communal morals, in order to comprehend hindered economic development. An increasing body of literature highlights this important link, but the conclusions are contested.

In *Underdevelopment is a State of Mind*, Harrison argued that although factors such as natural resources, military conquests, and policy, shape countries economic development, but he concluded that cultural values lay at the basis of hindered economic development throughout Latin America (Harrison, 1985). But detractors from the importance of culture in explaining variation in regional economic development highlight geographical, political, or economic factors as being more important (Sachs, 2000). Their argument is that favorable geography (in terms of production of goods and work conditions), and capitalist institutions, and the feedback loop that exists between them, are of utmost importance for economic development. Not culture. And it is certainly not the most important explanatory factor in economic growth.

Sachs (2005) develops the idea that culture does not matter in *The End of Poverty*. He argues that the fundamental cause of economic stagnation is poverty itself. Poor people are too poor to save in order to accumulate capital. Therefore, they are unable to pull themselves out of this poverty trap without assistance from global financial institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund. This has implications for how governments can, and cannot, operate. Governments are essential in developing economic growth in their

countries. However, people might be too poor to pay any, or increased tax, to generate economic growth. Moreover, governments might also be corrupt or inept and cannot collect taxes to drive economic development.

Previous national debt also hinders progress. Geopolitical forces, such as sanctions by a dominant economic growth against a less developed economic country, are often intended to topple dictatorial regimes, but also have the effect of stopping or slowing economic development. This impacts the lives of ordinary people. Stagnant economic growth is a less than ideal environment for entrepreneurial activities and innovation. Governments and institutions don't have the revenue to invest. People lack money to buy new products, however badly they might be needed. Using data from the World Bank, Sachs illustrates how population growth is increasing in poor countries. These data show the more children people have, the less money there is per capita. These issues all become interrelated, reinforcing, and helping to keep the poor, poor.

Diamond (1997) in *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, details the connection between geography, economic development, and human development. Like Sachs, Diamond argues that geographical factors, not culture, lie at the foundation of uneven global economic development and subsequent differences in levels of wealth in different regions. Some countries have hindered economic development because of the high cost of transport. They might be landlocked, be mountainous, or removed from long coastlines, navigable rivers, or lack natural harbors. Sachs said, "Culture does not explain the persistence of poverty in Bolivia, Ethiopia, Kyrgyzstan, or Tibet. Look instead to the mountain geography of a

landlocked region facing crushing transport costs and economic isolation that stifle almost all forms of modern economic activity” (Sachs, 2005, p. 58). He neglects to deal with the mountainous and landlocked Switzerland that has high levels of wealth and income.

When culture is considered in relation to economic development it is seen by Sachs (2005) as one variable, not an overarching system in which other thoughts, feelings and actions are embedded. Moreover, there is a moral hierarchy to using culture as an explanatory factor in describing different levels of economic development. Sachs (2005), for example, suggests cultural forces can inhibit economic development. He highlights the role of cultural and moral norms that mean women are refused their rights; they remain uneducated, and only bear children. From this perspective, women contribute little to economic and human development. From my point of view, Sachs’ ambition to end abject poverty is a worthy goal. But I also think the means to reach the ends are misguided in his application of the concept of “culture.” Sachs assumes one view of economic development: an inevitable march towards the enlightenment characterized by a homogeneity of cultural and moral perspectives. His claim that assumes women are powerless, denied their rights, and can contribute little to economic development is inaccurate. Yet Europe was able to advance in spite of this. Culture matters in understanding local economic systems, empowerment, and means of a morally fulfilled life (Banfield, 1958; Harrison & Huntington, 2000; Landes, 1999; Shweder, 2003; Weber, 1905/2009). By thinking of culture as an explanatory factor, rather than a system in which thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are embedded (Cole, 1996; Shweder, 1991; Wierzbicka, 1993) implies an incomplete and inaccurate version of human and economic development.

In Chapter 1 I outlined two stories of capitalism. In describing the origins of industrial capitalism in Britain in the 1800's Sachs argues Britain had a favorable combination of geographic factors. Britain had fertile soil, plenty of rain, rivers and waterways and was in close proximity to America and the rest of Europe (just like its former colony, Ireland). Sachs (2005) argues that Britain was relatively open, entrepreneurial and had social mobility. It was an occupier, not occupied. It was politically stable and free speech helped innovation. This innovation meant Britain was a global center for scientific revolution. Omitted from this narrative is that the zeitgeist of free speech, support for innovation, and values placed on entrepreneurial activities certainly seem cultural.

Sachs' (2000; 2005) arguments about culture are overly simplistic, because he conceptualizes culture as an explanatory variable, just one factor among many. Banfield's (1958) case study illustrates the intricate ways cultural and moral beliefs – the importance of close family rather than community activism and government – meant capitalist institutions were difficult to establish in southern Italy. He does not underline the importance of complex and pre-existing reasons for the focus on the family at the expense of the community – poverty and the low status of the manual laborer – but intertwined with, and inseparable from these forces, are culturally widespread and historically ingrained cultural and moral beliefs and values.

Although not an explicit study of economic development, Nisbett and Cohen (1996) explain higher rates of aggression and homicide in the US south, relative to the north, by examining the culture of honor that exists in the south. They use data from news reports, government

institutions, legal frameworks, and experiments, to illustrate how fundamental cultural beliefs in aggressively defending honor when threatened manifests in everyday behaviour. The basis of this culture of honor, according to the authors, lies in early Irish and Scottish farming settlers in the American south, who, unlike their more settled neighbors in the American north, needed to physically defend any affronts to them, or against their herd, on the lawless frontier. Over time, laws and intuitions were established to keep the peace, but these were still ingrained with the moral and cultural basis of defending one's honor. The study highlights, contrary to arguments made by Sachs (2000; 2005), that geographical topographies (i.e. farming land) are linked to the establishment of institutions (i.e. to keep law and order) and are historically interconnected with cultural and moral beliefs (i.e. the right to defend one's honor).

Banfield (1958) does not privilege cultural and moral beliefs over institutional, governmental, historic, or geographical factors in explaining stunted economic growth in his ethnographic field site. He explains the complex and reinforcing relationships between each of them. He stated, "That the Montegransesi are prisoners of their family-centered ethos - that they cannot act concertedly or in the common good - is a fundamental impediment to their economic and other progress. There are other impediments of pervasive importance, of course, especially poverty, ignorance, and a status system which leaves the peasant almost outside the larger society. It would be foolish to say that one element in this system is *the* cause of backwardness: all these elements - and no doubt many others as well are in reciprocal relation; each is both a cause and an effect on all the others. The view taken here is that for purposes of analysis and policy the moral basis of

the society may usually be regarded as the strategic, or limiting, factor. That is to say, the situation may be understood, or altered, better from this standpoint than from any other” (Banfield, 1958, p. 155, emphasis in original).

In summary, cultural and moral beliefs and economic growth are linked, yet the connection between the two has often been neglected in analyses of economic development.

Understanding the connection between culture and economics can inform contemporary debates on rising economic inequality that was discussed in chapter one. Under what conditions do people accept rising income and wealth inequality without turning to democratic means to affect social change? And under what conditions does the perception of unfair economic inequality lead to violent protest and other forms of civic unrest? Moreover, elaborating the connection between culture and economic development, and the relationships between perceptions of fair and unfair economic distributions, can also inform the reactions of different social groups to the 2008 global financial recession.

II. Cycles of Inequality and the 2008 Financial Crisis

Historical economic analyses suggest the global financial crisis of 2008 was not a unique event (Aliber and Kindleberger, 2015; Reinhart and Rogoff, 2009). Reinhart and Rogoff (2009) situate the 2008 economic crash within a broad historical milieu of economic recessions and recoveries. Analyzing data ranging as far back as 12th century China and medieval Europe, the authors conclude that the trope “this time is different” when referring to contemporary economic booms is false: the weight of evidence suggests a cyclical – but

not inevitable— pattern of economic boom and bust in the form of government defaults, inflationary spikes, and banking panics, have occurred in all nations throughout history. The role of the accumulation of debt – either by banks, governments, or the public—is one uniting theme underlying their survey of historical economic crises. Economic and social analyses of the 2008 economic crisis that claim it was a unique event grossly miss the point (Reinhardt and Rogoff, 2011). The authors argue failing to remember the lessons of history results in similar mistakes being repeated. Cultural patterns of collective memory, steeped in localized history, are important to understand in order to appreciate the complexity of perceptions towards economic crises and recoveries.

These historical analyses of economic booms and busts reveal common patterns across time and countries. The literature on economic inequality suggests inequality is increasing since the end of WWII. Interestingly, in a theory put forth by Shweder (2017), there are correlations between migration policies and income distribution. During the period 1870 – 1920, the United States had a relatively liberal migration policy, accepting immigrants from around the world. Simultaneously, during the same period, there was an unequal distribution of income in the United States. Following WWI, until the early 1970's, the US began closing its borders, and this correlated with an increase in economic redistribution. From the 1970's until the present, the United States has relatively open migration policies, and again these correlate with widening gaps in income and wealth distribution (Piketty, 2014). In the United States, there is a correlation between the patterns of cultural homogeneity and heterogeneity, that is, the presence of many recent immigrants, and more or less inequality of income distribution. This is the *Equality – Difference Paradox*: the

observation that the more culturally and ethnically homogenous a country is, the greater the equal income distribution and vice versa (Jindra, 2014; Minnow, Shweder & Markus, 2008; Shweder, 2017; Shweder & Power, 2013).

Following the global economic crisis of 2008, the unequal economic recovery highlighted the growing gap between “the 1% and the 99%” in many Western countries. The widening gap in income earned, with the accumulation of income in the hands of a small minority, has led to a turn towards extreme political and economic policies. In the United States, for example, both Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders gained political notoriety during the 2016 presidential election. Both potential candidates for the highest office in the US tapped in to the unhappiness of large swaths of US voters who were dissatisfied with their economic status during the aggregate economic recovery overseen by President Obama. Although the US economy improved in terms of economic growth and job creation, many voters reported not experiencing this recovery in a meaningful way in their everyday lives. Bernie Sanders highlighted the perceived unfair gap between a wealthy minority who are experiencing wealth gain and rising incomes during the economic recovery and those who are not. For his part, Trump proposed to make America great again during his Presidency by tightening US borders, controlling migration, and therefore appealing to Americans who are concerned with increasing cultural heterogeneity and increasing income inequality in the United States. Similarly when Britain voted to leave the European Union, the vote for Brexit was in large part a vote for greater control over British borders. Across the Western world, there has been a swing towards more extreme left and right wing political, economic, and social policies. Shweder’s (2017) historical model suggests the next fifty

years – from 2020 to 2070 - could see a tightening of borders, control of migration, and the corresponding creation of greater income equality in both the US and the UK.

Shweder (2000) suggests one plausible hypothesis to explain the pattern of open and closed borders correlating with more or less equal economic distribution. He argues that “if economic growth is contingent on accepting the deep or thick aspects of Western culture (e.g. individualism, ideals of femininity, egalitarianism, the Bill of Rights), then cultures will not converge and will not develop economically because their sense of identity will supersede their desire for material wealth (p. 177).” The implication is people will give up material economic wealth for the sake of their cultural identity. The Brexit vote and the election of Trump in the US are both indicators that threatened identities and perceived eroding of social status and privilege supersede concerns about economic development. Money talks, but not always.

Research on the *Equality – Difference Paradox* extends the observation that as measured by the Gini Index (a measure of income inequality across countries, where a score of one hundred means one person has all the wealth in a country and a score of zero means the wealth is evenly distributed among all citizens) the more culturally homogenous countries – places such as Sweden, Ireland and Slovakia – have more equal income distribution (Jindra, 2014; Minnow, Shweder & Markus, 2008; Shweder, 2017; Shweder & Power, 2013). Conversely culturally heterogeneous countries (who have high levels of ethnic, religious, and linguistic diversity), like Brazil, the UK, and the United States, have greater income inequality. Indeed, there was more equal income distribution, as reported by the

Gini Index, in Rwanda after the genocide by the Hutu's against the Tutsi's in 1994 (Shweder, 2017).

To test this hypothesis, I developed a larger sample. Alesina, et al. (2003) listed ethnic fractionalization data, that is a measure of ethnic diversity, from 215 countries. From this list, 33 countries had no Gini Index. I averaged the Gini Index from 2004-2014 from this reduced list. Even though the decade-average Gini index was somewhat higher than the one for one year alone, e.g. 2012 (37.31 vs 36.73; $t = -2.8$, $N = 69$, $P = 0.006$), the two scores were significantly correlated ($r = 0.98$, $N = 69$, $P < 0.0001$). This suggests that using decade-averages to maximize sample size is likely a robust measure of inequality of this period.

A total of 136 countries had an average Gini score from 2004-2014. Across this sample of countries, the ethnic fractionalization score and the Gini index were significantly positively correlated ($r = 0.29$, $N = 136$, $P = 0.001$, Fig. 5), indicating that countries with greater ethnic fractionalization had higher inequality. Figure 5 is a graphical representation of the *Equality-Difference Paradox*.

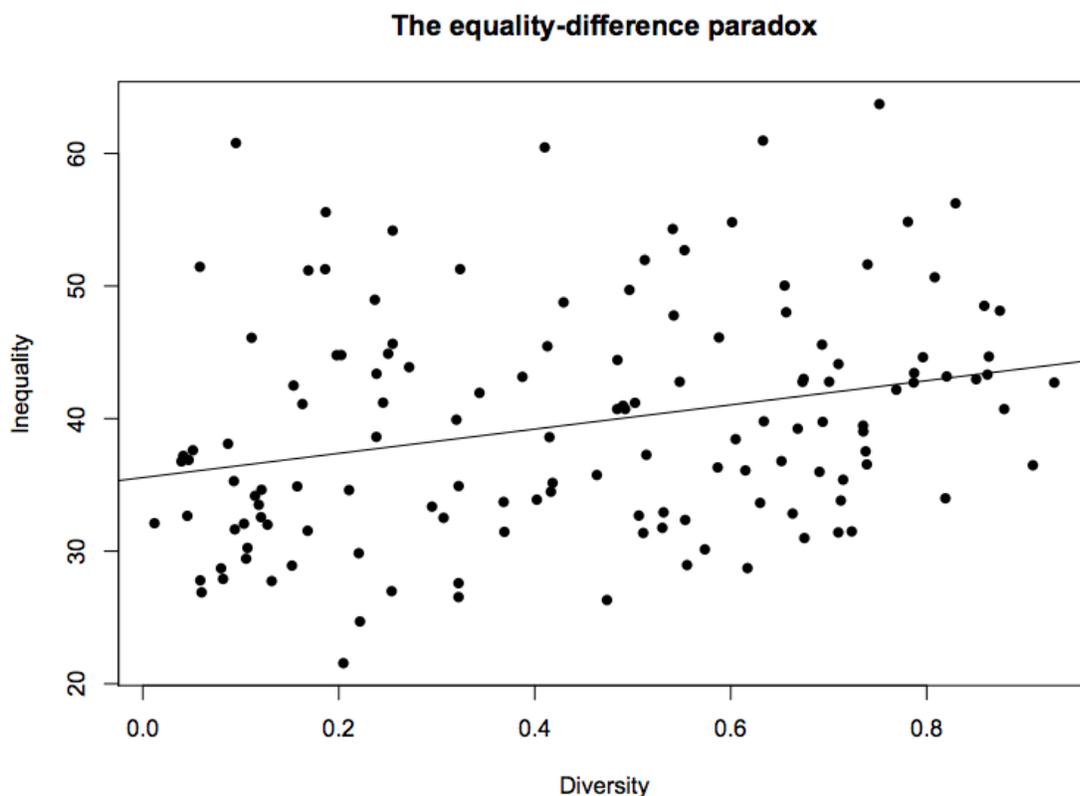


Figure 5 illustrates the “equality-difference paradox.” The data for ethnic fractionalization on the x-axis for 136 countries is plotted against the level of inequality for each of these countries. The more diversity there is within a country, the more income inequality there is. The data for the Gini Index was derived from the World Bank and was forwarded to me by Michael Jindra. The measures of diversity are from Alesina, et al. (2003). Despite the statistical significance ($r = 0.29$), this only partially explains the variance, and a lot of other factors help explain the relationship between culture and economic development. However, the point is the heterogeneity does matter in understanding global variance in economic growth. Source: this graph is an original construction.

The ethnic fractionalization scores developed by Alesina, et al. (2003) have been criticized (Fearon, 2003). The data for these scores were mostly taken from the Encyclopedia Britannica but countries that were omitted from this volume were sourced elsewhere. This may have introduced variance in data that was problematic. The fractionalization data is from 1979 to 2001 and therefore it doesn’t incorporate contemporary figures, including mass migration as a result of the 2008 economic depression. Moreover, the figures present

a one-time measure of fractionalization: changes over time are omitted. The data reveals only insofar as it conceals. It is interesting to focus on specific cases to illustrate some nuances of the *Equality – Difference Paradox*.

Figure 6 focuses in on some countries of interest because they demonstrate the effect and some focus on countries – like Ireland – involved in the Eurozone crisis. The sampling was not random. The countries that illustrate both the *Equality – Difference Paradox*, as well as those – like Haiti – that defy the principle are included as presented here in Fig. 6.

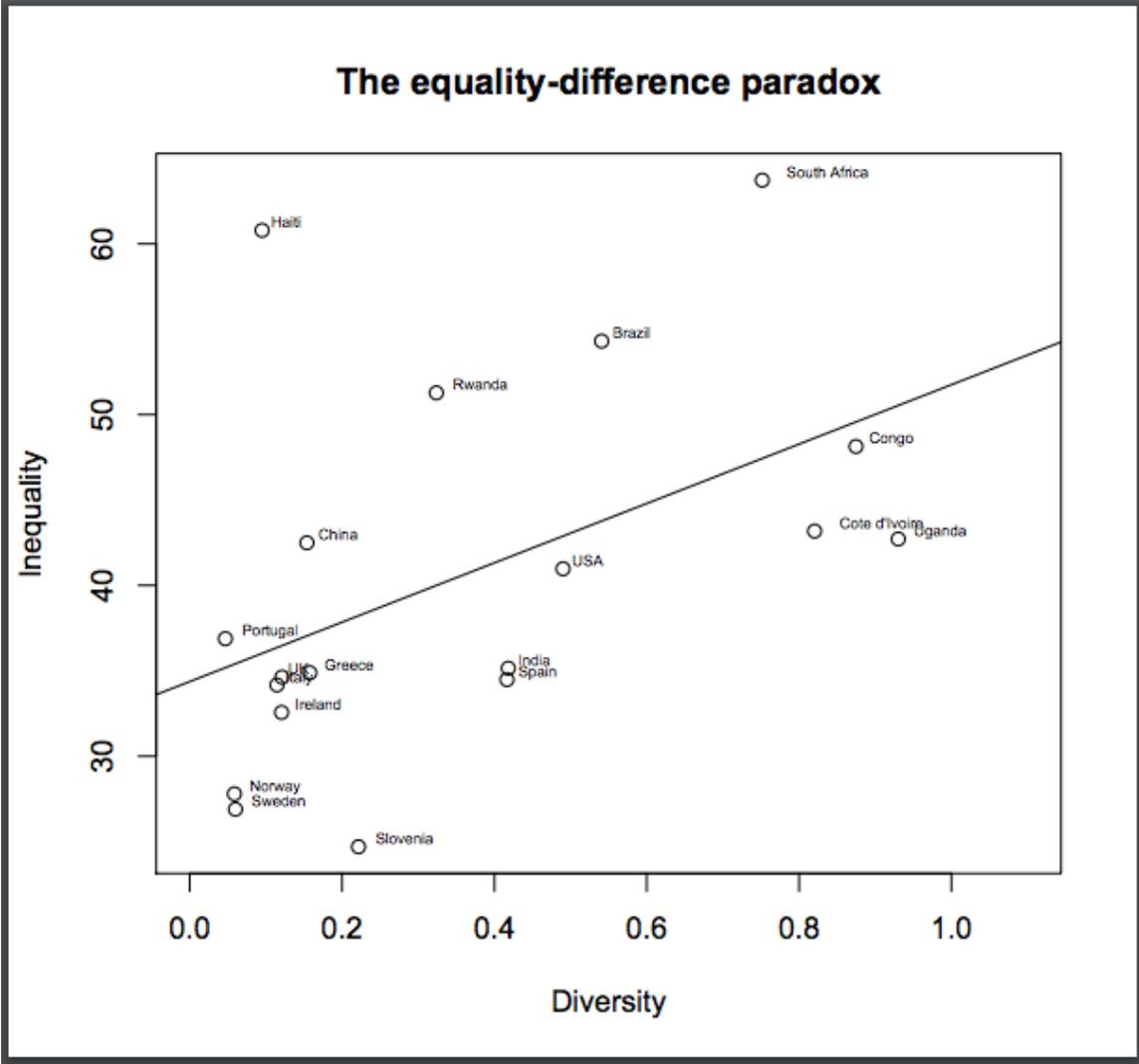


Fig. 6, continued, illustrates the *Equality-Difference Paradox* with reference to 19 countries. They were chosen to illustrate the principle, as well as countries that defy this paradox. Countries like Norway and Sweden have low levels of diversity and low-income inequality. Countries affected by the Eurozone crisis, such as Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Ireland have relatively low levels of ethnic diversity and low levels of economic inequality. More diverse countries, like India and the USA, have higher levels of economic inequality. The USA has the greatest level of economic inequality in the “Western” world. Some African countries, such as Congo and Uganda, have some of the highest levels of diversity, correlated with the highest levels of economic inequality. Haiti is an exception to the paradox. It has low levels of diversity, yet has high levels of inequality. China also has lower levels of diversity, yet higher levels of income inequality. Source: this graph is an original construction.

The *Equality – Difference Paradox* is controversial (Jindra, 2014; Shweder, 2017). One implication might be that if you value more equal income distribution – as many left-wing politicians, and economists referred to earlier, do – you need greater cultural homogeneity. This might mean the assimilation of refugees, migrants, and other cultural groups in to the mainstream culture of the host country. It might also mean the segregation, separation or elimination of peoples. Another consequence of the *Equality – Difference Paradox* is if you truly value cultural heterogeneity, one consequence might be unequal income distribution. People do not agree with, or want, to share wealth – in a variety of forms such as social welfare benefits- with people who are culturally or ethnicity dissimilar to one another (Putnam, 2007; Ziller, 2015).

Shweder (2017) argues there are several reasons why this paradox exists within culturally diverse nations, such as the US, Brazil, India or Israel. These reasons include the idea that groups of individuals exist within these pluralistic societies that remain poor by choice or are unwilling to reject their inherited austere lifestyle. Other groups explicitly reject a bourgeois version of the good life that emphasizes status and the accumulation of income and wealth.

Shweder (2017) details the poorest community of its size – as measured by mainstream economic measures – in the United States. He finds that, contrary to his expectations, the poorest place is a Jewish community in the State of New York. In the community of Kiryas Joel, emphasis is not placed on the accumulation of income. Religious study for the men, and child rearing for the women, are the order of the day. Communal and shared resources in this culturally homogenous community maintain a level of existence that is subsidized by the U.S. government for each member. Lack of annual earned income does not necessitate a poor life.

The Kiryas Joel example further highlights the interdependence between economics and cultural values and raises a number of questions concerning how we ought to measure income and wealth distribution, such as what are the meanings of money and what is its connection to living the good life; what are the historical dynamics of wealth and income distribution and how does this impact the conditions by which people think fiscal inequality is fair or unfair; and how do people think about, and react towards, these economic realities?

Robert Putnam (2007) develops the association between cultural diversity, community, and economics in ‘advanced countries’. He argues that increasing ethnic diversity, driven by immigration, impacts the economies of these host nations. Putnam views increased immigration to wealthier nations as inevitable. He argues in the long term inward migration is advantageous for communal and economic development in those nations. However, he argues that increased immigration, and subsequent ethnic diversity,

potentially has a negative impact on social cohesion in the short term. For example, he discusses data suggesting that in ethnically diverse neighborhoods in the US, trust (including trusting members of one's ethnic group) is lower than in ethnically homogeneous neighborhoods; further, people have fewer friends in diverse communities, and communal cooperation is lower. He concludes that many Americans are uncomfortable with diversity. However, over time, with the emergence of cross-cultural identities and new forms of social solidarity, this fragmented social fabric can be repaired, which is beneficial both socially and economically. He discusses the successful incorporation of previous waves of immigrants, including the Irish, into the mainstream fabric of US society. This analysis highlights the complexity of understanding the role of diverse cultural values and norms with economic 'development' in its multifarious forms.

The literature connecting culture and economics suggests an underlying connection between the way people think, feel, and act in different cultures in relation to financial systems and economic value. Contemporary research on the *Equality - Difference Paradox*, coupled with classic ethnographic research, highlights the importance of considering culture in accounts of economic development and inequality. The arguments subsumed in this review are just one manifestation of a broader approach to comprehending how individuals think, feel, and act within diverse cultures throughout time. It is a microcosm of the field of cultural psychology.

III. Cultural Psychology

Cultural psychology is a trans-disciplinary enterprise aimed at understanding how minds and cultures co-construct one another (Bruner, 1990; 2002; Cole, 1996; Kitayama & Cohen, 2008; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Shweder, 1991; 2003; Shweder & Power, 2013).

Subsequently, it follows that different cultural groups have different versions of what is a true, good, beautiful, and efficient way of life. The review of the literature connecting economics and culture is just one manifestation of the utility of cultural psychological theorizing. Within this broad framework, impressive research has sought to understand cultural similarities and differences in conceptualizations of the self (Shweder and Bourne, 1982; Markus & Kitayama, 1991); cognitive processes (Nisbett & Miyamoto, 2005); sex and food practices (Rozin, 2007); intergroup relations (Gillespie, 2006; Hammack, 2011); honor (Nisbett & Cohen, 1996); development across the life course (Arnett, 2000; Shweder, 2009); religion (Norenzayan, 2013); emotion (Shweder and Haidt, 2003); linguistics (Wierzbicka, 1993) the body (Obeyesekere, 1984/2014) and forms of government (Moghaddam, 2013, 2016). To this broad survey of the myriad research programs under the umbrella of cultural psychology, we might add a temporal dimension too. People across the world remember (Bartlett, 1932; Halbwachs, 1992; Wagoner, 2017; Wertsch, 2008). And they imagine (Power, forthcoming; Zittoun and Gillespie, 2015).

The research program in cultural psychology, using multiple methods of inquiry, has been generative (Cohen, 2008; Gillespie & Cornish, 2009, Power, et al., forthcoming). Underlying the diffuse topics of investigation, is a core set of broad and unifying principles that define cultural psychology as a discipline separate from general and cross-cultural psychology as

well as anthropology (Shweder, 1991) and as an interdisciplinary subject examining the intersection of culture and mentalities.

Shweder delineated the basic idea of the discipline when he wrote: “Cultural psychology is the study of the ways subject and object, self and other, psyche and culture, person and context, figure and ground, practitioner and practice, live together, require each other, and dynamically, dialectically, and jointly make each other up” (1991, p. 73). It follows that different people, in different regions of the world share a similar set of basic universal categories, such as thinking, feeling, wanting, acting, and moralizing (Norenzayan and Heine, 2005; Shweder, 1991; 2003; Wierzbicka, 1993). But these basic categories do not manifest in the same ways across time and cultures (Cassaniti and Menon, 2017). One particularly fruitful line of research is on the cultural psychology of moral reasoning. Research in moral psychology suggests regional variation in judgments of the true, good, beautiful, and efficient life throughout the world.

Morality is simultaneously evolutionary and cultural. Babies are not born “blank slates” as the philosopher John Locke suggested. Rather, they have evolutionary ingrained capacities to make moral judgments (Pinker, 2003). Newborns are not just babies, they are *just* babies: they are capable of making moral judgments concerning what is right and wrong (Bloom, 2013). People make intuitive decisions steeped in evolutionary emotions, such as disgust, when faced with potentially moral issues. Is it wrong to cook and eat your dead dog? How about using your national flag to clean your toilet? How about having sex with, then eating, a frozen chicken? These scenarios were among those given to groups of

respondents to gauge their initial disgust (Haidt, et al, 1993). Research respondents were disgusted with these vignettes. Yet, the post hoc justifications regarding whether these were moral or immoral varied across cultures. It provided evidence that people make moral intuitive judgments regarding good and bad, right or wrong. They react with their gut. Further research suggests that even when researchers challenge the post hoc justifications, the research subjects usually maintain their moral judgment even when their justifications are illogical, inconclusive, or contradictory of their evolutionary ingrained, intuitive, gut feelings (Haidt, 2001, 2012). This effect is referred to as “moral dumb founding” (Haidt, Bjorkland, and Murphy, 2000).

The study of morality has a long history. In psychology, the developmental psychologist, Jean Piaget, is often seen as an inspirational figure in understanding stages of cognitive development in children. His observations and experiments into how children conceptualize physical states led him to hypothesize children had six levels of cognitive development (Piaget, 1968). Over time, children progress from one cognitive level to the next. Kohlberg, et al. (1983) developed this stage-like developmental theory. He developed moral dilemmas and quantified the responses given by children. His theory aligned with Piaget’s. He linked the development of social and moral thoughts of children to their concepts of relationships in the physical world. Children move from making superficial inferences, to more sophisticated ones based inside authorities’ matrices, before moving on to question rules, norms, and authority as young teenagers. These seminal studies highlighted the advancement of cognition in children. Moral thoughts develop over time. Turiel (1983) illustrated the ways in which young children judged scenarios to be moral,

non-moral, or conventional. His findings chime with Kohlberg's: morality had its basis in harm and justice. What was, or was not, considered fair lay at the basis of moral thinking and reasoning.

Cultural psychology illustrates variance in cognition across time and place. Haidt et al. (1993) showed how there was more to morality than harm and justice. But concerns about harm and justice were fundamental moral principles for all cultural groups even though they weigh its significance in different ways (Haidt, 2012; 2013). Haidt's cross cultural study, asking scenarios such as whether it is okay to eat your dead dog or not, revealed variance across countries and within class within countries. Liberals weighted issues to do with harm and fairness more than conservatives. Harm and fairness are foundational moral principles for both groups.

Shweder, Much, Mahapatra, and Park (2003) delineate three ethics of morality. These are three overarching parts to a moral framework used for thinking about right and wrong, and good and bad. This "big three of morality" was derived from comparative cultural psychological research with the United States and India. The ethics of autonomy, community, and divinity place emphasis on individual rights; to duties one has in, and to, the community; to duties one has to the gods in different regions of the world. Subsequent extensions on this influential theorizing examine the moral worlds of cultural groups within the United States (Haidt, 2012) and trans-globally (Jensen, 2015).

People from different cultural traditions, with different worldviews, and versions of the good life, are increasingly coming in to contact, living together, and sometimes clashing in

their views of how life ought to be lived. Moral psychology is playing an increasingly important role in describing moral universes, and how they co-exist within one world. Morality binds and blinds (Greene, 2013; Haidt, 2012). Connected to how people judge right and wrong, good and evil, is how people remember their past and think about their future. Two psychological mechanisms that make cultural and moral groups cohere is collective remembering of a shared past and imaginations of shared futures (Shweder, 2010; Power, forthcoming).

Cultural and moral psychological frameworks, and the methods used in this research, guide the implementation of three interconnected theories used to comprehend the empirical data in this dissertation. In the following sections I outline literature on three theoretical approaches that will help make sense of the dynamics of anti-austerity protests in the Republic of Ireland. The three are interconnected, but delineations between how people think and act in relation to the past, present, and future is useful. Collective remembering of the past informs how people comprehend the present. Feelings of relative deprivation in relation to other individuals or social groups helps account for how people orientate their opinions, attitudes, feelings, and actions. As such it informs whether people think issues like increasing inequality are fair or not, and whether they will act in the form of demonstrating when they feel inequality is unfair. Finally, the psychology of imagination provides a framework for thinking about how people conceptualize the future, how they think it could be, and how a moral future could, and should, be created. Visions of the future impact how we act in the present. It is informed by how people remember, and use, the past.

In the conclusion I develop a new framework to conceptualize protest movements. The “big three of protest” – remembering, relative deprivation, and imagination, - might be psychological universals undermining all protests. These three cultural and moral psychological approaches are not exhaustive. Rather, they provide a temporal account that could help understand three important aspects of all protests and social movements. People remember the past to act in the present to orientate towards future action.

In the second half of the present chapter I review the literature underlying these three cultural psychological theories before I consolidate them and suggest how they might be used to comprehend the dynamics of anti-austerity protests in the Republic of Ireland.

IV. Collective Remembering

In *On Collective Memory*, Halbwachs (1925/1992) argued that individual memory is possible only through participation in social and cultural life. Social groups offer culturally appropriate scaffolds to individuals that inform how they remember the past. These are formed over time through shared social interactions and language that imbues meaning between members of these socio-cultural groups. In this way, individual remembering always occurs in relation to a collectively constructed past (Hirst and Manier, 2008).

Moreover, Halbwachs argues that collective remembering always occurs within a spatial framework. Cultural groups remember a version of their past from a spatial location, either

real or imagined. Physical surroundings, steeped in cultural history, provide an expanded framework from which groups can recall their past. This is because groups – either in their lifetime, or historically – ingrain their past on physical structures. As such, as all recall occurs in a physical location, people remember in relation to these spatial frameworks, infused with localized meanings embedded in broader socio-cultural and historical contexts. Every social group has the possibility to ascribe their own meanings on their spatial and physical locations, and even more opportunity to recall those meanings in diverse ways in the future. In this way, there are multiple ways to remember the past. Perhaps as many ways as there are social groups to do so.

Bartlett (1932), in *Remembering: A Study of Experimental and Social Psychology*, illustrated the ways in which remembering is a dynamic sociocultural process that involves an effort after meaning. By this he meant the recalling of past narratives, or other stimuli such as pictures, occurs along deeply embedded socio-cultural norms. In the classic experiment, Cambridge University students familiarized an unfamiliar Native American story through repeated reproductions. Unfamiliar elements of the story were transformed, elaborated upon, or omitted so that the story became familiar within their cultural tradition. They conventionalized the past to comprehend it within their own culturally appropriate framework. A contemporary elaboration replicates this finding, and also illustrates the ways in which this conventionalization occurs through dialogue between cultural members (Wagoner & Gillespie, 2014).

Developing on Bartlett, Wertsch (1997) argued that memory is done in a group, not by a

group. People in the present do not simply recall a linear version of cultural history. Rather, they exhibit agency. They remember a version of the past. And in this way, remembering is linked to identity. Collective remembering imbues both individuals and groups with a sense of identity and ways of thinking and behaving in the present. Collective memories are shared individual memories that help shape collective identity (Hirst and Manier, 2008; Wang, 2008). Wertsch (2008) argued collective memory is constructed using culturally shared narrative templates. These are frameworks for recalling the past but are elaborated upon in the present in light of novel and emerging circumstances.

In a similar way to Halbwachs and Bartlett, memory for Wertsch is also a dynamic sociocultural process that is done by individuals who are embedded within social and cultural groups. Therefore, the past is not static. It is used in the present and orientates groups and individuals towards future action. Who remembers the past, why, and when, are pertinent questions. And the answers are potentially controversial.

People use the past to comprehend cognitions, and justify actions in the present, and motivate future actions. The way in which the past is used depends on who is remembering. Subsequently, what is recalled and omitted, by whom, when, and for what purpose, are important questions to consider in understanding the functions of collective remembering in organizing contemporary societies.

Without shared memories social ties would not exist. Collective remembering is ambiguous, informs a group's identity, often ignores facts to fit into a pre-existing cultural

narrative, and is therefore often resistant to change (Wertsch and Roediger, 2008).

Therefore societies are often difficult to change. Identities, at the individual, group, and national level, result from memories that are both shared and personal. Some researchers have argued that national templates for collective remembering exist in order to provide frameworks for citizens in the present to comprehend contemporary events, even crises. Wertsch (2002; 2008; forthcoming) for example, articulates an interrelated four-part template that encompasses the official Russian mentality for collective remembering of various crises. At first Russia is represented as an innocent bystander as a particular event unfolds. Innocent Russia is attacked by an unreasonable, vicious, enemy. Russia is nearly destroyed, and its people suffer terrible hardships, but acting in splendid isolation, the exceptional Russians overcome this unprovoked and unjust attack, and defeat or expel the foreign enemy. Indeed, other researchers point to origin stories of people that lay the foundations for templates of collective remembering. Think of the importance of the Book of Genesis for articulating the foundational morals and social norms, as it is the first book of the Hebrew bible and of the Old Testament. These narratives form the basis of shared moral virtues, ideas of truth, and ways to live a true, beautiful, and meaningful life. Indeed, historical truth, as seen in the Russian case, can be fictional, interpretative, and might not be as important in actuality; rather its importance lies in binding people together into nations (Shweder, 2010).

David Miller, the political philosopher, stated: "Nations stretch backwards into the past, and indeed in most cases their origins are conveniently lost in the mists of time. In the course of this history various significant events have occurred, and we can identify with the

actual people who acted at those moments, reappropriating their deeds as our own. . . . The historical national community is a community of obligation. Because our forebears have toiled and spilt their blood to build and defend the nation, we who are born into it inherit an obligation to continue their work, which we discharge partly towards our contemporaries and partly towards our descendants (quoted in Shweder, 2010, p 191).”

Social and cultural groups recount foundational narratives, in the form of historical truth, over time. A body of cultural psychological, and psychological anthropological work, has assumed these types of deep cultural social and moral norms lay at the basis of contemporary behaviours.

Remembering, and gaining legitimacy for a group’s conceptualization of the past, can be contested (Jovchelovitch, 2006; Märtsin, Wagoner, Aveling, Kadianaki, & Whittaker, 2011; Power, 2013; forthcoming; Wagoner and Brescó, 2016). For example, who is identified as either the victims or perpetrators of violent conflict depends on who is recalling and narrating the past (Brescó, 2009; Hammack, 2011; Power, 2011). This is because cultural groups, in unique social positions, often vie with one another about legitimate ways of interpreting the past. Therefore remembering and narrating previous events is not a neutral process: the past actively informs both the present and future.

Collective remembering is a cultural process undertaken by individuals located in social groups. Remembering is not a straightforward, linear, and passive recollection of the past. Memories are contested. The past is recreated. What gets remembered, how, when and by whom, is related to how individuals and groups orientate towards one another.

V. Relative Deprivation

Relative deprivation theory predicts that when an individual or group compares itself to salient individuals or groups, and during this comparison, finds itself lacking, discriminated against, or disadvantaged, this leads to angry frustration (Czajka and de Haas, 2012; Runciman, 1966; Pettigrew, 2015, 2016; Power, forthcoming a & b; Walker and Pettigrew, 1984). Despite an abundance of recent social scientific research, relative deprivation is not just a contemporary phenomenon.

Aristotle, in *Politics*, discussed the connection between what people want, and their penchant to revolt, when they do not achieve their desires. He suggested revolutions occur when societies fail to realize equality: “the motives of gain and honor also stir men up against each other not in order that they may get for themselves, as has been said before, but because they see other men in some cases justly, and in other cases unjustly, getting a larger share of them...for when the men in office show insolence and greed, people rise in revolt against one another and against constitutions that afford the opportunity for such conduct...for men form factions both when they are themselves dishonored and when they see others honored; and the distribution of honors is unjust when persons are either honored or dishonored against their deserts” (Aristotle, quoted in Davies, 1971, p. 87). Aristotle was not calling for blanket egalitarianism. He suggests revolutions can occur when people perceive social and economic injustices when they compare their circumstances to others in society and find they are lacking. The issue was not absolute economic inequality. It is the perception of unfairness that led to revolution.

Marx and Engels in, *The Manifesto of the Communist Party*, argued that people were more likely to revolt when their survival was threatened (Davies, 1971). This is congruent with a common intuition: people are likely to be frustrated, angry, and aggressive, when their very existence comes in to doubt. However, Marx also articulated a more nuanced concept that dovetails with the concept of relative deprivation. In *Wage, Labour and Capital* Marx (1849/1973) said “A house may be large or small; as long as the neighbouring houses are likewise small, it satisfies all social requirements for a residence. But let there arise next to the little house a palace, and the little house shrinks to a hut. The little house now makes it clear that its inmate has no social position at all to maintain.” People are unhappy in their contexts when their expectations are incongruent with their realities. Frustration arises as your neighbor builds an extension.

Alexis de Tocqueville (1857/1955) develops this concept further in the seminal *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*. He discovered that French workers revolted and overthrew their government when there was a reduction in taxes and a general weakening of Parisian rule throughout France. As a result of the tax reduction, the French expected their lives would improve, but they didn't. There was a gap between people's expectations and their lived experiences. This incited a rage that drove this historic revolution.

Davies (1962) generalizes that revolutions are most likely to occur when a prolonged period of objective economic and social development is followed by a brief period of economic and social decline. This theory highlighted the temporal component of relative deprivation and the generation of frustration. Revolutions often occur when a social

group's expectations of their economic or social status increases, but these increasing expectations go unfulfilled. This hypothesis chimes with contemporary social psychological evidence that largely supports the idea that people are loss averse; they weigh losses more heavily than gains (Tversky and Kahneman 1991).

However, Davies' (1962) theory would predict that people will revolt or protest during an economic downturn that occurred after a period of sustained economic growth, not during an economic recovery. This did not happen in Ireland following the 2008 economic crisis. Therefore it is important to develop the classic temporal account of relative deprivation theory.

The types of comparisons people make, to whom and why; feelings of perceived disadvantage; and the manifestation (if any) of this frustration, thus all depend on the wider historical, cultural, social, economic, and legal contexts and how these are orientated to, understood, interpreted, remembered and imagined. Runciman (1966) distinguished between relative deprivations felt when individuals compare themselves to one another and when groups compare themselves to other groups. In social movements, groups compare their lot to that of salient others. For example, in the Occupy Wall Street protests, the division is between those who are benefitting from the economic upturn, and those who are not: between the 1% and the 99%. One group compares itself to another, and in the process, finds itself at a disadvantage. Comparative groups are not necessarily actually or objectively better off than others. Perception of advantage, either real or imagined, is of importance. As Runciman states, "...relative deprivation means that the sense of

deprivation is such as to involve a comparison with the imagined situation of some other person or group” (1966, p. 12).

The cultural psychological tradition discussed earlier can provide the tools to develop the relative deprivation concept further. This oeuvre suggests there are psychological universals – everybody that ever existed wants, feels, thinks, acts, desires, judges what is right and wrong, - but these universals manifest in localized contexts (Cassaniti and Menon, 2017). As such, cultural and moral norms, informed by history and economics, made explicit in laws and institutions, inform the manifestation, if any, of all cognitions and behaviors. This has implications for fleshing out the bones of relative deprivation theory.

First, comparison groups are always bound in shifting social, cultural, historical, political, economic, and legal contexts. Who compares whom to who is a matter of understanding the context in which comparisons are made. For example, research by Czaika & de Haas (2012) illustrates predictable patterns of migrant workers who are willing to do the types of jobs locals won't, in worse working conditions, for less pay. The comparison group of the migrants, however, is not the locals in their host country. It is a comparison with their past; they compare themselves to their lives and conditions in the country they left. As for the migrant's children, however, they often feel deprived in relation to their peer-group: other children at school. This is because their comparison group is other children in their host country, not children in their parents' country of origin.

These contextual applications of relative deprivation theory are often done at the expense of controlled social psychological manipulations of variables (Pettigrew, 2015). The sociological and political science evidence highlights the importance of understanding the contextual and temporal issues involved in intergroup comparisons (Davis, 1962; de Tocqueville, 1857/1955) Comparisons are made in cultural contexts and involve people's orientations in relation to their past experiences as well as their present circumstances.

The potential expression of angry frustration also invites closer analysis. The manifestation – if any – of this frustration depends on the wider context. On a collective level, in more open democracies, for example, protest is legal and can be made manifest in unfolding social, political, legal, economic contexts (Moghaddam, 2016; Power, forthcoming b). In contrast, more closed societies, such as dictatorships, (Moghaddam, 2013; Popper, 1966), can prohibit peaceful assembly. On an individual level, angry frustration might have different manifestations, such as anti-social behaviour, crime, or mental illness (see Pettigrew, 2016).

Collective action, in the form of protests, riots, and revolutions, requires conditions beyond individual frustration to materialize (Warren & Power, 2015). In contrast to contemporary formulations of relative deprivation theory (Pettigrew, 2015; 2016) anger is just one manifestation of frustration. Collective remembering helps account intergroup comparisons in the present. It also helps explain how people use the past to motivate action in the present and orientate social movements towards imagining, and creating, a future more congruent with their desires.

VI. The psychology of imagination

As we have seen, recalling the past occurs at the intersection of mind and society, between people and world they inhabit. People use the past. And because the past is reconstructed, intentionally or not, it involves an element of imagining. This is because individuals, and societies, remember a selective version of what occurred, not the full actuality of it. In this way, collective remembering is a dynamic socio-cultural process (Bartlett, 1932; Halbwachs, 1992; Wagoner, 2017; Wertsch, 2008).

This view of remembering is influential in conceptualizing how and why people recall and for what reasons (Wagoner, 2013; 2017). In contrast, relatively little has been written about how and why people imagine the future and the impact of what is imagined on their psychological functioning in the present. A cultural and moral psychological framework can inform the process of how and why imagining occurs.

I utilize and develop the theory outlined by Zittoun and Gillespie (2015) to conceptualize the sociocultural process of imagining. In particular I draw on their “looping metaphor” to illustrate the ways in which imagining futures is a form of escape from the immediate present, often by reflecting on the past, to inform versions of possible futures. They state: “We propose that imagination is disengaging from the here-and-now of a proximal experience, which is submitted to causality and temporal linearity, to explore, or engage with alternative, distal experiences, which are not submitted to linear or causal temporality. An imagination event thus begins with a decoupling of experience and usually

concludes with a re-coupling. Thus, imagination is a loop” (Zittoun and Gillespie, 2015, p. 40).

Remembering is one process by which humans can escape the present and imagine future and possible worlds. Imagination occurs with a situated and embodied context with people transcending the here-and-now. The content of imagining is always contextual. Zittoun and Gillespie state: “Human imagination can orient the individual to their future utilizing their past” (2015, p. 29).

The future is not a *tableau rasa*; it is not a blank canvas. There are always tensions between actual realities and possible futures. Collective imagining put humans on the moon and might put them on Mars. But wars are fought, revolutions won and lost, for dreams of a utopic future that often become a dystopia (Zittoun and Gillespie, 2015). Different social groups have different conceptualizations for the future from their past and present locations. Asymmetries and injustices about how power and economic resources are distributed can underlie people’s conceptualizations for what the future should look like. Even if the fundamental desire of people’s imaginations is to make the world a better place, visions for a morally good life vary across time and cultures (Shweder, 1991; 2003). Conservatives and liberals clash on visions of acceptable economic inequality and what the future of capitalism ought to be. There are as many imaginations for the future as there are people who can imagine. Problems arise when these visions for a true, good, beautiful, efficient, and decent life clash.

Individual projections of the future, steeped in historical, social, economic, cultural, and legal contexts, impact human development on individual and collective levels. Escaping

fears, anxieties, and the weight of the past and present motivates people to first conceptualize the future, and then try to actualize it (Zittoun & Gillespie, 2015). The perception of unfair, unjust, or immoral developments in societies can have real consequences. A leader who curtails civil liberties is met with mass protests. Privatization of natural resources, like water, breeds discontent. Governments can be replaced, dictators can be overthrown, and war can be declared.

Yet, imagining the future can have unintended consequences (Merton, 1936). The gaps between what is, what can, should, and will be, are difficult to anticipate in reality. History, memories, power relations, and intergroup dominance all shape these gaps. Dictators can fall, only to be replaced by new ones. Wars bring death, destruction, and chaos long after the signing of peace treaties. Civil liberties can be regained, only to be lost again in another form or at another time. But imagination, as a process occurring in individuals and collectives, opens the possibility for social change, creates pathways to effect agency, and constructs routes toward alternative societies, ways of life, justice, and the fairer distribution of economic goods.

Imagining is a break from a person's flow of consciousness (Zittoun & Gillespie, 2015) It can be triggered by the creation of ruptures on an individual or social level, by boredom or overstimulation, by a need to generate novelty to progress in the present, or by voluntary uncoupling where one purposefully creates space to imagine. Imagining is a multi-faceted and core cultural psychological process (Wagoner, Brescó, and Awad, 2017; Vygotsky, 1931; Zittoun and Gillespie, 2015; Zittoun and Cerchia, 2013).

Imagining is different from creativity. Creativity, including the creation of objects and ideas, generates a thought or symbol that is judged, interpreted, or used by others (Glaveanu, 2010; 2017). Imagination can have external consequences, but this is not necessary for imagining to have occurred. No idea, object, symbol, or product needs to be created for imagination to have occurred. Imagining is integral to creativity, but it can occur without creation (Zittoun and Gillespie, 2015). But like creativity, imagining can be conceptualized within a cultural and moral framework.

Yet, imagining is not always a moral enterprise (Power, forthcoming c). One can imagine immoral or non-moral actions. Imagining is also not always public. It can be kept private or not be realized or made manifest in any public way (Zittoun & Gillespie, 2015). In this way, the Irish case study to be developed below will be one illustration of how moral values can drive a social movement. But it does not imply all social movements are morally motivated. Nor does it imply all imaginings are moral, or indeed, that they should be moral. The process of imagining, privately at least, often entails living beyond one's moral code - conceptualizing different moral worlds, achieved by different actions and thoughts. Imagining can equally be about forgetting and temporarily living beyond memories and the realities of everyday life.

Imagining the future can be pragmatic. Thinking of protectionist policies, the curtailment of civil liberties, or privatization of natural resources, such as water, can motivate protests against perceived unjust or unfair executive orders, policies, or government and corporate intentions (Power, forthcoming c). Imagining societies where these policies and orders are

not curtailed, where democratic means aren't used to restrain a monopoly on power, can motivate protests and the development of social movements.

Projections, in the form of imagining alternatives to collective economic misfortune, are just one example of how thoughts of the future can inform reactions and attitudes in the present. Images of a perceived unfair future lead to civic discontent in the near present. In this way, individual imagining of collective futures, much like collective remembering of the past, is a contested phenomenon. James (1890/2001) stated: "There are imaginations, not 'the Imagination,' and they must be studied in detail" (p. 170). A plurality of imaginings, as well as memories, complicates social organization and has implications for how groups orient and compare themselves to one another.

Groups can dominate each other (Sidanius and Pratto, 2001), and unequal power relations have implications for whose version of both the past and future gets articulated and realized. In Bolivia, the government's privatization of the country's water supply at the turn of the millennium was met with street protests, and the overthrowing of the government. Bolivian citizens imagined their water supply being controlled, monetized by outside corporations, to the exploitation and detriment of ordinary citizens. They rejected this future that was becoming ever more likely. Democracy can be conceptualized as a dialogue. And protesters can be seen as modulating the decisions –and their perceived future implications of these bills, laws, and orders - via civic engagement, like voting or demonstrating.

Imagining the future helps people's present comparisons in terms of feelings of relative deprivation. Moghaddam, Warren, and Vance-Cheng (2012) show how cognitive

alternatives can galvanize social movements. In the North African context – and perhaps globally – reference groups are not necessarily within physical boundaries. Salient groups can be online or imagined, and lifestyles can be misunderstood, misinterpreted, or idealized beyond actuality (Shweder and Power, 2013). Despite inaccuracies, these imagined other social realities could potentially create angry frustration (Runciman, 1966). The manifestation of rising expectations – either realized, partially, in full, or not at all, depends on broader contextual issues: how they are understood, and whether they are deemed acceptable or unfair.

How people remember the past has implications for how they orient in the present and towards the future. Collective remembering is informed by one’s social, cultural, economic, and historical position in the present. It is also informed by a feedback loop that exists between the past and how the future is imagined. The leaving of the present – via the process of imagination – has transformative implications for the here-and-now. People use the past and the future to sculpt their subjective realities.

This temporal aspect of human activity – remembering, relating, and imagining – has implications for how we understand human development, as a dynamic socio-cultural process. More specifically it provides a framework for conceptualizing social movements. It provides a model to think about the motivations behind, justifications for, and projections of, demonstrations, democratic engagement, and social change. I use these processes in Chapter 6 to understand some of the dynamics of protest in the Republic of Ireland. I return in the Conclusion to discuss these three interrelated cultural psychological processes as an integrative model.

VII. Summary

In this chapter I have reviewed the literature linking culture, economics and development within a temporal framework. I argue it is important to consider the role of culture to understand economic development. The *Equality – Difference Paradox* highlights the role of cultural diversity (ethnic, religious, and linguistic) and income inequality across the world. Cultural and moral psychology provides frameworks for thinking through the connections between cultural and economic issues, perceptions of fairness, and civic discontent and engagement. I reviewed theory and research in cultural psychology claiming foundational moral principles, common to people across cultures. Fairness is weighed differently amongst different cultural groups, but a sense of harm, justice, and fairness, seems common across the globe. Yet moral principles that might be universal are not applied, or made manifest, uniformly across cultures and time. The meanings and applications of moral principles, like fairness, vary. This raises the research questions at the heart of this study: under what conditions can and do people accept inequality without engaging in democratic activities to effect social change? And under what circumstances does their tolerance turn to voting, protest and other forms of civic engagement and discontent?

Before turning to these questions in the empirical chapters of my dissertation, the following chapter sets the scene in which my research project took place. I discuss the global financial crisis of 2008 and the Irish economy before and after the economic crisis.

Chapter 3

The 2008 global financial crisis and the Irish economy

Before turning to the empirical section of the dissertation, which details the *Deprivation – Protest Paradox*, that is, the observation the Irish protested about the state of the economy during a recovery not recession, it is necessary to set the stage. In this chapter I discuss the localized Irish context in which this paradox unfolded. First I discuss the European Union (EU) and its effect on Ireland. Next, I examine recent Irish economic history. I draw on data from the Irish Central Statistics Office (CSO) to provide an objective account of the Irish economic situation before and after the economic recession. I then discuss the 2008 global financial crisis. In particular I examine the Irish context with a view to understanding the moral and cultural psychological dynamics that help comprehend how Irish people understand and experience the economic downturn from their social positions. I present preliminary evidence to suggest Ireland differed from Spain in its citizens' reactions to imposed austerity. I use this as justification to identify the Irish situation as an interesting in-depth case study to investigate using qualitative methods. I conclude by introducing the first empirical chapter of the dissertation.

I. The European Union and Ireland

European integration has a long and violent history. Since the time of the Romans, conquerors and dictators tried to unite the continent through strategic alliances, ethnic cohesion and cleansing, and most often, the use of brute force (Dinan, 2014).

Arguably, the most noteworthy examples of violence used to forge integration resulted in two World Wars that engulfed the continent in the 20th century. As an enfeebled Europe limped out of this post-1945 devastation, European elites and citizens began to reflect on the carnage, brutality, and horror that characterized the continent during the first half of that century. The people of Europe were receptive to working towards a peaceful continent, integrated along economic lines to create social harmony (Dinan, 2014). The approach of European elites was to curb the dominance of national self-interest and to promote intra-continental peace, economic integration, and supranational governance.

When European countries started to cooperate economically in 1951, only Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands signed the trade agreement; however, a series of international economic trade agreements from the 1950's culminated in the establishment of the contemporary European Union (EU), founded in 1993, with the signing of the Maastricht Treaty. By July 2013, the EU had expanded to its current 28 member states. On June 23rd, 2016, Britain voted to leave the EU, which will reduce the number back to 27.

European unity does not mean European uniformity. Historical and contemporary European integration is not straightforward. Although there is an EU entity, an understanding of underlying cultural issues is essential to understanding European integration. The expanding political and fiscal union in Europe, motivated by a desire not to repeat the mistakes leading to two World Wars in the 20th Century, rests on centuries of interrelated but diverging national beliefs, values, desires, and morals—issues that lie at

the foundation of human economic practices (Eichengreen, 2011; Krugman, 2013; Power, 2015). Comprehending cultural psychological divergences in regions across the EU reveals foundational issues at the heart of the current eurozone crisis, precipitated by the global economic collapse in 2008.

The European Union is an interesting location to explore how cultural values are entwined with economic development. This is because all 28 member States (including the U.K.) are geographically contiguous and 19 of these countries share a single currency. However, there are centuries of divergence in terms of cultural traditions, values, worldviews, and internal heterogeneity as well as beliefs about what constitutes 'development' and cultural norms about what is good, true, and efficient (Shweder, 1991; 2003).

Within the EU, Ireland is a particularly interesting case to explore. It is a culturally homogenous country that benefitted greatly from the European Economic Community – the precursor to the EU - funding since joining in 1973. This led to a rapid increase in quality of life in a short amount of time because of funding which developed infrastructure and educational institutions and created jobs. The economic crisis precipitated in 2008 was acutely felt there. During the 2008 financial collapse, like other ailing EU countries, such as Spain, Greece, Portugal and Italy, the Irish had high taxes, high unemployment, and high rates of migration. Adding to, and driving these societal consequences, was the implementation of austerity measures. Still, unlike their European neighbours, the Irish did not have a strong protest movement (Power and Nussbaum, 2014). Unlike the Greeks, and the Spanish the Irish have not rioted. Instead, initially, they peacefully accepted imposed austerity (Power, 2015). They were the first country to exit a bailout package (a massive

loan for over 85 billion Euro) provided by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Time magazine ran with the lead story of “The Celtic Comeback” to frame the Irish willingness to endure economic decline and the associated austerity measures (Mayer, 2012). Some insights in to the Irish response to austerity can be gleaned from historical reflection.

II. Irish Economic History

Since 1802 Ireland was a colony in a collective known as The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. But Ireland gained independence from Britain following a war in 1922. During these intervening years, there were a number of Irish uprisings against British rule. The most significant rebellion occurred in 1916, whose centenary was marked on Easter weekend, 2016. The 1916 Easter Rising was a significant historical event. A group of Irish rebels, motivated for the desire to create an independent Republic, free from British rule, staged a rebellion against British armed forces, in various locations around the country, but primarily in the capital city, Dublin. The epicenter of this rebellion by a group of poorly armed women and men occurred at the General Post Office (GPO) in Dublin. It is centrally located in O’Connell Street (this street is named after a Daniel O’ Connell (1775 – 1847) who advocated for Irish-Catholic rights in Westminster). As such, the GPO is a salient location in Irish history. The 1916 Easter rising was initially deemed a failure with many rebels being killed or captured, and much of central Dublin left in ruin. However, Irish public opinion turned when 16 leaders of the Easter Rising – the signatories of a new Irish constitution – were sentenced to death, and ultimately shot – by British forces in Kilmainham Gaol, Dublin. This precipitated the war of independence between Ireland and

Britain (1919 – 1921). This war ended after a controversial treaty was signed by the nascent Irish government, after being ratified by the majority of Irish people in a democratic referendum. The treaty split the country between 26 counties of an Irish Free State – who still remained in the commonwealth, and loyal to the British crown - and 6 counties which constitute present day Northern Ireland, which formed a separate entity. Later, a civil war broke out (1922-1923) between pro-treaty and anti-treaty forces in the 26 counties of the Irish Free State.

The effects of this period of Irish history are still felt. Two major political parties – Fianna Fail (traditionally anti-treaty) and Fine Gael (traditionally pro-treaty) emerged following the civil war. One of these two political parties has been the dominant party since then, albeit, at times, with the support of smaller parties to guarantee a parliamentary majority. In an attempt to reduce Irish exposure to the British economy, successive Irish governments favored protectionist policies following independence from Britain (Barry, 2014). During this time the Irish income per capita was estimated to be 55% of the UK in the 1920's, rising to only 60% in the 1960's. Protectionist policies, such as tariff protection and restrictions on foreign ownership, resulted in the economic depression, followed by mass out migration in the 1950's. Economic policy needed to change. In 1958, a document titled *Economic Development* was developed by the government and aimed to reverse Irish economic policy. This plan resulted in the genesis of a low corporate rate of tax that continues to be a controversial mainstay of Irish economic policy to this day. For example, the headquarters of many multi-national companies, such as Facebook and Google, are in Dublin. A low rate of corporate tax from the 1950's set the stage for further trade

liberalization and a diversified range of trading partners. From 1961, entry to the EU was a keystone objective in Irish foreign policy. Ireland benefitted greatly from joining the European Economic Community in 1973. Ireland joined the single currency – The Euro – on January 1st, 1999. The modernization of Ireland since the 1970's culminated in an unprecedented economic boom during the late 1990's and in to the 2000's when Ireland became known as "The Celtic Tiger". Given this sharp upturn in the Irish economy, the global economic downturn in 2008 was particularly dramatic in the Irish context. Economic data obtained from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) illustrates the strength and decline of the Irish economy during the 2000's.

Figure 7 shows fluctuations in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) values in Ireland beginning in 2000. GDP represents the total value added in the production of goods and services in the country. It is a key indicator of the strength of the domestic economy. GDP figures, reported in constant prices, remove the effect of price changes and are a reliable measure of economic growth. The graph below shows increasing economic growth in the Republic of Ireland from the early 2000's until the economic crash of 2008. Following the financial crisis, the Irish economy stagnated, and only began recovering in 2013. The GDP figures show strong economic growth in 2013. As we will see, this growth coincided with anti-austerity protests in Ireland. Crucially for what is to follow, people did not protest during the economic recession when GDP began to fall in 2008.

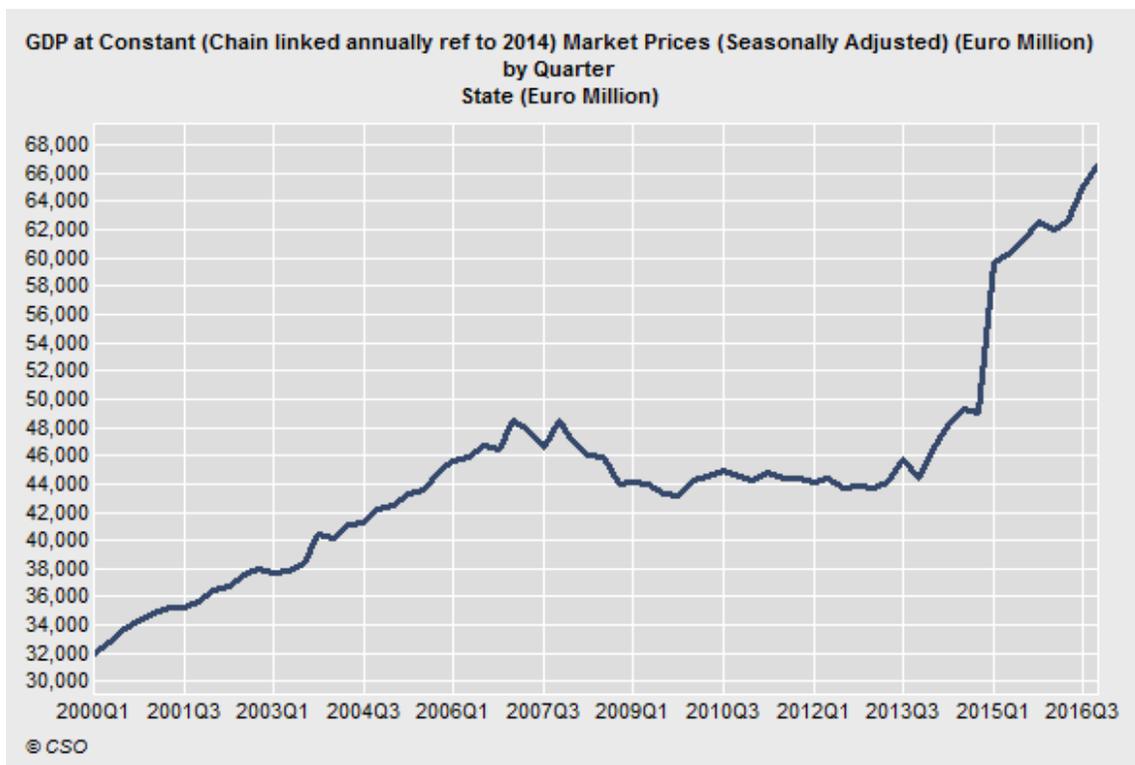


Fig. 7 shows the pattern of GDP in the Republic of Ireland this millennium. Source: I generated this graph from data on the Central Statistics Office website (www.cso.ie).

Figure 8 illustrates the pattern of Gross National Product (GNP) in Ireland since the turn of the millennium. GNP is the sum of the GDP and net factor income from the rest of the world, which is the difference between investment income and labour income earned abroad by Irish residents and companies (inflows) and similar income earned in Ireland by non-residents (outflows). In short, it is an indicator of the strength of the Irish economy abroad. The GNP figures presented here are constant prices. This removes the effect of price changes and is another reliable measure used to calculate economic growth. The Irish economy grew throughout the 2000's, and as indicated by the GNP figures then fell following the global financial crash in 2008, only to significantly recover from 2013 onwards.

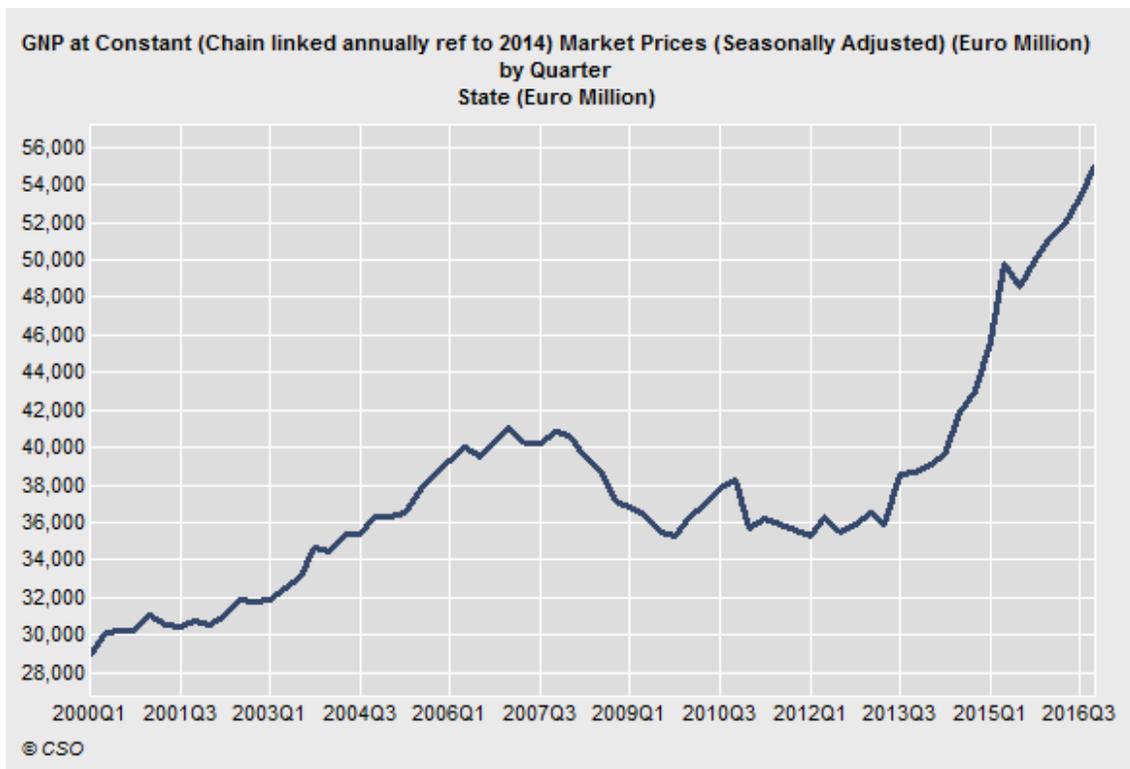


Fig. 8 shows the pattern of GNP in the Republic of Ireland this millennium. Source: I generated this graph from data on the Central Statistics Office website (www.cso.ie).

The patterns of GDP and GNP correlate with official employment numbers. Figure 9 illustrates the number of people employed in Ireland since the year 2000. The numbers in employment are measured in the Quarterly National Household Survey. A person is considered to have employment if they worked in the week before the survey for one hour or more for payment. It also includes all people who had a job but were not at work because of vacation or illness. There was a steady increase in the amount of people employed in Ireland during the “Celtic Tiger.” Unemployment was 15.2% in January 2012. This was at the height of the economic crisis. This figure might be artificially low, because people migrated from Ireland, relinquishing their right to social welfare, meaning they are

not recorded as being unemployed. As of March 2017, the unemployment rate was now 6.4% of the population.



Fig. 9 shows the rate of employment in Ireland from the year 2000. At the height of the “Celtic Tiger” period – the economic boom in Ireland from the late 1990’s into the 2000’s – there is increased employment. However, employment rates drop as the economy went into recession from 2007. Employment rates began increasing from 2012. Source: I generated this graph using data from the Central Statistics Office (www.cso.ie).

It is a striking observation that during an economic recession – signified by decreased GDP, GNP, and increased unemployment, Irish people didn’t take to the streets to protest. They demonstrated in the context of an economic recovery. To glean insight into this paradox, it is necessary to situate the Irish case in a broader European context.

III. Eurozone crisis and Irish reactions

Economists give various explanations for the causes of the 2008 economic crisis—easy availability of credit, property bubbles, poor regulation, unscrupulous banking practices, people manipulating the system—but find it harder to explain the varying reactions to the crisis. The economies of Spain, Greece, and Ireland collapsed, but their residents reacted very differently to the outset of various austerity policies. In the first two countries, austerity measures were met with large-scale demonstrations and riots. In contrast, the residents of Ireland did not take to the streets. As such, the Irish case, on a surface level at least, proves to be different from some EU neighbours and warrants closer attention.

Figure 10 shows the GDP per capita for Ireland, Greece, Spain, and the average GDP for the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OCED) countries that are represented by the black line. The Irish economy – the roaring Celtic Tiger – yielded higher levels of GDP for the Irish as opposed to these other countries by the turn of the millennium. The trend is for economic growth throughout until the economic crash began to be felt in 2007 – 2008. The Irish economy performed higher than Greece, Spain, and the OCED average until 2016, despite the recession and subsequent recovery. This might help account for the differences in reactions to the economic crisis in Ireland, Spain and Greece, for example. The Irish might have accepted austerity differently to some Spanish and Greeks, because the impact of budgetary cuts and increased taxes were felt more acutely in Spain and Greece because they had lower GDP per capita to the Irish. Yet the decline in GDP in Ireland was starker than in Greece and Spain, despite the higher starting point. The

economic recovery – evidenced by the increase in GDP per capita – was also more forceful in Ireland in comparison to Greece, Spain, and the OCED average over the same period.

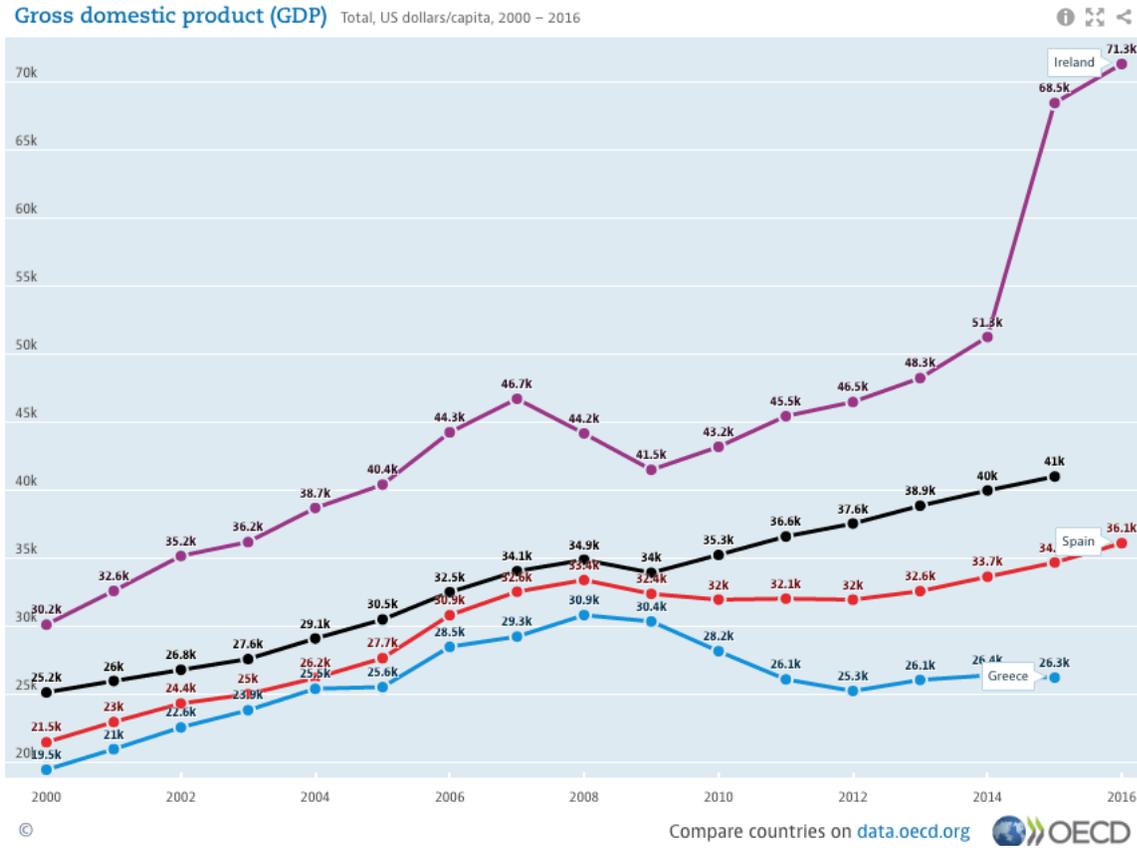


Fig.10. This graph shows the GDP of Ireland (purple), Spain (red), Greece (blue) and the average of OECD (black) countries from the turn of the millennium. Source: this graph is an original construction and was generated from data on the OCED website (<https://data.oecd.org/>).

If a base rate of GDP per capita explained why the Irish didn't protest during a decline like the Spanish and Greeks, it should also predict that the Irish felt proportionately happier than the others during the economy recovery. But people do not always make rational decisions based on available objective evidence. The Irish endured a starker economic downturn than the Greeks and Spanish, albeit from a starting point of higher GDP per

capita, and were privileged with an even more robust economic recovery than these comparable others. Yet, the Irish actually protested during their economic recovery.

Comparing the Irish and Spanish cases in detail is revealing. Similarly to the Spanish, the Irish were relatively satisfied with the economic performance in the years preceding the global financial crisis. Both countries had booming construction and tourism industries.

Figure 11 shows that the Irish in particular were satisfied with the country's economy, yet with the onset of the global financial crisis, satisfaction dropped from 65% to below 45%.

The majority of Spanish were happy with their economy too, yet this satisfaction dropped from 55% just before the financial crisis to Irish levels in 2008. The Spanish reported greater satisfaction with their economic performance after the 2008 recession. Curiously the Irish report further dissatisfaction as the economic crisis worsened from 2008 -2010.

Their satisfaction improved after the government that oversaw the economic recession was voted out of power in 2011.

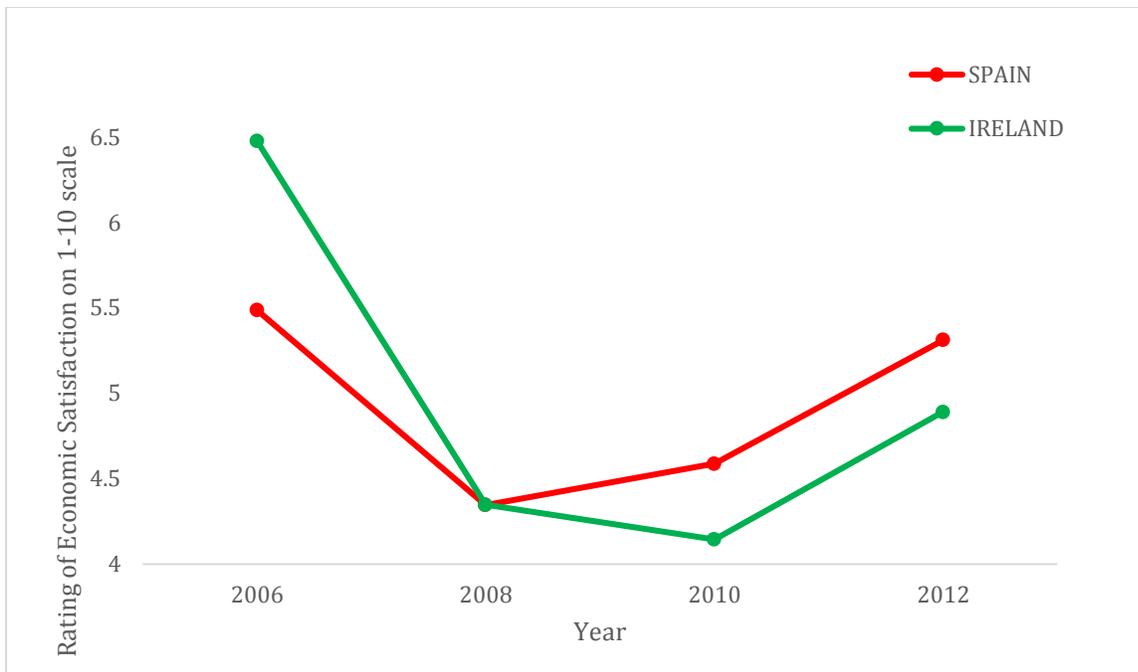


Fig. 11 Satisfaction with the Economy. European Social Survey data comparing levels of Irish and Spanish satisfaction with their economy before, during and after the economic crisis. This survey takes place every two years across EU countries with large, random and representative samples of participants (min n= 1,800 per country). Source: original construction.

There are ways to make sense of this difference. People were unhappy when the economy collapsed in these two European countries. Yet, there were divergences in a number of democratic activities available to Irish and Spanish to create social change. Figure 12, for example, illustrates that the Irish show less support for contacting politicians than the Spanish when the economic recession was unfolding and austerity measures (or as one economist participant later referred to as “fiscal readjustment programs”) were being introduced. The Spanish, unlike the Irish, changed their government during 2008-2010. This might account for the reduction in the Irish wanting to contact politicians during this period. They didn’t trust them or perhaps they didn’t think they could generate economic or social change (Power, 2015).

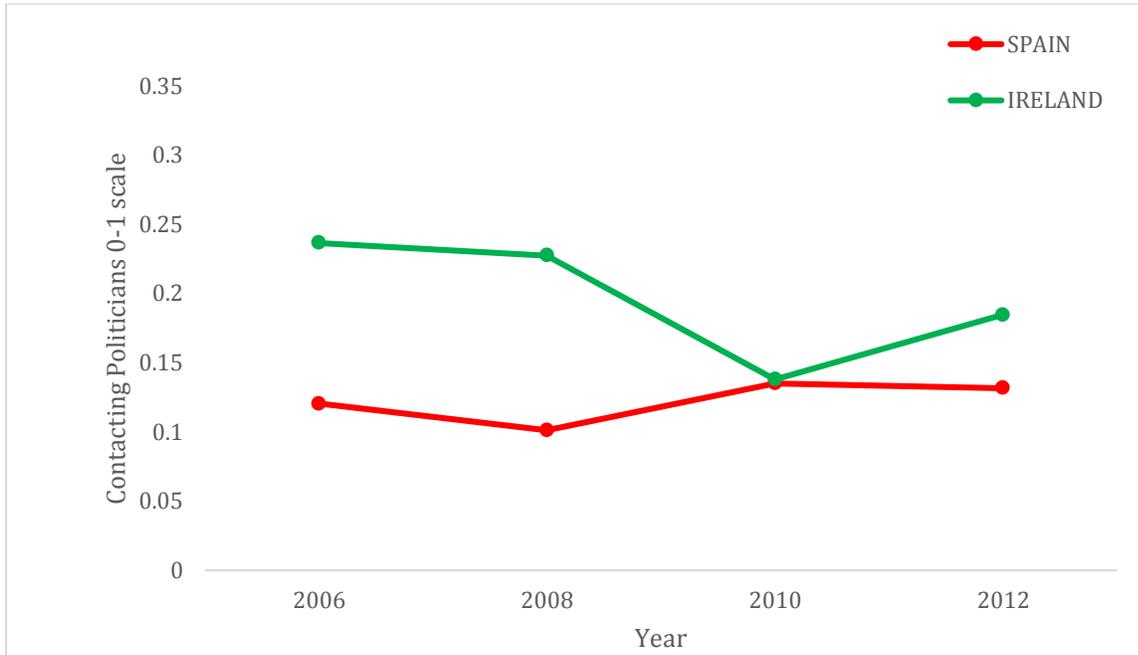


Fig. 12. Political Engagement. The Irish, unlike the Spanish, engaged with politicians to a lesser degree than they previously did during a time when austerity measures were being introduced. Source: this is an original construction from European Social Survey data.

The Irish, in contrast to the Spanish, showed decreased support when the Irish government was forced towards austerity, such as signing petitions. This dynamic is illustrated in Figure 13.

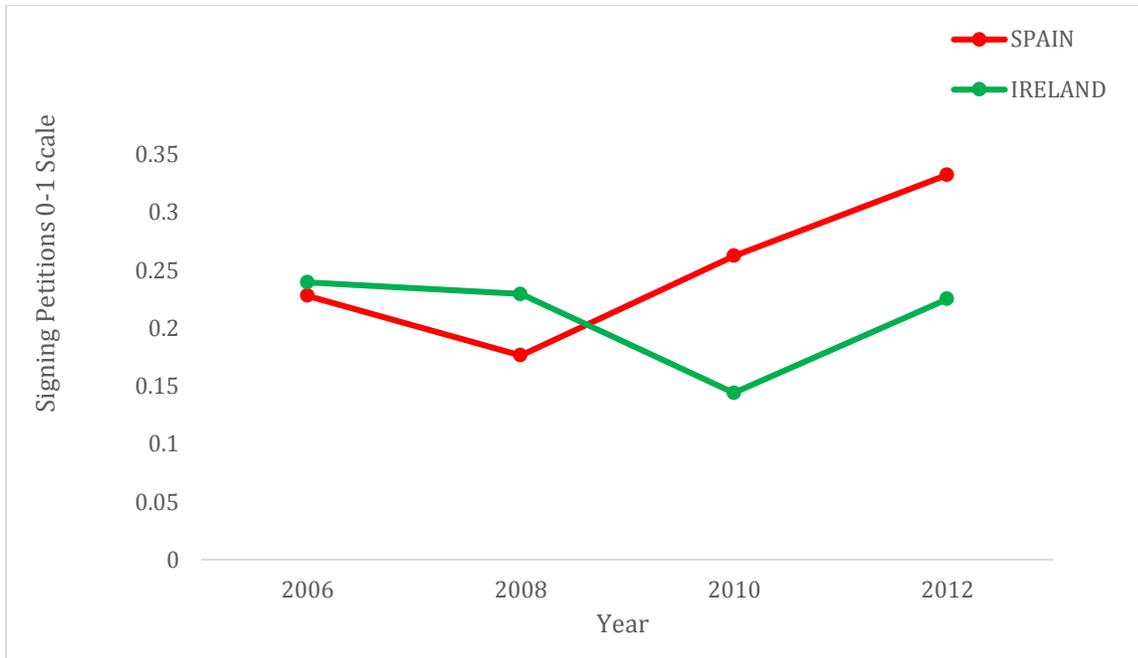


Fig. 13. Willingness to Petition. There is a decrease in the number of people who said they would sign petitions during the unfolding economic crisis in Ireland. The Spanish, in contrast, show an increase in this democratic activity during this time. Source: this is an original construction from European Social Survey data.

Similarly, during the crucial period of 2008-2010, the Irish didn't take to the streets to protest the introduction of new taxes, increased levels of pre-existing taxes, cuts to the public service, increased migration, unemployment, and under-employment. Figure 14 reveals the Spanish, although having a higher level of support for demonstrating before the 2008 economic crisis increased their support for demonstrating. The Irish did not.

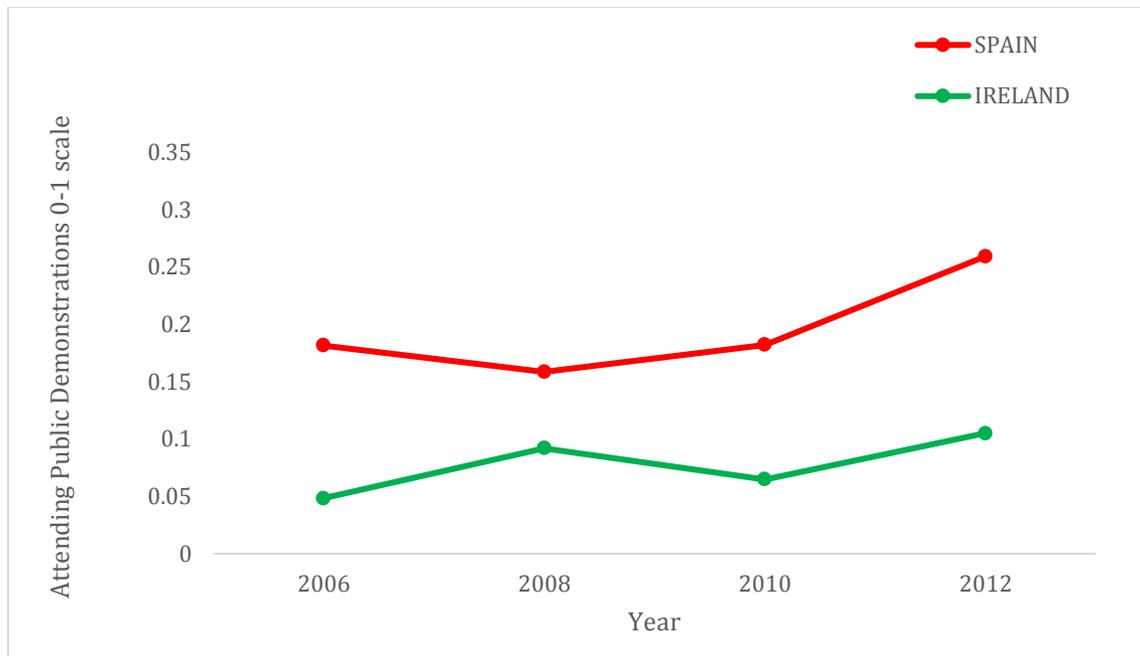


Fig. 14. Support for Protest. The Irish did not increase their support for protest following the introduction of austerity measures following the global economic collapse of 2008. Source: this is an original construction from European Social Survey data.

In sum, before the global economy collapsed, the Irish and Spanish were both relatively happy with their countries' economies. But with the fall of the US financial sector in 2007 – symbolized by the collapse of Lehman Brothers – the knock-on effects caused recession in some interrelated economies. The Irish and Spanish economies suffered decline, especially in terms of the construction and tourism sectors, leading to economic dissatisfaction. Curiously, the Irish didn't engage in some potentially democratic activities to effect social, economic, or political change, to a markedly increased degree. They didn't contact politicians, perhaps because they didn't trust them, or because they harbored some blame towards them for the economic crisis. But they also didn't sign petitions, calling for the removal of this government. And they didn't take to the streets to demonstrate. Intuitively you might think people would act like the Spanish. Why did the Irish respond this way? We

will look next at some commentators who have tried to articulate reasons for the Irish response.

IV. Irish reports

In the New York Times bestseller – *Boomerang* – the journalist, Michael Lewis, offered an influential and plausible explanation of the different cultural responses to the financial crisis (2012). Lewis observes, that unlike the public in Spain and Greece, the Irish did not immediately vote out the conservative business-friendly in-power party, Fianna Fail, until February 2011. This was three-and-a-half years after the fiscal meltdown. He traces the origins of Ireland’s emergence as the success story of the EU from the late 1990’s through to 2008. This economic boom was largely due to increased tax intake from the construction industry. However, it was later revealed that the six Irish banks all needed to be bailed out because both property developers and members of the public had accrued too much debt that they couldn’t repay once it became clear that demand for housing dramatically decreased. This allowed Lewis to conclude, “Left alone in a dark room with a pile of money, the Irish decided what they really wanted to do with it was to buy Ireland *from each other*” (p. 84, emphasis in original). The result of this bailout was that the Irish needed to borrow 85 billion euros to pay for the everyday running of the country. Ireland borrowed the money from the IMF, from the EU, and from the European Central Bank (ECB), a collection of organizations known as “the troika.” Dovetailing with the central theses of both *Culture Matters* and *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations*, discussed in Chapter 2, Lewis remarks: “which way entire nations jumped when the money was made freely available to them

obviously told you a lot about them: their desires, their constraints, their secret sense of themselves. How they reacted when the money was taken away was equally revealing” (p. 122). In contrast to Greece, where the people wanted no part in repaying debts accrued by the government and violently protested against being implicated in their repayment, the Irish had an alternative response. Despite some minor protests in the autumn of 2008, the Irish did not organize a strong protest movement, nor riot against agents of the state. Seemingly, the Irish passively responded to this large debt incurred by the banks, and implicitly agreed to repay it, at their own expense. Why? Lewis fails to connect his observations on the Irish collective cultural mentality and his observations of the Irish response to austerity. He remarks - “The famous gift of the gab is a cover for all the things they aren't telling you” (p. 127). However, he doesn't suggest in-depth reasons why the Irish have passively responded and how this might be connected to what is omitted from what they don't articulate.

Insight into Irish history and cultural mentalities can be gleaned from ethnographic work, such as Nancy Scheper-Hughes's *Saints, Scholars and Schizophrenics* (1981/2001). This ethnography examines the effects of emigration from a small rural town in the West of Ireland on villagers remaining behind. Scheper-Hughes finds that social isolation, the role of the Catholic Church as the dominant moral force, unwanted celibacy and perceived harmful child rearing practices all affect mental health, especially the onset of schizophrenia. This classic and controversial ethnographic work is skillfully located in the historical context of net migration, particularly of young people, from Ireland (Scheper-Hughes, 1981/2001). Moreover, Scheper-Hughes delineates the effect of the dominant

narratives about the morally good life ingrained from the teachings of the Catholic Church on the lived experiences of the villagers in “Ballybran” This fictitious name plays on the idea of “ban-martra” (white martyrdom) which Scheper-Hughes explains is a slow ‘death to self’ through self-denial manifested in celibacy, abstinence, fasting, and serving penance for one’s sins. Bakan (1968) argues that Irish Christianity overcomes essential loneliness and individual pain by re-interpreting pain as meaningful, and suffering as being redemptive. Throughout this thickly descriptive work Scheper-Hughes reveals the importance of the moral premise that ‘you reap what you sow’ and the negative effects this has on mental health. Abstinence and celibacy are attempts to avoid “sowing” and thus earn a place in heaven in the afterlife. Contemporary ethnographers have developed Irish cultural models and their effect on the distinct lived experiences of groups within the country. Sullivan (1990) investigated how alcoholics and depressed Irish adults understand the onset and manifestations of their mental health problems in the local Irish context. Her respondents drew on historically embedded ideas to describe ways of being Irish. She also identifies the moral foundation of ‘you reap what you sow’ and a widespread and profound belief that this form of morality expresses itself in the notion of ‘redemptive suffering’ in the Irish psyche. Sullivan traces this moral premise to the Catholic Church, which highlights having to remedy previous moral transgressions by confessing sins and serving penance: “The more you suffer the quicker you get to heaven” as one respondent commented (Sullivan, 1990, p. 130).

Understanding how Irish people responded to this economic crisis, and associated austerity, provides an opportunity to comprehend more broadly how people understand

and experience societal phenomena from their unique socio-cultural and moral perspectives. Moreover, it provides an opportunity to explore the ways in which there are similarities and divergences in the types of explanations, moral reasons, and justifications people give to explain such crises. The Irish case highlights, for example, the ways in which people do, and do not engage, in democratic activities; how they orient towards their government, agents of the State, and other social groups within the nation from their cultural and moral perspectives.

The Irish case study provides one empirical example to explore these issues in a localized setting. In 2013 Ireland had a population of nearly 4.6 million. It is a relatively homogenous country (Alesina, et al., 2003). One study ranked Ireland as number 134th from a list of 159 countries in terms of ethnic diversity (Fearon, 2003). Why the Irish protested during an economic recovery rather than a recession is a paradox I aim to understand in this dissertation.

V. *The Deprivation - Protest Paradox*: Preview of the empirical chapters

In Chapters 4 – 6 I explain why the Irish protested during an economic recovery rather than a recession. This is the *Deprivation - Protest Paradox*. These empirical chapters draw on multiple psychological methods, at different levels of analysis. I describe and explain choice of methods in each chapter rather than having one stand-alone chapter on methodology.

In the first empirical study I conducted semi-structured interviews with a group of public elites in Ireland. I performed a thematic analysis of this transcribed interview data and revealed three interrelated themes used by this group to help explain why the Irish initially accepted austerity measures. Next I conducted a follow up study with a polar opposite group of Irish people – young unemployed Irish adults. Ten interviews were conducted in this preliminary study. The combined data from the interviews with public elites and unemployed youth inform several hypotheses that were tested using culturally sensitive correlational and experimental studies. The conflicting results of these studies are reported and discussed in Chapter 5.

Taken together, the results from Chapters 4 and 5 suggest some of the cultural and moral psychological reasons why the Irish accepted hardship and suffering as austerity unfolded. But that was then. Times changed. In Ireland the economy recovered, and in this context, people began protesting. I explain why in Chapter 6. I show how incongruence between people's expectations of an economic recovery and their lived realities went unfulfilled. This led to dissatisfaction and legitimized protest. People expected to reap the benefits of enduring hardship. But found it was perceived that a minority of wealthy people, not ordinary people, who reaped the benefits. Data for this chapter comes from random sampled interviewing at a series of national demonstrations in Dublin, Ireland. It was also informed by urban ethnographic fieldwork. I end the dissertation by developing a "big three theory of social movements" to understand why people protest; by developing the S.A.G.E. model for conducting social psychological research; I end by reflecting on the

limitations and potentials of my research and by discussing the psychology of water distribution.

Evidence presented in this chapter suggested the Irish, unlike the Spanish, accepted austerity without protesting. Although the survey has a broad and random representative sample in different waves over time, the results warrant further investigation. Why did the Irish seem to accept austerity and not protest, as other EU nations seemed to do? What explains this seemingly non-intuitive behaviour? In the next chapter, I use interview data with a group of twenty public elites, and ten unemployed young adults, in the Republic of Ireland to glean insights, from a psychological perspective, into why the Irish didn't take to the streets, unlike some European neighbors, when austerity measures were introduced.

Chapter 4

The Elites and the Unemployed

In this chapter I examine the role collective memories play in mitigating civil unrest since the 2008 Irish economic recession. I interviewed 20 highly influential people in the public eye in Ireland (i.e., TV and radio presenters, journalists, economists, outspoken academics and members of prominent financial institutions) to comprehend what aspects of the past they draw on to narrate the causes, consequences, and solutions to the economic recession. In their accounts, key themes recurred. Current migration from Ireland is seen as a legitimate continuation of a historical response to hardship. My participants distanced contemporary peaceful Irish responses to austerity from previous violence on the island of Ireland. The central moral organizing principle that “you should reap what you sow,” and the endurance of collective suffering as a consequence of this moral foundation, is another factor used to explain the peaceful Irish response to austerity. On a theoretical level, this research suggests ways in which collective memories are used to inhibit violence and offer plausible alternatives about how to act when faced with crises.

The way in which collective memory is narrated has implications for understanding how people act in the present and orient toward the future (Bartlett, 1932; Halbwachs, 1925/1992; Power, 2011; forthcoming a, b, c; Wagoner, 2013, 2017; Wagoner & Gillespie, 2014; Wertsch, 1997; 2008). Conceptualizing memory as a dynamic process is part of a larger oeuvre of cultural psychological literature that aims to understand individuals in context (Shweder, 1991, 2003; Shweder & Power, 2013). Narratives are important social

tools in forming a temporal account of how individuals are situated and develop within sociocultural worlds (Bruner, 1990, 2002; Hammack, 2011; Shweder, 2008). They are cultural tools by which people make sense of their place within developing social, cultural, and temporal worlds. In this way they help in forming temporal accounts of the past, present, and future.

Master narratives are the dominant and most influential frameworks that groups use to make sense of their current position and future outlook (Hammack, 2011; Shweder, 2008). Shweder (2008) argued that although heterogeneity of narratives exist in each culture, it is possible to trace dominant themes that help define a group's cultural psychology. This is because prevailing collective memories of the past, and their implications for acting and being in the present and future, act as overarching organizing principles. They give meanings and values to past experiences.

Despite numerous media analyses of the economic recession from an economic perspective, little research has explored the cultural psychological reasons underlying the peaceful Irish response to imposed austerity. What is the impact of a relatively culturally homogeneous population in explaining an Irish response to austerity? What is the role of collective memory, and the ways it is narrated, in explaining the general Irish reaction to austere measures?

I investigated the master narratives told by people in the public eye in Ireland about their understandings of the causes, consequences, and solutions to the current economic

downturn. Before presenting my analysis of interview data for this group, I outline and justify my methodological approach. In my conclusion, I draw my methodological approaches in these empirical chapters together and I articulate the S.A.G.E. model of social psychological research (Power, et al. forthcoming).

I. Method

I conducted semi-structured interviews with 20 people in the public eye in the Republic of Ireland in summer and winter of 2013 at a time and location most convenient for them. I identified suitable respondents directly and through referral.

The interview schedule developed as an iterative process. All interviews were recorded and transcribed, and note taking after interviews further contextualized these findings. Only pseudonyms are used in the analysis. I conducted a thematic analysis of the interview transcripts (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013; Clarke & Braun, 2013). Participants were all prominent social actors and commentators in the Republic of Ireland. All were highly educated and employed in prestigious and relatively high-paying jobs, and all produced frequent print, social, visual, or audio media commentary to the public about the causes and consequences of, and solutions to, the economic recession. My interviewees included a mixture of radio and TV commentators, economists, analysts, journalists, outspoken academics, and members of prominent fiscal institutions.

Often, these people held positions in multiple categories. It is important to understand the

perspectives of people in the public eye because this group comprises people who regularly engage with the media to transmit their understandings of aspects of this downturn to the population of Ireland. Therefore, this group was in a unique position to form and disseminate “master narratives” of the Irish response to the recession.

II. Thematic Analysis

This section discusses in detail the recurrent themes that emerged in these interviews.

Part One: Migration.

Ireland has a long history of migration (Gillespie, Kadianaki & O’Sullivan-Lago, 2012). This theme was discussed by each of my 20 respondents. Migration was represented as a “safety valve” to release pressure on government expenditure and to help maintain the peace with those who chose to stay in Ireland. This metaphor of a safety valve is not unique to the present crisis. Instead, it is ingrained within Irish history. The extract below shows the way in which Dan, a senior economist and self-proclaimed “talking-head,” uses a template of the past to make sense of the present:

“Now you can think back at the half million who emigrated from 1946 to ’61; if they hadn’t emigrated you would have had over the period, on average, 250,000 young very angry and annoyed people. You wouldn’t have had the money to pay them decent social welfare, so what would have happened to society? Would it have just meandered along [suggesting there might have been civil unrest]? So the phrase is often used “safety value of emigration” that stops the pressure.”

During eras of previous economic hardship, migration was also a plausible solution. In a similar way to that suggested by Wertsch (1997), Dan used a preexisting historical framework of the Irish migrating during times of stress to frame his narrative of current emigration. It reduces the pressure on the government to pay mostly young unemployed people social welfare that it cannot afford to. Migration seems to be a better alternative to having 250,000 “angry and annoyed people” at home.

Migration acts as a method of reducing societal and fiscal pressure in Irish society. This is because when people leave Ireland they relinquish their right to claim social welfare. This historically ingrained pattern of dealing with economic decline has contributed to a pattern of choosing migration rather than the venting of anger on the streets in the form of protests or riots. Tom, who is a hugely influential talk show host, also highlighted the effect migration has on Ireland. The Irish, he said, have responded to the recession “with great forbearance.” With specific reference to migration he said:

“If you bear in mind that people will say ‘look at Portugal, or look at Greece or Spain,’ I mean they got into the streets and went protesting. It hasn’t happened here [in Ireland]. I suspect two reasons for this. One, we still have a pretty good social welfare system. And second, migration, which if it wasn’t there, a lot of angry people would still be here putting more pressure on the social welfare system, and in turn meaning there would be fewer benefits, or lower benefits, and they might be in a position of protesting and people would be very angry.”

Tom gives two interrelated reasons that further develop the metaphor of the “safety valve.” In his view, migration from Ireland, unlike other European countries, takes the fiscal pressure off the government. This has a dual effect. Migration means potentially angry and unemployed people have left. It also suggests people who stayed, particularly those who

are unemployed, have access to the same level of social welfare as before the economic downturn. The implications of this extract, as well as discourse from other respondents, are that migration helps to alleviate societal unrest. Moreover, the analysis reveals the way in which participants use frameworks of the past to understand contemporary elaborations of the culturally legitimized, and historically ingrained, pattern of migration during times of hardship. This alleviates some of the potential for civil unrest among those who stayed. According to my respondents, mass migration is the first reason why the Irish have not organized a strong protest movement or rioted against the state.

The next section of the analysis suggests another plausible reason. Several respondents spoke at length about the reemergence of community in Ireland. Because of strong social cohesion, informed by the weight of Irish history, and ways of being Irish, the Irish feel they are “all in it together,” as one person in a prominent fiscal institution told me.

Consequently, rioting is not represented as being a legitimate social action. Underlying and motivating this representation is an explicit rejection of past violence and a distancing of the current crisis from the previous paramilitarism in Ireland.

Part Two: Community and social cohesion.

Previous literature linking cultural values and economics has highlighted the impact this association has in terms of social cohesion (Jindra, 2014; Putnam, 2007). Often the relationship between the two is complex and varies due to context and levels of diversity. Ireland is a relatively homogeneous country (Alesina, 2003; Fearon, 2003). Given

predictions based on previous literature on the *Equality–Difference Paradox*, the expectation is that Ireland, as a homogeneous country, would have a strong sense of community and fairly even income distribution. This pattern was indeed evident throughout my interview data. In explaining the sense of community in contemporary Ireland, my interviewees often referred to Irish history.

In particular, modern Ireland is distanced from the memories of violence, or “The Troubles” (the 30 years of violence between 1968 and 1998 in Northern Ireland). Instead Ireland is represented as having a strong sense of community. As one respondent, Sean, said to me, “We now do our blood letting at the ballot box.” The two following extracts are representative of a broader corpus of data that explore a distancing of the violent past from the peaceful and democratic present response. Patrick, a radio and TV broadcaster, had this to say on the matter of the Irish response to the recession:

“I don’t think we are pushovers. I think there is a broad picture of what needs to be done, and I think people realize the point: What is the point of burning down EU offices, or a bank, or whatever? Who ends up paying for that? We do. The taxpayer... They [the Irish people] saw rioting as a no-brainer—you just don’t do it. And remember as well, we come from a background where we have lived tragedy after tragedy—rubber bullets, people being killed deliberately, accidentally, tit for tat, stupidity, decent places being burnt to the ground, decent schools, and people have said, “No, no, we are not going down that road.” It’s not because we are pushovers. I think it’s because we are intelligent.”

This extract reveals an interesting part of the Irish master narrative about responding to the current crisis. Patrick draws on the past, the “tragedy after tragedy” in Northern Ireland, to make sense of current actions and orient behavior in the future. He explicitly recalls the events of the past to reject any repetition of them in the present. He thinks the

Irish public also agrees with this version of events: “They saw rioting as a no-brainer.” It is seen as a rational choice not to riot or protest— because the rioters will indirectly end up paying for this destruction— but the matter is steeped in the history of Irish conflict and a strong will not to have more violence during this and future crises. Earlier in the interview, when I asked him why the Irish haven’t rioted, he said:

“We don’t want them fucking rioting. I don’t want to see a pregnant bank worker burnt to death like in Greece. Does anyone know that lady’s name? No. Is there anyone advocating that we should be out throwing bricks? It’s nonsense, it’s absolute nonsense. The other reason, I think one of the things that has been demonstrated over the past 5 years is that the sense of community is greater than we thought it was. One reason why people don’t throw bricks or throw petrol bombs is that more likely than not they know the Guard [member of the Irish police force] on the other side or they know someone who knows someone who is a Guard. There is still that sense of community. Why should I throw a brick at my neighbor’s child? Why should I throw a petrol bomb at my cousin’s husband?”

In this extract Patrick is making three points. First, he defines Irishness in relation to what it is not: The Irish are not like the Greek protesters who would murder a pregnant banker. Again, there are echoes in this extract of distancing the Irish from the weight of the paramilitarism of the past. As a nation, the Irish have a new focus: on the development of communal spirit in times of hardship, such as harsh budgetary cuts across the board. It is this sense of shared community that stops Irish people from throwing bricks and petrol bombs against people in the local community that they are connected with, such as the local Guard, or “my neighbor’s child.” This purposeful distancing of memories of the past from the present where there is strong social cohesion is further developed in other extracts.

Like Patrick, Tom, an influential radio presenter, also positions contemporary Irish

responses away from the memories of violent Irish history and steers the response toward a social cohesive position. In this way he is actively engaging with, and reinterpreting, collective memories of the past to create a peaceful narrative about how to act in the present:

“We had pernicious trouble on this island for nigh on 30 years, from 1968 to 1998, and people realized that you know you solve your problems by working with other people—politicians working together, civil servants working together. . . . And so it may be the experience of that, subliminally or subconsciously, has locked its way in there, has asserted itself into our thinking, that if you have a problem you solve it patiently, using democracy, respecting difference, respecting different points of view, and really we saw what violent protests in Northern Ireland for two and a half decades didn’t really achieve, then you go about things in a systematic and logical way. . . . There is a strong sense of community.”

Tom interprets the violence that characterized the island of Ireland for nearly 30 years and offers insights based on his analysis to explain the current crisis. The resolution to this violence was through community-based cooperation, where individuals worked together through democratic means. This problem-solving method— of systematically and logically working together—to resolve conflicting issues during crises has “subliminally or subconsciously” entered the Irish psyche. In this sense, Tom is foregrounding the solution to the violent past—rather than the actions during the conflict—as the historical lesson to be considered in relation to the current problem.

Taken as a whole, the cohesion and refocusing on communal aspects of Irish life highlight the importance of cooperation in a democratic society. There is a sense that engaging with the system in which everyone is a part is the ideal way to work through the problems associated with the economic downturn. Consequently, there is a move away from

organizing mass protests or rioting against the state. The violent aspects of Irish history are both explicitly and implicitly backgrounded, and the communal and democratic nature of contemporary Irish society is prominent in this master narrative.

Part Three: Moral foundation.

The final section of this analysis looks at a third reason why the Irish haven't organized a strong protest movement or rioted against the state. It lies in the cultural psychological and moral foundation of what it means to be good and right within the context of Irish society. The moral tenet "you reap what you sow" is prevalent throughout all the transcripts of people in the public eye. This moral logic in Irish society has its basis in history and is reproduced in everyday discourse and reasoning (see Scheper-Hughes, 2001; Sullivan, 1990). In contrast to the previous two sections, where emigration was seen as a legitimate and historical pattern and where the violent aspects of Irish collective memory were located in the shadow of social cohesion, the forthcoming section assumes a mostly implicit function of history as being at the basis of this moral foundation. In this way, remembering in the final master narrative is subtle but pervasive in my interview data. One consequence of the moral lesson that you reap what you sow is to suffer or endure the consequences of one's actions.

Alex sees the moral that you reap what you sow as a necessary consequence in participating in Irish democracy:

“All those policies [concerning public expenditure, salary increases, and tax decreases], all those fiscal policies were repeatedly endorsed by the Irish electorate in the elections. The fiscal policies of ramping up government expenditure and cutting taxes in a medium to long term in an unsustainable way were repeatedly endorsed by the electorate in 2002 and 2007. . . . So I don’t agree with the idea that the Irish electorate—that the people didn’t have anything to do with this [the economic collapse]. If you get child benefit, if you pay income tax and the income tax base was cut down so that over 45% of people in 2008, income earners, didn’t pay income tax. Because we [the government] cut the base down so narrowly. These were ridiculously unsustainable policies. I don’t agree with the idea that “I didn’t cause this. Why should I have to suffer it?”

Alex’s analysis of the causes and consequences follow a “reap what you sow” mentality.

Although those in the public eye say the Irish public blames bankers, developers, politicians—“everyone except themselves,” as one commentator said to me—Alex has a different opinion. A corollary and extension of using the ballot box to vote out previous governments, as discussed in the previous section, is that you must deal with the consequences of those you vote into power. Alex highlights how the Irish public, over several elections, continually elected a government that favored tax cuts and “ramping up expenditure.” These policies were unsustainable, and therefore, by virtue of having endorsed them, the Irish public must “suffer” the consequences. In the Irish context, suffering austerity is seen as a consequence of having enjoyed previous financial excesses. On this view, the Irish do not protest because they are partly culpable for their own economic hardship. Steve states:

“Another reason Ireland didn’t protest as much [as Greece], and didn’t have that outright anger, was because there certainly was an acknowledgment that we are not blameless . . . there is a collective acknowledgment that we were all, most people, had a part to play [in the economic crisis].”

It is clear from these extracts that those in the public eye think that Irish people are at least

partly to blame for the economic downturn. The public should therefore take responsibility for the debt they incurred. Moreover, because there is a “collective acceptance” (though perhaps not manifest on an individual level) that the majority of the public was involved in the economic downturn, it serves as a form of justification against rioting and protesting.

There is no clear agent to protest against because there is an implicit understanding that all people are involved. This moral judgment—about what is right to do implies that the Irish public is reaping what they sowed: They acted foolishly in the financial realm and now must deal with the austere cutbacks. The final section of this third part of the analysis examines in more detail the content of what the Irish people “reap” in terms of austerity and associated suffering Craig situates *suffering* among the Irish public as an inevitable consequence of the current zeitgeist in Ireland:

“We are stuck with the world we live in. Within these confines there are a lot of things we can do, and will do, and austerity is just a consequence of what we do. We suffer it with dignity, we suffer it in anger, or you suffer it in one way or another. The motivation is whether you do it in silence or in rage. That is probably the key question.”

Given that the master narratives promote peace and distance the current Irish response from a violent history, Craig’s statement, in relation to others he made, suggests that the Irish suffer in silence. He earlier claimed that “we don’t do anger.” The Irish suffer “one way or another” due to austerity measures that are a consequence of reaping what you sow. This idea is supported throughout the transcripts of the majority of respondents. Alex, for example, speaks several times about groups within Irish society who “suffer,” and even suggests that it has roots in Catholicism, when he flippantly says, “If there is one thing the Catholic Church teaches, it is to pay for your sins.”

This insight is in keeping with the literature surrounding suffering and the cultural psychology of the Irish (Scheper-Hughes, 1981/2001; Sullivan, 1990). Interestingly, throughout my transcripts it seems more appropriate to say my respondents were answering questions about the economic recession by drawing on historically informed ways of being Irish. In this sense, they are not explicitly alluding to the Catholic Church, but it is plausible to suggest that this version of morality is widespread throughout Irish society. The traumas spoken about by several respondents—“the famines, the oppressions, the civil war, the migrations”—are all part of a tapestry of Irish history that ingrains a form of suffering within the Irish collective mentality.

III. Conclusion

The analysis details the three interrelated master narratives told by people in the public eye in the Republic of Ireland about the causes, consequences, and solutions to the economic recession. The unifying theme was the ways in which these 20 respondents draw on the collective templates of the past to make sense of, and narrate, their understandings of the present crisis in Ireland. Taken together, these master narratives offer reasons why my respondents believe the Irish public did not respond violently to the economic downturn. Migration is seen as a historically ingrained, culturally legitimized, response to hardship. In this way, it acts as releasing a pressure valve as hundreds of thousands of people leave Ireland—giving up their claims on social welfare—which inhibits violence from the migrants as well as reduces the potential for protest from those who remain. This is because social welfare has not been significantly cut for those who chose to stay in

Ireland.

There is a distancing of behavior during the present crisis in Ireland from “The Troubles” where there was a denigrating of the social fabric and violence was rife throughout Northern Ireland. A collective memory of these events is another reason for the current peaceful response in Ireland. Ireland is now a maturing democracy, with strong social ties and therefore leaves rioting to a collective memory of the past. The moral foundation of “you reap what you sow” is prevalent in the discourse of all my respondents. This moral logic reveals the ways in which the Irish are thought to be partially culpable for their own downfall. Consequently they do not protest or riot: It is illogical to do so when served one’s just desserts.

Taken together, these three master narratives—migration, community, and moral foundations—provide the content of the Irish response as articulated by highly influential respondents in the public sphere in Ireland. As a whole, these master narratives suggest three interrelated reasons why the Irish, unlike some of their EU neighbors, did not experience civil unrest.

Remembering is conceptualized as a dynamic activity that is bound to specific social and cultural norms (Bartlett, 1932; Halbwachs, 1925/1992; Wagoner, 2011; Wertsch, 1997). My analysis illustrates the ways in which those in the public eye in Ireland use collective templates of the past to make sense of the present.

More specifically, it reveals three ways in which my respondents elaborate on historical templates in order to comprehend and narrate their understandings of the causes, consequences, and solutions to the economic recession. My respondents understood contemporary migration from Ireland as a continuation of a long-established historical trend. This explanation was spoken about with ease by all of my respondents. The second remembering strategy also involved purposeful recall of the past to make sense of the present. However, rather than directly continuing the narrative of the past, a distancing strategy was used. This allowed my respondents to define contemporary Ireland in a positive light in relation to the violence that marred Irish history, particularly during “The Troubles.” The third strategy was to invoke a historical and culturally ingrained form of moral logic to explain the crisis. Although some respondents hinted at this form of reasoning as having its origin in Irish history, all interviewees invoked it in their discourse. In this way, they evoked a cultural pattern from the past to use in the present. Taken together, these three interrelated master narratives offer a plausible, though not exhaustive, set of reasons for the relatively peaceful Irish response to the economic downturn. This study reveals three ways in which remembering the past is used as a dynamic sociocultural process to narrate a peaceful present.

Moreover, my analysis has implications for how we think about cultural values and economics more generally. Previous literature has identified the importance of linking these two areas (Harrison & Huntington, 2000; Jindra, 2014; Landes, 1999; Shweder & Power, 2013). This study illustrates how culturally and historically ingrained values—such as the legitimacy of migration, the importance of social cohesion, and moral reasoning and

justifications— all contribute to economic understanding in the Irish context. My analysis of the emphasis placed on communal and social values directly contributes to our theoretical and empirical understanding of the *Equality–Difference Paradox*. My respondents claim that in Ireland, a relatively homogeneous country, austere measures were experienced by all groups, who were “all in it together.” This social solidarity is predicted by homogeneity (Putnam, 2007). Greater homogeneity correlates with increased fairness in income distribution and greater social cohesion (Jindra, 2014). This appears to be the case as extrapolated from my interview data. The analysis has implications for how domestic and international stakeholders understand how people in the public eye think the Irish have responded to the economic recession. Previous literature has suggested a religious, political, and cultural divide between different groups in terms of their understandings and evaluation of economics (Banfield, 1958; Harrison & Huntington, 2000; Landes, 1999; Shweder, 2000; Weber, 1905/2009). One way these divides have been identified is through large-scale surveys that simply ask questions about these values. If these findings appear on this relatively superficial level, in-depth ethnographic work and field experiments can then be used to offer a more-detailed understanding of what these values are and how they are linked to the cultural psychology of these regions. By exploring the perspectives of different groups, it should be possible to extrapolate a clearer picture of the nations’ cultural psyche and master narratives, rather than those told by just one group, which is a limitation of the present study.

Behind the facts and figures espoused by economists and bankers are lives, logics, and lived experiences that need to be understood. A psychology sensitive to culture and morality is

the key needed to understand complex and confounding phenomena, such as the curiously peaceful Irish response to austerity and the civic unrest elsewhere in the EU (Power & Nussbaum, 2014).

IV. After the Elites: Controversial ideas in the public sphere

One feature of this analysis that motivates future studies is how it was responded to when the ideas were disseminated in the public sphere. There was a considerable negative reaction to the ideas expressed by these public elites when they were made public. The previous analysis was published in *Peace & Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* (Power, 2016). The work was also featured in the popular press. David Nussbaum and I wrote an Op Ed in *The Guardian* newspaper titled “The Fightin’ Irish: Not when it comes to austerity and recession.” It was printed online on July 24th (Power and Nussbaum, 2014). The article was reprinted in Irish media. I was invited to give a series of radio interviews based on the analysis. On August 2nd, 2014, I was invited to speak on RTE, the Irish national broadcaster, on a show called “The Business” which is usually broadcast to around 400,000 people. I also presented the analysis to peers and colleagues at several academic conferences. Thus the findings were disseminated widely in the public sphere and commented on.

The controversial idea – that in life people get their just desserts – added a new layer to the conversation about austerity in Ireland. The insights of this first study were aided by the design. The interviews I did with public elites in Ireland were anonymous. In this context, respondents might have felt more open to discuss controversial ideas. An implication of

articulating a belief that the Irish public were culpable for the economic downturn and therefore accepted austerity is not a popular argument among the public. However, I gleaned this insight, strongly held by most, though not all, of the public elites I interviewed, because they felt comfortable saying it without their name being attached to this idea. One prominent journalist, with reference to his suggestion that Irish people were partly to blame for their own hardship, told me “I’d never say that in public. Not if I wanted to keep my job...or my head.” During my radio interviews, and in subsequent academic and popular press publications, I was able to communicate this culturally ingrained moral belief that ‘in life you reap what you sow,’ to the public. I stated that my analysis revealed this moral logic was omnipresent in the discourse of public elites. I did not suggest I personally held this belief. Moreover, I did not argue or suggest this was a casual factor in determining acceptance of austerity in Ireland.

The previous Irish Minister for Finance, the late Brian Leihani, who oversaw the controversial bank guarantee in 2008 that bailed out the failing Irish banks at the expense of the taxpayer, once said in relation to the Irish economic boom, and subsequent austerity following the collapse, that “we all partied.” The implication for Irish ears was “...and now we have the hangover.” The former Minister was slated in Irish media for this statement which first aired on November 24th, 2010, on the investigative journalism show, *Prime Time*. Perhaps because of the backlash against this statement, the logic it entailed, and the blame it placed on ordinary people, other public elites were very reluctant to make similar statements on the record.

Interestingly, when I spoke informally with an influential Irish elite in December 2016, she made reference to the Minister's remarks, stating,

"Well there was a narrative out there that people partied. And then people say "I didn't party." You get in trouble if you say it. But that's not true. * whispers * It's bullshit. Everyone partied. Some might have stayed in the kitchen getting drunk, others might have popped in for 5 minutes and left, others stayed all night. People mightn't have bought fancy houses, but I don't know anyone who didn't upgrade their car, who didn't buy art, or a sculpture, or something to upgrade their life. But you can't say that, you just can't say it."

Interviews with public elites reveal and conceal. There are disjunctions between what they say on and off the record. In whispered tones, some public elites still blame the actions of ordinary people for causing the economic crisis, even eight years after the financial collapse. The anonymous viewpoints of the elites, and my dissemination of them, received both criticism and support in the public sphere. Consider these two extracts, taken from the comments section underneath "The Fighin' Irish" Op Ed in *The Guardian*. First, a person identifying himself or herself as "Ninja Kitten" wrote:

"So, only the people who have already had plenty of opportunity to have their voice heard were interviewed, and only 20 of them? Hardly representative or solid methodology here!

I certainly am not reclaiming my dignity through austerity, nor do I believe that suffering is the only way to redemption. Very few people I know or have talked to about the recession and austerity feel like that at all. This is something that others (media, politicians, bankers) say about us. We were not all responsible for the crash - some of us didn't buy property because it was overpriced, and we didn't go Celtic tiger crazy. If the authors had interviewed 100 Irish people of all kinds I suspect they'd have found very different themes."

In response to this comment, mike65ie, replied to its author, and said:

"Enough people did go "€eltic Tiger €razy" (Celtic Tiger Crazy) for it to matter though!

For a significant cohort you were nothing without your back garden decking upgrade, your current year BMW or Audi and the apartment in Portugal (Portugal) or Bulgaria all bought on tick.

Another season (reason) for the lack of riotous behaviour might have been down to watching the Greeks tear themselves apart and let loose a mentality which saw Golden Dawn rise to prominence.”

Ideas are always contested and appropriated in the public sphere (Jovchelovitch, 2006; Moscovici, 1961/2008). Yet the attribution of moral blame for the recession and subsequent austerity in Ireland was particularly controversial. The two contrasting extracts above, generated by people responding to an analysis of discourse by public elites, raises further questions. Undoubtedly, the master narratives of people in the public eye touched a nerve, yet further research is required to access the omnipresence of this cultural cognition. The elites occupy a unique social position. They were well-educated, earned impressive salaries, and occupied positions of power and influence. Did they give an inaccurate representation of the Irish response to austerity, economic hardship, and social suffering?

V. Do you reap what you sow? A brief investigation with unemployed adults

Subsequent interviews with unemployed Irish young adults reveal the ways in which the moral belief – that in life you get what you deserve - has become internalized (Power, 2015; Power, forthcoming b). Unemployed Irish youth occupy a polar opposite position from the public elites in the Republic of Ireland. Unemployed interviewees attributed blame for the financial crisis, and their poor financial position because of it, to the unscrupulous actions of bankers and the Irish government. But they also gave in-depth and intricate examples

from their personal situations to suggest a proportion of blame should be attributed to the actions of individual Irish people too. For example, I asked Séan, an unemployed Irish man in his early twenties:

SP: “Who, if anyone, do you blame for the recession?”

Séan: You have to blame society in general you know what I mean, there was just no exit plan, people just kept buying and selling and giving loans, there was no expectation, or realization, that this is all going to break down...When the world recession kicked in and everyone is panicking and everyone is losing jobs, no one was expecting the highlights to end so suddenly and so abruptly. So you have to put the blame on society.

SP: So who do you mean by society?

Séan: The Irish public.”

Séan clearly blames the causes of the economic recession on the behaviour and on the shortsightedness of ordinary Irish people. Although he said, “it’s a world recession,” he blames the “Irish public” for the drastic economic decline. I asked him for an example from his own life, and he discusses his father’s situation who is heavily in debt, and who suffers from clinical depression after being made unemployed. He told me:

Séan: “My mother and father spent what they wanted [during the economic boom, known as The Celtic Tiger], they got loans out, and the loans were so easily got, at one stage, my father told me this; he applied for an overdraft from the bank and they said “we’ll get back to you.” At five o clock that evening they said “James, would you like a 20,000 euro overdraft?” and my dad was like “yeah,” and it’s just that, that kind of naivety, that he would spend it and worry about it in the future.”

So although his father is clinically depressed, and there are constant family fights and collective stress due to this financial debt, he firmly places substantial blame for this

situation in his father's actions: not only or mostly on the banks, the financial regulator, the European Central Bank.

Another respondent, Charlie, who finished school at 18, was an unemployed former factory worker having difficulty repaying his mortgage when I interviewed him in the summer of 2014. He described how he and his wife went to a prominent Irish bank in 2006 to get a loan. The banker offered him a reasonable mortgage to buy his first home based on his salary, but Charlie lied, telling the banker that a competing financial institution was offering him a bigger loan. Fearing losing a new customer, the banker agreed to match the mortgage. In this scenario, there are several places where blame can be attributed. However, during the course of his story Charlie repeatedly illustrated the ways in which the fault lay with him. His current financial hardship, in his mind, is directly related to his lie—not to an irresponsible banker, an incompetent government, or a global financial downturn, but to his own actions. He does not protest because he feels culpable for his own situation.

This is a clear example of the internalization of blame – that in life you get what you deserve. It manifests in a lack of protesting. One snippet of an interview with Mark illustrates this point. He was a young and unemployed Irish man who migrated to Canada for two years. While there he worked in a variety of manual and creative jobs. He returned to Ireland after his two-year Canadian visa expired. He had been unemployed, and living at home with his mother and two siblings, for nearly a year when I interviewed him. His response is indicative of this social group's attitudes towards protesting, democratic

engagement, and social change in the localized Irish context, at the time of interviews in summer 2014. When I asked him what he thought the dominant Irish response to the economic crisis was, he said:

Mark: "I don't think we have done much to be honest with you. What other response is there?"

SP: "Well, in some European countries, young people have protested about austerity."

Mark: "It is pretty anarchist, isn't it? I don't know if it gets anything done...I don't think it's better if there are any deaths caused by it...I don't want to see anyone burnt at the stake."

These extracts, taken from a broader corpus of interview data with unemployed Irish youth, suggest that even the most vulnerable group – unemployed people on state welfare programs– accepted austerity and held easily available narratives to illustrate how the actions ordinary Irish people contributed to the economic downturn. One does not protest when you feel culpable for your own situation. It shows that the moral element of the Irish response was widespread and not confined to public elites.

VII. Methodological pluralism

My analysis of data obtained from the European Social Survey—which includes representative data from 28 European countries regarding social issues in two-year waves from 2006 to 2012—illustrates differences between Ireland and Spain on several relevant issues. As I detailed in Chapter 3, the Irish met the introduction of austerity by not engaging in democratic behaviours that could have led to social, political, and economic change. Moreover, they did not show an increased support for protesting. Interviews with unemployed Irish youth help comprehend these observations.

Combined, the two sets of interviews support the survey data suggesting the initial Irish reaction to imposed austerity was passive. The analysis reveals the nuances of the moral reasoning and cultural psychological tendencies, couched in collective memories of ways to be and to act, and made manifest in contemporary reactions to the current economic crisis. In this way, the relationship between culture and economics, and essentially how people experience and understand these relationships, informs how they feel they should act in the context of economic stress in current Irish democracy. They did not riot or protest, because on a collective level they felt partially culpable for the economic situation and it is illogical to take to the streets in such a case. In Ireland, with the initial onset of austerity, migration was one way to deal with a perceived bleak future. Another was to purposely divide a violent past from a necessary peaceful present. Indeed, the Irish people voted out the government who oversaw the economic downturn, and bailed out the banks at the expense of the taxpayer, in 2011.

Both qualitative studies had their limitations. The elites were not randomly sampled, but the interviews were in-depth and audio-recorded. Interviews with unemployed people were in-depth, but were not all audio-recorded. Participants in this group preferred to informally talk with me about their understandings of, and experiences during, the economic downturn. I asked all of these unemployed participants if I could record our interviews. Five agreed. I took notes during non-recorded interviews. Afterwards I wrote extensive notes based on the interview material, recording quotations as accurately as possible.

Each research method has its own scopes and limits. But multiple methods, in this case using surveys and interviews, with different samples, are needed if social science is to advance and deal with the pressing social issues of both the present and the future (Campbell and Fiske, 1959; Power, et al., forthcoming). Understanding localized context and meaning-making processes is often deemphasized in empirical social psychology (Asch, 1952; Power, et al, forthcoming; Rozin, 2001; 2006). Despite the acknowledged limitations of the two qualitative studies, they do help inform the generation of hypotheses that can be tested experimentally.

Chapter 5

Quantitative tests of qualitatively derived hypotheses

The master narratives told by public elites and unemployed youth, used to explain suffering and the endurance of hardship, can also be seen as legitimizing folk psychological understandings: they are tales told to make sense of the unfair subjective worlds, legitimize systems, and maintain the status quo. Insights from the qualitative research that was presented in the previous chapter can inform the generation of hypotheses that can be tested experimentally. In this chapter I report four studies that are aimed to quantitatively test qualitatively derived hypotheses. Does a belief in “reaping what you sow”, and a belief that migration acted as a safety valve to release pressure on the system, lead to greater acceptance of austerity, blame for the recession on the actions of ordinary people, and no protest? I discuss system justification theory as one possible overarching theory to explain why people might justify hardships without protesting.

I. Does a belief in “just desserts” alter attitudes towards austerity?

System justification theory (SJT) argues people have an ideological disposition to justify the prevailing status quo (Jost et al. 2004). System justification is a “process by which existing social arrangements are legitimized, even at the expense of personal and group interest” (Jost et al. 2004, p. 2). Most of the supporting evidence is based on experimental social psychological research. The theory highlights the tendency to accept the status quo and to imbue it with legitimacy. The system in which one lives is seen as morally good, fair, natural, natural, desirable, inalterable, and therefore inevitable (Jost et al. 2004). This

motivation partly explains how disadvantaged groups – like the unemployed – can internalize feelings of inferiority. The theory also predicts that internalization of this inferiority and subsequent justification for the status quo is most readily available at the implicit rather than explicit levels. Finally, in its strongest form, the theory posits that justification for the system is paradoxically strongest for those who are most marginalized. Two scales measuring belief in a just world for self and belief in a just world for other are frequently used to predict support for system justification theory. Both of these scales measure individual differences in motivation to believe the world is a fair and just place for oneself and for other people. The more you believe the world is a fair and just place, either for yourself, or for other people, the more you justify the system (Jost et al, 2004).

A belief that in life you “reap what you sow” is a historically ingrained, culturally viable, master narrative told by some Irish to explain, understand, and even justify the system in which they live. Previous research illustrated variations of this master narrative to explain suffering and hardship in the Irish context (Scheper Hughes, 1981/2001; Sullivan, 1990). Studies 1a and 1b reported below sought to test the “reap what you sow hypothesis” experimentally: when primed with narratives ascribing culpability for the economic crisis to the actions of ordinary Irish people, participants should think austerity is fair, protest less, and blame Irish people for causing the economic crisis. Insights from system justification theory, coupled with the analyses of interview material with public elites and unemployed Irish youth, lead to a number of predictions based on this hypothesis.

Priming is an experimental technique used to nudge participants to think about a particular phenomenon through a certain framework (Oyserman and Lee, 2007). Priming different

groups to think in different ways and then assess their perceptions, responses, and attitudes towards a certain phenomenon allows the researcher to determine what role thinking in certain mindsets, or through certain frameworks, has on attitudes and perceptions. In my research I remind research participants about two possible causes of the economic crash. In one version, a newspaper article evoked a narrative the actions of ordinary Irish people caused the downturn. In the other, external factors – beyond the control of Irish individuals – caused the economic collapse. This design allowed me to determine what effect priming certain mindsets or memories of the recession has on influencing attitudes towards blame, protest, and fairness of austerity. The main prediction of studies 1a and 1b were: If you are primed to think the actions of ordinary people, as opposed to external factors beyond ones' control, were culpable for the economic crisis in Ireland, then people are more likely to 1) think austerity is fairer, 2) support protest less, and 3) blame the actions of ordinary people rather than institutions for causing the economic crisis. The two primes are reproduced in Appendix 1.

Moreover, evidence gleaned from the qualitative interviews suggests support for these three dependent variables should be moderated by other psychological traits. Participants were assigned four scales – belief in a just world for self; belief in a just world for other (Jost, Banaji, and Nosek, 2004); a measure of guilt and shame proneness scale (Cohen, Wolf, Panter, Insko, 2011); and locus of control scale (Rotter, 1966). System justification theory is supported by evidence from two scales: belief in a just world for self and for other. I used these two scales to determine support for system justification before the experimental manipulations. Research respondents were given the guilt and shame proneness scale. This is because the qualitative data revealed the Irish felt culpable for the financial collapse.

Therefore those who are higher on feelings of guilt and shame in general should support the system to a greater degree and show less support for civic discontent (Cohen, Wolf, Panter, Insko, 2011). Finally, participants filled out the locus of control scale. The scale measures how much control people feel they have over their lives (Rotter, 1966). Those who feel they cannot control their realities should be more accepting of the status quo. They should tolerate the system to a greater degree and subsequently show less support for protest behaviour *vis a vis* the economy.

II. Study 1a

Method

Participants

Participants were faculty and students from an Irish institution in a midsized city ($n=342$, $M_{age} = 39.9$ years, 61% male).

Procedure

Participants filled out scales assessing their belief in a just world for oneself and other (Jost, Banaji, and Nosek, 2004), their feelings of proneness to guilt and shame (Cohen, Wolf, Panter, Insko, 2011), and their locus of control (Rotter, 1966) in a randomized order. After filling out these four scales, research subjects were told they were going to read a newspaper article from the last decade and then be asked questions on the content. Participants were randomly assigned to read one of two possible articles, both of which were fictional newspaper articles from *The Irish Times*. Each was designed to prime a

distinct set of beliefs. Half the participants read an article that emphasized how hard work, dedication, and entrepreneurial efforts of regular Irish people led to the economic boom known as the Celtic Tiger (“Irish to Blame” condition). By extension, the logic is that the actions of ordinary Irish people played a significant role in other economic events, including the downturn. The other half of the participants read a newspaper article that argued the economic boom in Ireland from the late 1990’s into the 2000’s was driven by external factors, such as increased foreign investment and strong trading with foreign partners such as the USA and the UK (“External Factors” condition). The role of hard work, effort, and dedication of ordinary people was downplayed in this condition. As such, other economic events such as the collapse could then be attributed to external factors, not the actions of ordinary Irish people. To ensure participants read the article they were randomly assigned to, two attention-check questions followed each fictional newspaper article. Failure to correctly answer one or both of these questions meant the participant was unable to continue in the study and thus these participants were omitted from analyses. However, I included no check to see if the priming worked as expected.

After reading the article and answering attention-check questions, participants completed three questionnaires, in random order, based on the results from two previous qualitative studies and observational work conducted in Ireland. These three questionnaires assessed participants: (1) support for civic engagement and protest in the face of austerity, (2) beliefs about the fairness of austerity, and (3) attribution of blame for the economic crisis. Across all questionnaires, all questions were reverse coded such that a greater value indicated greater support of a particular behavior or construct.

The first questionnaire was designed to assess participant support for civic discontent following austerity measures. Research subjects were asked to indicate the extent to which they supported a set of actions that people are willing to take to oppose austerity measures on a seven point Likert scale, ranging from very likely to support (1) to very unlikely to support (7) (Table 1).

Table 1 shows a range of culturally sensitive questions designed to assess support for democratic engagement and civic discontent.

Sign a petition
Distribute a petition
Write to a politician
Phone community members to gauge level of opposition
Call a radio talk show to discuss issues
Attend a demonstration planning meeting
Organize a demonstration meeting
Attend a demonstration
Organize a demonstration
Go on strike
Go on prolonged strike
Plan to damage government property
Purposely vandalize government property
Abuse a police officer to their face
Resist arrest at a demonstration
Be violent towards agents of the state

The second dependent variable assessed how fair or unfair people felt austerity measures were. Research subjects were asked to indicate how fair or unfair fifteen contemporary and culturally significant statements were on a seven point Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7) (Table 2).

Table 2 shows a range of culturally sensitive questions designed to assess how fair or unfair people think a range of austerity related issues are

Reducing social welfare for people under 21
Reducing the number of care workers in disability services
Introducing the local property tax
Introducing the water services tax
Introducing the universal social charge
Increasing the student contribution fee to attend university
Attempting to remove the medical card for the over 75s
Increasing pensions for politicians
Maintaining a low rate of corporate taxation
Decreasing money allocated to the arts
Cutting expenditure to healthcare
Introducing the income levy
Introducing a hiring freeze in the public sector
Cutting the child benefit allowance to all Irish mothers
Increasing international travel allowances for politicians

The final questionnaire assessed attribution of blame for the economic crisis in Ireland. I hypothesized those people who were primed to feel responsible for the economic collapse would attribute less blame towards the actions and decisions of the Irish government, the EU, and other external forces. Those who were primed to think the actions of ordinary Irish people caused the Celtic Tiger should also think the actions of ordinary Irish people, not those of government or other institutions, should be blamed the financial downturn in Ireland. Research subjects were asked to evaluate the extent to which a variety of factors were casually responsible for the economic collapse in Ireland. Participants were given a series of 28 possible reasons, people, or institutions to blame for the economic crisis and rated each from “highly to blame” (1) to “highly innocent,” (7). There were three categories within this questionnaire that were analyzed as separate variables: 1) Institutions to blame, 2) Irish institutions to blame, and 3) Irish people to blame (Table 3).

Table 3 shows a range of culturally sensitive questions designed to assess attribution of blame for the 2008 economic crisis.

International politics
The bursting of the international housing bubble
US financial collapse
European Union
European Central Bank
German Politicians
Fianna Fail government
Fine Gael government
Inefficient government officials
Corrupt government officials in Ireland
Banking sector in Ireland
Individual bankers in Ireland
The financial regulator in Ireland
Anglo Irish Bank
Bank of Ireland
Permanent TSB
Ulster Bank
Allied Irish Bank (AIB)
Irish People not working hard enough
Irish people not being industrious
Irish people not being motivated or ambitious
Irish people not being fiscally responsible
People spending too much money
Irish people accruing too much personal debt
Irish people taking on multiple mortgages
People illegally taking advantage of social services
Individuals finding ways not to pay tax
People working off the books and claiming social welfare payments

After completing all questionnaires, participants provided demographic information: gender, age, where they were born, political orientations toward economic and social issues, religion – including how often they practice religion, occupation, and annual income. This information was designed to obtain general information about the participants for use in statistical analyses.

Results

Across a series of oneway ANOVAs with condition as the predictor, I found no main effect of priming condition on any of the dependent variables. There was no support for the main prediction that when people are primed to think Irish people caused the financial crisis

they think austerity is fairer, protest less, and accept more blame. To explore whether condition (External Factors; 1: Irish to Blame; 0) interacted with other relevant aspects of participant beliefs (namely their (1) belief in an external locus of control, (2) belief in a just world for themselves, or (3) belief in a just world for others), I used regression analyses to examine the main and interactive effects of condition and each of these three variables. All continuous variables were mean centered.

External locus of control. There were no main or interactive effects of priming condition or belief in an external locus of control on participants attitudes toward protest, on participants beliefs that the Irish people, Irish institutions, or other institutions were to blame for the economic collapse, or on participants' proneness to feel guilt or shame, all $ps > .10$.

Although there was no main effect of condition on participants beliefs that austerity measures were unfair, there was a statistically significant effect of the external locus of control, $\beta = -.171, p = .025$. It also interacted with condition and belief in an external locus of control, $\beta = -.151, p = .047$. Participants who were in the "Irish to blame" priming condition who were high in external locus of control rated social reductions as less unfair than participants in this condition who were low in external locus of control beliefs. I find a similar, but non-significant, pattern for participants in the External Factors condition.

Belief in a just world for oneself. There were no main effects of condition, and no significant interactions on any dependent variable, all $ps > .10$). However, there were main effects of

participants' beliefs in a just world, as applied to themselves. Participants who hold stronger beliefs in a just world showed decreased endorsement of protest behaviors, $\beta = -.247, p < .001$, increased belief that austerity measures are unfair, $\beta = -.198, p = .005$, and a marginal tendency to feel more guilt and shame, $\beta = .097, p = .063$. Participants that held stronger beliefs in a just world we also less likely to blame the Irish people, $\beta = -.272, p < .001$, or Irish institutions, $\beta = -.261, p < .001$, and were marginally less likely to blame non-Irish institutions for the financial crisis, $\beta = -.135, p = .060$. Congruent with system justification theory, people who believe in a just world for oneself support protest less. However, contrary to the theory, they still think austerity is unfair (despite feelings of guilt and shame); and don't attribute blame to Irish people or domestic or international institutions. The findings do not present any clear support for the overall hypothesis and only minor support for secondary predications.

Belief in a just world for others. There were no main effects of condition, and no significant interactions on any dependent variable, all $ps > .10$). However, there were main effects of participants' beliefs in a just world, as applied to others. Participants who hold stronger beliefs in a just world for others showed decreased endorsement of protest behaviors, $\beta = -.341, p < .001$, and increased belief that austerity measures are unfair, $\beta = -.259, p < .001$. Participants that held stronger beliefs in a just world we also less likely to blame the Irish people, $\beta = -.223, p = .003$, Irish institutions, $\beta = -.230, p = .002$, or non-Irish institutions for the financial crisis, $\beta = -.266, p < .001$. In support of system justification theory, those who had a high belief in a just world for others supported protest less, but thought austerity was unfair, and didn't attribute blame on the actions of ordinary Irish people or domestic and international institutions. The evidence provides mixed support for the secondary

predication that those high on belief in a just world for both oneself and others, and those who had high feelings of locus of control and feelings of guilt and shame, support protest less, think austerity is fair, and blame ordinary people for the economic crisis in this particular sample.

II. Study 1b.

Method

Participants and procedure

The same experiment was replicated in a non-university sample. Participants in Study 1b completed the study online and were compensated (unlike those in study 1a) for completing the study ($n = 228$, $M_{age} = 24.2$ years, 36% male). The materials, procedure, and predictions were exactly the same as Study 1a.

Results

Across a series of oneway ANOVAs with condition as the predictor, I found a main effect of condition on one dependent variable: participants support for protest, $F_{(1,227)} = 4.084$, $p = .044$. In particular, participants in the Irish to Blame condition were more likely to support protest behaviors than participants in the External Factors condition ($M_{Irish} = 3.06$, $SD_{Irish} = 1.19$; $M_{External} = 2.74$, $SD_{External} = 1.15$). But this finding was opposite to the main hypothesis. It provides evidence against both system justification theory and the insights from the

qualitative research. I next used regression analyses as in Study 1a to explore whether condition interacted with other relevant aspects of participant beliefs.

External locus of control. Although I found no main effect of condition on participants' proneness to feel guilt or shame, $p > .10$, I found a marginal main effect of an external locus of control, $\beta = -.049$, $p = .058$, that was subsumed by a marginal interaction of condition and holding an external locus of control, $\beta = .063$, $p = .072$, such that participants in the External Factors condition that endorsed a greater external locus of control were less likely to feel guilt or shame, $R^2 = .033$.

Additionally, I found a significant interaction between condition and external locus of control on participants likelihood of blaming non-Irish institutions for the economic collapse, $\beta = .192$, $p = .051$, such that participants in the External Factors condition who were higher in external locus of control were marginally less likely to blame non-Irish institutions than participants lower in external locus of control, $R^2 = .033$. Again, I found no relationship in the Irish to Blame condition, and there were no other main or interactive effects, all $ps > .10$.

External locus of control. There was a marginal main effect of condition, $\beta = .133$, $p = .055$, in the same direction as indicated by the above ANOVA. There was also a main effect of belief in an external locus of control, $\beta = .214$, $p = .028$, such that having a stronger external locus of control was associated with greater endorsement of protest behaviors. Finally, there was a significant interaction, $\beta = -.231$, $p = .018$, such that participants in the External

Factors condition who had greater external locus of control were more likely to endorse protest behaviors than those in this condition with a low external locus of control, $R^2 = .051$. I found no relationship in the Irish to Blame condition. The only other significant effect I found was an interaction between condition and external locus of control on participants likelihood of blaming non-Irish institutions for the economic collapse, $\beta = .192$, $p = .051$, so that participants in the External Factors condition who were higher in external locus of control were marginally less likely to blame non-Irish institutions than participants lower in external locus of control, $R^2 = .033$. Again, I found no relationship in the Irish to Blame condition, and there were no other main or interactive effects, all $ps > .10$.

There was some support for the predications derived from the external locus of control hypothesis i.e. those who were high in feelings of control, therefore thought they could influence the world around them should also support protest less, think austerity is fairer, and blame the economic collapse on the actions of ordinary Irish people in contrast to those participants who were low on these psychological traits who were in the external factors condition.

Belief in a locus on control also interacted with the main effect of condition; people with a higher locus of control supported protests more, presumably because they believed their actions could effect change: they controlled their realities. This finding is enhanced by the result that those who were in the External Factors condition, who had a high locus of control, endorsed protest behaviours more than those who had a low locus of control.

Belief in a just world for oneself. There was the same marginal main effects of condition on endorsement of protest behaviors, $\beta = .125, p = .059$, but there were no other main effects of condition, all $ps > .10$. There was one main effect of belief in a just world on participants' guilt and shame proneness, $\beta = .177, p = .027$, so that participants who held a stronger belief in a just world also felt more guilt and shame. These findings are in keeping with a secondary prediction derived from the just-world for oneself hypothesis. There were no other significant main effects, but there were several significant interactions. There was a significant interaction of condition and belief in a just world on blaming the Irish people for the economic collapse, $\beta = -.218, p = .037$. Participants in the External Factors condition who had greater belief in a just world were more likely to blame the Irish people for the current crisis than those in the same condition who had a low belief in a just world, $R^2 = .027$. This is also congruent with the prediction of system justification theory. There was no significant effect in the Irish to Blame condition. There were no other main or interactive effects on any other dependent variables, $ps > .10$).

People who were high on a belief in a just world for oneself also felt more guilt and shame. Congruent with this is the finding that those who had high levels of belief in a just world for oneself who were in the External Factors condition were more likely than those who were low in this belief and in the same condition, to blame the actions of ordinary Irish people for the economic crisis. These findings offer some support system justification theory.

Belief in a just world for others. There were the same marginal main effects of condition on endorsement of protest behaviors, $\beta = .125, p = .059$, but there were no other main effects

of condition, all $ps > .10$. There was one marginal main effect of belief in a just world on participants' tendency to feel guilt and shame, $\beta = .123$, $p = .065$, which is in keeping with a secondary prediction, but there were no main effects of beliefs in a just world on any other dependent variables. However, there were several significant interactions. First, there was a significant interaction of condition and belief in a just world on how unfair participants viewed austerity measures, $\beta = .254$, $p = .009$, such that participants who were in the Irish to Blame condition and who had greater belief in a just world were more likely to view austerity measures as unfair than those in this condition with less belief in a just world, $R^2 = .109$. I found no relationship in participants in the External Factors condition. Second, there was a significant interaction of condition and belief in a just world on how much participants blamed Irish institutions for the economic crisis, $\beta = -.215$, $p = .031$, such that participants who were in the Irish to Blame condition and who had greater belief in a just world were less likely to blame Irish institutions for the current crisis than those in this condition with less belief in a just world, $R^2 = .30$. I find no relationship in participants in the External Factors condition.

People who were higher in a belief in a just world for others were more likely to feel guilt and shame. Congruent with this finding people who were higher in a belief for a just world for others who were in the "Irish to blame condition" were more likely to think austerity measures were unfair. People in this condition and who were high in a belief in a just world for others blamed Irish institutions less. These findings both add and detract from system justification theory.

There are a variety of reasons why the results in Studies 1a and 1b might differ, primarily stemming from the fact that the participants in each study were significantly different on a number of demographic factors. These differences might help explain why there was a main effect of condition on endorsement of protest behavior in one sample and not the other. Independent t-tests revealed differences between both groups. Participants in the first sample with faculty and students at an Irish university (Study 1a) were, in contrast to the paid and online sample (Study 1b): older ($M_{\text{University}} = 39.9$; $M_{\text{Social}} = 24.2$ years, $t(568) = 17.98$, $p < .001$); had a greater percentage of males ($M_{\text{University}} = 61\%$; $M_{\text{Social}} = 36\%$, $t(568) = -5.95$, $p < .001$); were less Catholic ($M_{\text{University}} = 48\%$; $M_{\text{Social}} = 57\%$, $t(568) = 2.33$, $p = .020$); they were more likely to be employed, especially full time, ($M_{\text{University}} = 71\%$; $M_{\text{Social}} = 17\%$, $t(568) = -11.87$, $p < .001$). Moreover, in the university sample, people were more frequent religious service goers ($M_{\text{University}} = 5.72$; $M_{\text{Social}} = 5.37$, $t(568) = 2.25$, $p = .025$). In the university sample, the means for each dataset show that the university sample had higher income than the paid online sample ($M_{\text{University}} = 4.65$; $M_{\text{Social}} = 1.54$, $t(568) = 16.15$, $p < .001$). Moreover, the university sample was less conservative than the paid sample ($M_{\text{University}} = 3.88$; $M_{\text{Social}} = 4.52$, $t(561) = -3.37$, $p = .001$).

The sample in study 1a, in contrast to the sample in study 1b, consisted of older people; a higher percentage of males; who were more Catholic and more frequently practiced Catholicism; were more likely to have paid and full-time positions and therefore had higher annual income; and they were more liberal. Any one, or a combination of these statistical significant differences, could help account for the different findings between both groups that is problematic because incongruent findings between groups do not provide clear

evidence to support or rejection the predictions. The younger, more conservative sample, with lower income in study 1b supported protest more when primed to think the actions of ordinary people caused the economic recession. The other sample in study 1a didn't hold this attitude when primed. This main finding contracts system justification theory that predicts, inversely that, more marginalized groups will support the status quo more. Other moderating effects, highlighting the differing roles of feelings of guilt and shame, belief in locus of control and just world for self and others, also differ between these two samples. Reflecting human cognition, the results are complicated. They offer conflicting support and detractions from pre-conceived psychological theory. Results also detract from one prediction of system justification theory: the findings suggest more marginalized groups are not more likely to accept the status quo.

The main contribution of these findings is to highlight the importance of replicating studies across samples to develop more nuanced understandings of social processes. The more nuanced understanding we now have is that replication of experiments needs to be done to ensure the reliability of psychological research. The incongruent results across samples, and in relation to the findings from the qualitative research, are discussed below and in-depth in Chapter 7 – the conclusion.

III. Study 2a

Previous experimental social psychological research has examined the perceived ease of migration and support for system justification. The results suggest those who report being

unable to leave their home country show greater tolerance for supporting the status quo: they accept hardship in their countries because they feel unable to leave (Laurin, Shepherd and Kay, 2010). In Ireland the question is there a difference in attitudes towards the fairness of austerity, blame for the recession, and support for protest, between those who reported they could leave Ireland as opposed to those who said they could leave? I hypothesized those who would find it difficult to leave Ireland would justify the system to a greater degree.

To test this hypothesis, I conducted two correlational studies. I used the same three culturally sensitive variables – informed by previous ethnographic and qualitative research in Ireland – as the two experiments discussed in the three tables above. I tested three predictions. First, the more difficult it was for people to leave Ireland the more they support the system and therefore should think austerity was fairer; they should show less support for protest; and they should blame the actions of ordinary people more for causing the 2008 economic collapse.

Participants

The first group to undertake this correlational study was paid online Irish participants, recruited from the same company as the paid research subjects in the first experimental study ($n = 98$). Respondents were compensated for participating. Research subjects who did the experiment reported previously were unable to complete this correlational study. No demographic information was collected on these participants.

Procedure

Participants were asked to indicate how easy or difficult it was for them to migrate from Ireland on a seven point Likert scale, ranging from very difficult (1) to very easy (7). Next, participants were given the same three dependent variables as respondents in the experimental condition. They were asked a series of questions, banked into three groups, aimed at revealing their attitudes towards fairness of austerity, support for protest, and blame for the economic recession. The order in which these participants were presented with these banks of questions was randomized.

Results

In contrast to system justification theory, I found that the harder you think it is to migrate, the more you support protest, $r = .193$, $p = .059$. Surprisingly, the more you support protest behaviors, the less you see social welfare reductions as unfair, $r = -.234$, $p = .021$.

However, the more you support protest behaviors, the more you blame the EU, $r = .241$, $p = .017$. The more unfair you see social welfare reductions, the less you blame institutions overall, $r = -.413$, $p < .001$. This holds for international institutions, EU institutions, and Irish Institutions (all created from parts of the same overall institutions scale). However, the more unfair you see social welfare reductions, the less you blame the Irish people as well, $r = -.300$, $p = .003$. The more you blame the Irish people for the current crisis, the more you also blame international institutions, $r = .303$, $p = .003$, and EU institutions, $r = .250$, $p = .014$, but not Irish institutions, $p = .984$.

The main finding here contradicts system justification theory. People who feel they cannot leave their system did not justify it: they supported protest. The rejection of the prediction derived from system justification theory dovetails with the lack of support for this theory from a different sample that were chosen from the same pool of paid online participants. However, no participant who did the experiment did the correlational study. Future research should gather demographic data on these participants to examine whether there are meaningful inter-group differences between the samples. However, one could assume their demographics were similar to the other sample that was compensated for undertaking the experimental work.

IV. Study 2b

Method

Participants and procedure

I repeated this study for the same reasons I replicated the experiment with a different Irish sample. The second sample can be described as an online, social media, sample. The Irish Times newspaper agreed to share this survey. It was posted online on March 26th, 2016. However, it was not confined to readers of the Irish Times. People shared it on social media. Therefore the sample can best be described as a “social media sample.” The link was live for one week. The sample was $n=353$. The procedure, materials, and predictions were the same as Study 2a.

Results

There was no effect of migration beliefs on attitudes towards protests, fairness of austerity, or blame for the recession, all $ps > .10$. The lack of a relationship stands in contrast to the results of the first sample. However, there were some revealing correlations. The more you support protest behaviors, the less you see social welfare reduction as unfair, $r = -.603$, $p < .001$. This matches what was found in the paid sample. The more you support protest behaviors, the more you blame all types of institutions, $r = .409$, $p < .001$, but also, the more you blame the Irish people, $r = .322$, $p < .001$. This was not evident in the paid online sample. The more unfair you see social welfare reductions, the less you blame institutions overall, $r = -.413$, $p < .001$. The more you perceive social welfare reductions to be unfair, the less you blame the Irish people as well, $r = -.464$, $p < .001$. These both match the results of the paid online sample. The more you blame the Irish people for the 2008 economic crisis, the more you also blame international institutions, $r = .115$, $p = .092$, and EU institutions, $r = .132$, $p = .051$, but not Irish institutions, $p = .659$. This, again, is congruent with the results in the paid online sample.

One plausible reason for the difference in main effects in both samples is correlations under .3 are considered weak. Therefore, because the correlations were low, and no demographic was collected, these two studies can be seen as preliminary investigations that need to be re-run and elaborated upon in future studies. It is highly likely that readers of The Irish Times, and people in their social networks are different on a number of salient features than a paid online sample. Future research in this area would benefit from including scales for belief in a just world for self and other to examine whether determining

these beliefs added explanatory power to help comprehend the findings from the basic correlation, and collecting demographic data.

VI. General Discussion

There are multiple reasons for different results between iterations of the experiments reported in studies 1a and 1b. Discrepancy in terms of different means in ages, incomes, and religiosity and conservatism can help account for some of the variance. One group was paid for their time, the other wasn't. The paid online sample were comprised of younger people who earned less money than their counterparts in the other sample. System justification theory predicts those who feel most powerless in society justify the system to a greater degree. Yet this sample showed more support for protest when primed to think Irish people were culpable for the economic crash. This finding is at odds with the qualitative research and a prediction of based on system justification theory. The fact that there was no check to see if the priming had the desired effect is a major limitation of the two studies and underscores any possible insights from the experiments.

The qualitative data suggest that Irish people have a historically ingrained, culturally widespread, belief that in life you get what you deserve. The experimental conditions aimed to manipulate this belief by priming one group of participants to think the actions of ordinary Irish people caused the economic collapse and the other group of participants to think external factors caused it. The results do not support the main hypothesis. Therefore, there is no support to suggest that when Irish people are made to think the actions of

ordinary people caused the economic crisis then they think austerity is fair, blame Irish people more for their role in the crisis, and protest less. In fact, there was some support to suggest that people support protest more under this condition. They do not support the status quo.

One possible reason for the disjunction between the qualitative and quantitative results might be that the manipulation used in the experiment was not effective enough to prime Irish mindsets. Specifically the priming task involved reading, rather than writing, an article. The passive, rather than active, element of the manipulation made it weaker (Oyserman & Lee, 2007). Moreover, the priming assumed a logical jump: when the Irish were made to think actions of ordinary people caused the economic boom, they would assume the financial crisis was caused by the actions of ordinary people. Yet, there is no evidence that people made this assumption. A more effective prime would be to have a more “active” manipulation, where participants had to engage in producing a written sample aimed to manipulating their mindsets more directly with a “reap what you sow” attitude. The task given in the experiment, although apropos of the Irish context, might have been too passive, and weak, to manipulate respondents attitudes to a research question that was very salient and omnipresent in Irish (and global) media at the time.

Another plausible reason for the incongruence between the qualitative and quantitative work is that the dependent measures were not sensitive enough to changes induced by the manipulation. It might have been the case that a stronger manipulation would have shifted the attitudes of even non-marginalized groups to justify the system. Evidence for this

argument might be indicated by the fact that across all these different variables, with decent sample sizes, only one small significant effect was seen. This might be easily expected by chance. Moreover, there was no effect visible in any of the four scales. As measured by these instruments, Belief in a just world for self and other, feelings of guilt and shame, and feelings of control do not influence people's attitudes and perceptions towards various aspects of the 2008 economic crisis.

A fourth reason why the results from the qualitative and quantitative studies didn't show the same conclusions might be the timing of the studies. Social change does not occur in the psychological laboratory. It unfolds in complex contexts, over both historical and immediate timelines, for interrelated social, cultural, economic, political, historical, and legal reasons (Asch, 1952; Power, 2011; Power, forthcoming). Social change occurs in the real world. Interviews with elites in Ireland were conducted in summer 2013. Interviews with unemployed Irish youth were conducted in summer 2014. Beginning in summer 2014, the Irish economic outlook changed. It emerged as the fast growing economy in Europe. On aggregate, the outlook improved. Time had passed since the economic crash in 2008; people had time to think, reflect, and reform their opinions. The next chapter details this changing context and I show empirical evidence examining this societal and economic change. The salient point here is that data collected for these two experimental studies with two randomly sampled groups of Irish people, was collected as the economy improved and as the dust from the crash began to settle. Discourse from the two qualitative studies suggested outward migration also played an important role in determining how austerity was distributed and experienced in Ireland.

Contrary to previous research which suggests people justify the system in which they live if they find it difficult to move (Laurin, Shepherd and Kay, 2010), those Irish people who find it difficult to migrate showed less support for the system in which they lived: they supported civic discontent (study 2a). But this result was not replicated in study 2b.

The failure to reproduce the findings of the migration study on a different sample of Irish respondents reveals the importance of replication. Groups, in different social and economic situations have different opinions, attitudes, and orientations in the world. It is not surprising to find mixed results due to two different sampling methods. One group was economically motivated – they were paid for participation – the others were not. The larger social media sample ($n=352$) as opposed to the paid group ($n=98$) allowed smaller differences to achieve statistical significance. Both of these issues complicate the results because those who are willing to do paid online experiments might be in more need of money and have different representations of the economic crisis and a smaller sample size might not have enough power to reveal statistical differences. It makes it difficult to make solid conclusions. The result of the two correlation studies at best complicates previous work that argued those who cannot easily migrate support the status quo. The most accurate insight that can be gleaned is different socio-economic groups have different attitudes and perceptions towards the consequences and understandings of the 2008 economic crisis.

In contrast to system justification theory, it is also intuitive to think when people don't have an option to leave a place, under difficult circumstances; they will reject the status quo.

This is what the participants in study 2a did. Again, the timing of these studies is important. Both correlational were administered in early 2016, when the Irish economy is improving on aggregate, but when people were protesting against austerity. Mixed findings between samples in both correlational studies supporting fairness of austerity, protest, and attribution of blame, are not surprising. At the time the studies were undertaken there was a growing discourse in Ireland about voting out the government who had overseen an equal economic recovery: there was doubt in the legitimacy of the status quo. A very large sample covering a breath of demographics might have shed more light on to the contradictory evidence presented by these two correlational studies. What the protests signal is a break in legitimacy, which then gets expressed in social and political change. So under this account, the role of culture operates in the first phase of the economic crisis as a conservative force, when the existing order is defended and rationalized. But once there is a break, then a separate set of cultural beliefs come into play, namely, those having to do with the appropriate ways to effect change so as to restore legitimacy.

The failure to replicate the findings from either the experiment or the correlational studies is not surprising given recent analyses that suggest merely 33% of a sample of published psychological work in top journals replicated (Nosek & the open science collaboration, 2015). The findings reported in this chapter add to the chorus of social scientists calling for greater replication of published findings. Science progresses through discoveries than can then be replicated. My findings both add to and complicate previous theories. Before firm conclusions can be drawn, further hypothesis-testing needs to be carried out.

One finding of these attempts to test quantitatively various qualitatively derived hypotheses is that insights from ethnographic work can inform culturally applicable variables (Asch, 1952; Shweder, 2012; Rozin, 2001; 2009, Power et al forthcoming). Experimental social psychology has its roots in contextual research (e.g. Sherif, et al, 1961), yet over time these experiments have become more divorced from lived realities (Power, 2011). Online platforms where participants take numerous studies each hour, and the broader availability of voluntary research subjects on the Internet, means it is easier than ever to test experimental hypotheses. But it comes at a price. Statistically significant results are only meaningful if they can be replicated. And they are only meaningful if these replications based in lived realities. Non-replicated studies (which is a problem regardless of the source of the ideas), abstracted from social realities (lacking validity), must be questioned: this is one important conclusion to be drawn from my series of inconclusive studies.

VI. Summary and preview of the following chapter

Does a belief in “just desserts” hinder protest, increase support for austerity, and effect where blame for the crisis is attributed? And do the Irish who can’t leave the country justify the system? The quantitative work produced mixed substantive results, but clear methodological implications: experiments need replication, they ought to be culturally sensitive, and the results need to be interpreted and understood in light of ethnographic research. In the specific cases outlined here, the studies were administered during an economic recovery, not a recession. It is possible this context influenced the findings that

were largely incongruent with the findings of reported in Chapter 4. And it is also likely there are intergroup differences in attitudes and opinions within the Irish population. Overall, it is possible to conclude different socio-economic groups in Ireland have different attitudes and opinions on the 2008 economic crisis.

The *Deprivation – Protest Paradox* is based on the observation that in Ireland people protested during an economic recovery, not during a recession. The studies undertaken in Chapters 4 and 5 aimed to answer one related question: under what conditions do people accept economic hardship and inequality without engaging in democratic activities to effect change? The qualitative results offer some social, cultural and moral insights in to why the Irish didn't protest, unlike European neighbors such as the Spanish, during an economic recession. Analyses of interview data from public elites and unemployed Irish youth reveal that the Irish passively accepted austerity due to a variety of interrelated cultural and moral psychological reasons. The incongruence of the quantitative research findings at a different time period suggested a shift in context might have led to a shift in attitudes, perspectives, and behaviors such that some people no longer wanted to justify the system, they wanted to change it. Or, given the internally contradictory findings and various failures to replicate, the differences might indicate that the quantitative research was simply unreliable.

The research presented in Chapter 4 offered coherent discursive justification about the reasons why the Irish accepted austerity. The experimental studies were not undertaken to challenge the qualitative findings. They were conducted to provide deeper insight into the

underlying psychological dynamics behind the discursive evidence. It is unfortunate that they do not provide those insights, but this does not undermine the evidence presented in Chapter 4.

The following chapter advances the *Deprivation – Protest Paradox*. The Irish did protest, but during a strong economic recovery. I present evidence to answer the question: under what circumstances does people’s tolerance for economic inequality turn to protest and civic discontent?

Chapter 6

How the perception of unfair economic inequality leads to civic unrest

In this chapter I first discuss contextual shift in Ireland as it transitioned from economic recession to recovery. Next, I detail the data collection for this phase of my project. I introduce the “big three theory of protest.” This theory develops a temporal framework for conceptualizing the motivations and driving forces behind social movements. Collective remembering and imagining inform feelings of relative deprivation in the present. I develop the nuances of this theory in Chapter 7. In the Irish context, these feelings of frustration manifest in protest. I present empirical evidence from my ethnographic research at protests to provide evidence in support of the theory. I end by discussing the implications of this research for comprehending classical formulations of relative deprivation theory and parallels between the Irish and other contemporary cases.

I. The times they are a-changin’

Here I look at the political changes arising from the way the economic crisis was handled. Ireland enjoyed sustained levels of high economic growth for the fifteen years preceding the 2008 financial crisis. This period was commonly known as the “Celtic Tiger.” This economic growth had initially been export-led and driven by a degree of ‘catching-up’ to more developed economies. However, an unsustainable property boom marked the latter years of the Celtic Tiger. The bursting of the domestic property bubble coincided with the onset of the global financial crisis, leading to a sharp and deep recession that saw a virtual collapse of the Irish banking sector. On Monday September 29th 2008, the Irish

government made the controversial decision to safeguard all deposits, bonds, and debts in six failing Irish banks. This decision came to symbolize the difficult and unpopular policy choices successive Irish governments chose to make over the coming years, both fiscal and banking related, which, in turn, set in motion a series of societal and cultural changes that continue to be felt today.

Social change does not occur in the psychological laboratory. It unfolds in complex contexts, over both historical and immediate timelines, for interrelated social, cultural, economic, political, historical, and legal reasons (Rozin, 2001, 2006; Power, 2011, Power et al, forthcoming). Social change occurs in the real world. In the Irish context, a number of salient events occurred that shifted public opinion, and had an effect on the Irish public's understanding of the unfolding economic crisis, and their engagement with democratic activities, particularly in the form of demonstrating.

In summer 2013, a recorded conversation between two prominent members of Anglo Irish Bank, was leaked and was made widely available on social media. Anglo Irish Bank gave large loans to property developers during the boom years of the Celtic Tiger in the late 1990's through to the mid-2000's, in the Republic of Ireland. The conversation, recorded before the Irish government agreed to bailout the ailing Irish banks in 2008, made explicit what many Irish people had since come to suspect: the bankers had lied to the government about the depth of the institution's solvency – they needed more money to shore up the bank, but lied, saying they only needed a fraction of the ultimate bailout required. They reasoned in Ireland, in for a penny, in for a pound.

The lie caused public outrage in the Republic of Ireland. Later, on January 27th, 2016, a banking inquiry commissioned by the Irish government concluded that the Irish public was not culpable for the economic crisis. The responsibility of the financial crisis was placed on risky banking practices, and a failure of EU institutions, not on the actions of the Irish public. The banking inquiry had no power to prosecute those individuals or institutions responsible for causing and exacerbating the crisis, only to identify sources of culpability. The public attribution of blame for the financial crisis, and ensuing austerity, began to change. But the most dramatic shift in context, however, was with the economy.

Following the bursting of a decade-long property bubble coinciding with the onset of the global financial crisis, Ireland suffered a sharp and deep recession that saw a virtual collapse of the domestic banking sector. Real gross domestic product (GDP) fell by almost 10% in 2009 and continued to contract in 2010 and 2011, while unemployment climbed from below 5% in 2007 to reach a peak of 14.7% in 2012. (This compares to a contraction of 2.8% in the United States GDP in 2009, which was swiftly followed by a return to positive GDP growth from 2010, with a peak unemployment rate of 10% in 2009.) Given the scale of the economic headwinds, the Irish Government was forced to seek shelter in the form of an EU-IMF financial assistance program as it lost access to financial markets in the face of a spiraling deficit that reached 32% of GDP in 2010 due to unprecedented capital injections into the banking sector.

In the context of such a sharp decline, the speed of aggregate economic recovery has been rapid. The first shoots were visible in 2013, when real GDP recorded positive growth of

1.1% while Gross National Product (GNP) increased by over 4%. The recovery then boomed the following year, with Ireland claiming the mantle of fastest growing economy in the euro area in both 2014 and 2015, a title which it held on to in 2016. Both GDP and, importantly, GDP per capita – a key measure of living standards – moved above its pre-crisis peak in 2014, a rapid turnaround given the scale of the downturn in Ireland. The improvement in economic performance was strongly led by the exporting sectors in the initial phase, but over the 2015-2016 period the recovery broadened, with domestic demand now also making a significant contribution. While personal consumption had continued to contract in 2013, it recorded positive growth of 1.7% in 2014, which strengthened to an increase of 4.5% in 2015. Although the volatility of Irish national accounts data can make it difficult to measure precisely the strength of economic growth, the broadening of the recovery is evidenced by the performance of the labor market, where the unemployment rate has dipped below 8 per cent, from a peak of 15 per cent in early-2012.

This narrative of objective economic growth has been omnipresent in the public sphere in Ireland since 2013. The country had formally exited the economic recession, it became the first EU country to exit the EU-IMF bailout program, and the economy was heralded as a success story for tightening belts and accepting austerity for longer-term economic growth.

In this context of rapid economic growth and a shift in the attribution of blame for the crisis towards the actions of the financial sector and government, a new charge on water use was introduced.

On December 28th, 2014, Michael D. Higgins, the current President of the Republic of Ireland, signed a controversial Water Services Bill into law. For the first time in their history the Irish public would have to pay directly for the water they consumed in the form of quarterly bills. The enactment of this law has been met with strong opposition from sectors of the Irish public, most visibly in the form of demonstrations.

Ireland previously had water charges that were abolished by the Labour party in December 1996; afterwards, Irish citizens paid for their water through general taxation. In 2010, as part of the terms of an €85bn EU-IMF bailout, the Irish government agreed to reintroduce water charges in three years. At this time, water charges were ubiquitous around the world. Until the reintroduction of water charges in 2014, for example, Ireland was one of the few countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development not to charge directly for consumed water.

The Labour party initially opposed directly charging Irish citizens for water services. Yet, after the 2011 general election their stance shifted. They formed part of a coalition government, led by Fine Gael, and this coalition drafted a new bill to again directly charge the public for water services. However, they did not lower the other tax rates that were previously increased to pay for water services, so this amounted to a tax increase. A semi-state company, Irish Water, was established to oversee the introduction of water services in 2013. It was part owned by the Irish government, and by implication, the Irish people. It also had private shareholders.

Some of the company's early actions created frustration among the Irish public leading to protests and shifting policies. In July 2014, it was announced that the average bill would be €278 for a household comprised of two adults and two children. Water was charged at €4.88 per 1,000 litres. Later, the bill for household water charges was capped at €260 and the cost of 1,000 litres of water was reduced to €3.70. Moreover, the government offered a one time €100 water conservation grant even if you didn't pay your bill. This measure was designed to increase the number of people registering to pay water charges. A change in the pricing structure resulted from civic discontent about this semi-state body expressed in mass demonstrations and national debate in Ireland.

It was also revealed that staff at Irish Water could earn a bonus of up to 19%. The Irish public deemed this unfair, and the controversial "reward scheme" was later suspended. Moreover, mixed messages concerning the requirement of people's Personal Public Service numbers (PPS) generated both anxiety and anger with sectors of the public. This unique identification number is used by members of the public to access resources such as state benefits. When Irish Water requested this number, it was interpreted by some people that Irish Water, supported by the government, would deduct money from people's benefits if they refused to voluntarily pay the water charge. The government used a similar method of payment when they introduced a "local property tax" in summer 2013.

The Tánaiste (deputy Prime Minister) Joan Burton was trapped in her car by water protesters for more than two hours after attending an event in Jobstown, a working class area in Dublin, in November 2014. She pressed charges against the protestors, citing "false

imprisonment.” Later, a 17-year-old boy, who was 15 at the time of the protest, was given a conditional discharge: he could avoid a criminal conviction if he did not reoffend for nine months. The Fine Gael senator, Martin Conway, stated on a popular left-wing political show “water needs to be paid for, it doesn’t just fall out of the sky.” This line was often quoted as presented here, though he did follow it up with the clarification “...it needs to be purified.” The omission of the qualifier is indicative of the zeitgeist at the time: a dislike of politicians, water charges, and the Irish Water company. Phil Hogan, the Irish minister for environment in 2014 said those people who do not pay their water bills, will have their water pressure “turned down to a trickle.” This statement was perceived as a threat by some sectors of the Irish public, who were already increasingly dismayed with the water debacle in Ireland.

In the context of an aggregate economic recovery, following a drastic economic recession, people perceived the introduction and unfolding of these new charges as an unfair “tax” (Power, forthcoming, a, b, c). Summarizing the creation of Irish Water, and the reaction of the public to it, Fergus O’Dowd, the junior minister for Fine Gael, who helped establish the company, called it “an unmitigated disaster.”

Given these reasons, the enactment of the Water Services Bill and the establishment of Irish Water has been met with strong opposition from sectors of the Irish public in the form of local and large-scale anti-water charges demonstrations, clashes and stand-offs with police, and a refusal of many citizens to register to pay this new charge. The charge on water acted

as a concrete focal point to galvanize a broader anti-austerity movement: it was the final straw. Or better, it was the drop that caused the dam to burst.

The Irish suffered austerity as the economy collapsed, endured budgetary cuts, and saw their friends and family migrate, or queue for social welfare. The Irish faced austerity together. But now they heard the economy was improving. Their expectations in an economic boom were especially high, since they had endured austerity for a better tomorrow.

Yet the economic rebound was experienced unequally. Although the aggregate economic growth in Ireland in 2014 and 2015 was staggering, but this aggregate economic growth is disproportionality felt by different social groups within Irish society. The gap between expectations and lived experiences motivates and legitimizes protest in the Irish context.

A satirical letter published in *The Irish Times* summarized this issue:

“Sir, - Paul Krugman has compared our GDP figures to ‘leprechaun economics.’ How ludicrous. Get with the times, Prof Krugman. Nobody believes in economics any more. – Yours, etc, Patricia O’Riordan, Dublin 8.”

This letter, published on Monday, July 18th, 2016, encapsulated the Irish zeitgeist at the time it was published; a distrust of data reporting aggregate economic growth, frustration with official commentators on economic improvement; made manifest, in this case, with satire in the public sphere. The *Deprivation – Protest Paradox* can be explained by the gap between expectations and lived experiences that motivate and legitimize protest in the Irish context (Power, forthcoming a & b; Power & Nussbaum, 2016).

In the remainder of this chapter I outline a theory and supporting data from my interviews and urban ethnographic participant observation at demonstrations in Ireland.

II. The Big Three of Protest: Collective Remembering, Relative Deprivation, and Imagining

Relative deprivation theory can help explain why the Irish protested during an economic recovery, rather than a recession (Pettigrew, 2015, 2016; Power, forthcoming b & d). The skeleton of this theory predicts that when an individual or group compares themselves to salient individuals or groups, and during this comparison, they find themselves lacking, discriminated against, or disadvantaged, this leads to angry frustration. I outlined this theory of relative deprivation in-depth in Chapter 2. I fleshed out the skeleton of this theory by drawing on literature in cultural and moral psychology. In this chapter, I will apply a temporal approach to account for how protests are galvanized and social movements maintained. This new theory, combining literature on relative deprivation, remembering, and imagining, will be articulated in the concluding chapter.

A temporal account of feelings from relative deprivation that draw on cultural and moral psychological insights, may offer a more complete understanding of protest movements. How people remember the past, and imagine the future, impacts what they feel and how they act in the present. In Chapter 3 I illustrated the diverse ways a group of public elites drew on the past to make sense of the present and orient towards future action. They articulated and used a version of the past. But in this chapter I will show that different

social groups, in different socio-economic positions, understand, interpret, and articulate versions of the past in different ways. This analysis of interviews with protesters in Ireland reveals the ways both remembering and imagining inform feelings on relative deprivation that manifest in protest in Ireland.

III. Methods

I interviewed over 150 randomly sampled Irish protesters, of a broad adult age, from all areas of Ireland, from mostly, though not exclusively, working class backgrounds, during a series of demonstrations in Ireland. I also conducted several months of in-depth urban ethnographic work with a core group of anti-water charge demonstrators in a small Irish city. During the urban ethnography and after the national protests I recorded extensive notes to help contextualize my data. These recorded interviews, observations, and associated notes constitute the data for this study.

The analysis involved three stages of coding. First I listened to my recorded interview data and read over my transcriptions and accompanying notes to immerse myself again in the context of these protests. Second, on the basis of this survey, I generated initial codes that identified metaphors, phrases, concepts, and other points of interest that stood out. From this list I tried to group themes together based on this initial thematic coding. At this point it became clear that protesters were not simply talking about what was currently happening in Ireland. Their discourse was saturated, both implicitly and explicitly, with a temporal component. They were positioning their complaints about their situation in the

context of an economic recovery, as well as within a broader historical and future timeline. Once I began re-listening to the recordings, and re-reading notes and transcribed interviews, it was clear that this temporal component encapsulated important themes that could be subsumed within it. This led to a third level of analysis in which I generated three overarching themes, which I call here the “big three of protest: remembering, relative deprivation and imagining.”

The most obvious theme within these three interrelated concepts was relative deprivation. I was not explicitly aware of the rich literature in this area before generating my interview schedule for my first series of interviews with protesters, so I did not frame my questions in these terms a priori. Instead, after introducing myself and asking for informed consent at groups of randomly sampled interviewees, I simply, and naively, asked, “Do you think there is an economic recovery happening in Ireland?” All my interviewees, explicitly or non-verbally thought there was an economic recovery, but they weren’t feeling it, with the exception of one woman. She told me she was feeling some benefits from the economic upturn, but was protesting about cuts to disability services, that affected her disabled daughters quality of life. She was the only participant to discuss disability services directly, though others discussed cuts to public sector funding, including health care.

In this way, all my participants expressed a sense of relative deprivation, which was a connecting theme throughout these interviews. At the local level, participants were interviewed several times throughout the course of three months. Initially I worked with formal interviews, but over time the people I worked with offered their opinions and

thoughts to me spontaneously as I stood watching the protests occur at a local level. My presence in these contexts allowed protesters, construction workers, and police to become familiar with me. In this way, some individuals were effectively “interviewed” multiple times. Quantification of interview material would have concealed the temporal and contextual omni-presence of feelings of relative deprivation if each interviewee had been considered an isolated unit.

Importantly, this social movement had central leadership in the form of *Right2Water* – a conglomerate of activists who provided a central organization that both advertised and legitimized protest. Speeches by trade unionists, community activists, and left wing politicians added further legitimacy to the social movement. They did this by echoing and highlighting discourse in the public domain about perceived social injustices. Another important feature of this social movement is the average age of participants. As might not be expected, it was not young educated students who drove this movement. Rather, it was predominantly middle aged, working class people, who formed the core of these national (and local) demonstrations.

My analysis of the interview material suggested the protesters were using the past and projecting in to the future when discussing relative deprivation. They were locating criticisms of the government in a broader context, which included what had happened and what they imagined might happen. This informed their feelings of relative deprivation, which were expressed in the localized situation. As such, the third level of analysis suggested themes of remembering, deprivation, and imagining were overarching and

interrelated across all interviews. Quantification of these themes has the benefit of increasing reliability of the frequency of these observations. However, I will postpone discussion about the benefits of quantitative findings until the next chapter in order to focus here on a qualitative analysis of rich, thickly descriptive ethnographic data. That is, for the present purpose, the rough three tier thematic analysis provided a sufficiently semi-flexible and novel framework to capture important psychological processes underlying the emergence of a sequence of interrelated national and local anti-austerity protests. And interpreting and articulating and nuances, discrepancies, as well as themes that are implicitly, not just explicitly, articulated by protesters.

My analysis of interviews with anti-austerity protesters at a series of national protests in Dublin, Ireland, and interviews and urban ethnographic observations with a core group of anti-water-charges protesters, in a small Irish city, reveal how protesters use both the past and the present in form their feelings in the present. These feelings are of relative deprivation. They manifest in a democratic activity – demonstrating – to effect social, political, and economic change. The analysis reveals an omnipresent acknowledgement of an unfair gap between those who are benefitting from the economic recovery and those who are not. To elaborate upon this identification, interviewees had a range of complaints based on their individual subjective experiences. People were frustrated with the lack of government action to alleviate the homeless crisis throughout the country; the rising cost of living; the perception the police supported the government and corporate interests, not ordinary people; the lack of credible job opportunities; the state of the national public health service. These frustrations often manifested themselves in moral appraisals:

interviewees voiced dissatisfaction with the government and related institutions, which oversaw an unequal economic recovery. They are represented as being morally culpable for this unequal recovery, which they judge to be unfair. Moreover, blame that might have been attributed to the actions of ordinary Irish people for causing the economic recession was deflected from this population. Blame was placed at the feet of officials in the government and related financial institutions. Protesters called for the government to be voted out of power. In this new context, it is the government, not the people, who must reap what they sow.

Protesters specifically imagine an immoral future, where water is privatized. This privatization is seen as a further manifestation of unfair austerity and a further step towards a widening gap between the rich and the rest. Protesters articulate what ought to happen in order to make Irish society more equitable. The leap from what is happening, to what should be happening, is one process that motivates and justifies protest in order to realize their imagined Ireland. In order to add legitimacy to their idealized future society, they locate their imaginations by detailing past examples where privatization of resources, both in Ireland and abroad, are remembered and are used to articulate what they perceive will happen in Ireland. The imaginings of current protesters is to realize the next step of these previous ambitions for a fairer Ireland where there is social and economic equality for all.

III. Remembering and imagining the privatization of water

In the Irish case, however, protesters also recall the past to strive towards their imagined social worlds. I spoke to one young man in his early 20's as we walked together on one

demonstration in January 2015. He told me he went to earlier protests in Ireland aimed at highlighting the importance of having a referendum on gay marriage. A referendum did take place, legalizing gay marriage in Ireland the previous year. That was his first engagement with demonstrations, although he said, "I have been political all my life." Like all of my respondents, he too identified a gap between a rosy narrative he was hearing in terms of economic recovery, and his lived reality. He went to university during the economic recession – paid for by himself he said – to study accountancy. Weathering austerity in the sanctuary of university, he believed he would reap the rewards of his hard work. On graduating, he found full time and permanent work impossible to find. He told me he works on a controversial "Job-bridge scheme". This program requires people to accept jobs that are offered to them for a slight pay increase on their core social welfare payments. The disjunction between expectations for an imagined future where there was a fair economic recovery and lived subjectivities where people are forced to take jobs they may not want creates frustration. The Irish protested during an economic recovery when a new charge on water was introduced. It was the final straw for the protesters. When I asked this respondent why he was on a protest today, he told me:

"The aim of today's protest is to stop the privatization of essential services. This has been an [government] agenda that has been followed throughout this country over the past twenty years an agenda that has roots in neoliberal economics, which is a doctrine that preaches that the state should not have assists, that the state should not provide services, everything should be left to the private market, which I feel is completely wrong because the private market cannot provide essential services to the poorest people in society. Because, why does a business exist? To produce, to make a profit, you cannot make a profit for providing services for people who do not have money. So that is the aim here. Water is an essential service, no human being can live without it, and it should not be in the hands of the private sector."

This response reveals how the dual processes of remembering and imagining inform moral judgments that legitimize and justify protest. This interviewee begins answering my question about the aims of the protest by articulating a future scenario where the Irish government sells the semi-state Irish Water (the company set up to administer the water charges in Ireland) to a private corporation. My respondent imagines a continuation of a recent historical trend in Ireland: the privatization of state owned companies. He made a moral judgment when he said, "I feel (this) is completely wrong." Imagining the privatization of the "essential" water services in Ireland, by drawing on neoliberal policies of the past, he justifies the aims of the protest: stopping Irish Water now, before an essential service is out of the control of the State, and by implication, out of the control of Irish people.

Imagining the privatization of Irish Water is a common theme across my interviews with demonstrators. I spoke to a married couple, who told me they were both retired, meaning they were over the age of 65. During the course of our interview the woman spoke more, although the man chimed in to agree and extend points his wife made. I spoke to them as a protest got underway: people began marching from Connolly train station in Dublin, towards the city center. When I asked, "why are you guys here today?" the woman told me:

"We are protesting about the water charges. They [the government] brought it in, it was set up as a company [Irish Water], with shares in it, but what is going to happen, in a few years down the road, they will be forced to sell it to repay the company and this thing happened in Bolivia a couple of years ago and the people could not afford [to pay], they wanted a loan from the IMF [International Monetary Fund], the IMF gave them a loan on the condition they privatize their water and the water got so expensive that the people couldn't afford water. There was a revolution in the country, the government had to leave the buildings by helicopter, and the company was thrown out of the country. People don't want to see this happening to this country."

The answer provided by this woman shares psychological processes with the previous respondent, and also elaborates on his future projections. This retiree also uses imagination and memory to justify her reasons for being on the protest. She initially spoke in the present tense: “we are protesting about the water charges.” But in her next sentence she draws on the past and projects in to the future to explain her opening statement. In the recent past, the government established the semi-state Irish Water company, yet suggests that in the future it will be privatized. There is an implicit moral judgment articulated by the respondent: the privatization of water is morally wrong. She imagines a revolutionary scenario occurring in Ireland similar to the one that happened in Bolivia. When water services were privatized in that country, the corporation overseeing water and sanitation services charged prices for water consumption that some citizens couldn’t afford. When this natural resource - a “fundamental human right” as many of my respondents referred to it - is threatened violent protest can occur. My interviewee implies a similar future awaits Irish people if water services are privatized. Therefore it is imperative to stop this imagined privatization in the present. Memories of the Bolivian experience inform how this respondent imagines a future Ireland that leads to democratic action in the present. I heard a common chant at these national protests that confirms an anti-privatization sentiment across, and beyond, my sample: “From the rivers to the sea, Irish water will be free!”

Remembering the past informs imagined representations of the future and can impact thoughts and behaviours in the present. This line of logic extends beyond the concrete representations of what the future holds – such as the privatization of water services – to a more general articulation of an unfair and dystopian society.

After each of the national demonstrations reached their endpoint, there were a series of speeches given by left-wing politicians, community activists, poets and musicians, and trade unionists. Each speech reflected some of the themes from my interviews: people highlighted a variety of social injustices beyond water charges. In one speech, a community activist drew on a depiction of a violent past to generate a picture of a more dystopian future and to raise the possibility of an overly utilitarian society. He stated:

“Irish Water is a symptom, the IMF [International Monetary Fund] is the disease. And until everyone here has realized that, and joined the dots, and realizing that this isn’t just about the water, it’s about the prostitution of this island...it’s about how they bought and sold us like cattle at a market, and we swallowed what they told us and tore ourselves apart. It is meant to be divisive; it’s about them and us. Instead we should unite again, to stand as men, women, and children, whose time has come to say the system isn’t working and there must be a better way. There must be a fairer future where our children won’t be forced to leave, where they find a future where they believe this island will belong to us once more and not the corporations that have risen to the fore. But for all that we march, we need to keep this in perspective: that the privatization of water is an IMF directive. And the IMF themselves, for those who cannot yet see, are trying to write the manuscript for modern history. So it’s not as simple as demanding that water charges are abolished, to my understanding it is their objective to demolish the notion of a nation state for all that it once stood for.”

This activist created two competing visions for the future. First, he draws on the past privatization of Ireland, to project an image where there is continued “prostitution” of Irish resources, including water. This makes an inequitable Ireland: a division between “them and us,” between those that benefit from neoliberal privatization espoused by the International Monetary Fund, and those who do not. Increased corporate influence in Ireland, he warned, will erode the nation state and by implication, increase inequality. But he also imagines and articulates an alternative future where all citizens “unite” to create a fairer and “better” system, where he imagines that “our children” will have a “fairer future.”

One concrete effect of this change would be to mitigate waves of historical migration from Ireland during times of economic hardship (see Power, 2015; 2016).

In the localized Irish context, imagining the future is formed by the past. It galvanizes, legitimizes, and drives protests in the present. Interview and ethnographic data reveal imaginations of the future are proximal and distal. The two interview extracts are proximal: the imaginings are specifically grounded in immediate fears of privatization of Irish Water. The speech extract reveals a distal imagining: it is a general articulation of dystopian effects of neoliberal policies: the eroding of the nation state, and country specific ways of living a moral life. A second distal narrative for a future society was articulated: a more utopic and fair society, a return to the moral norms, of a fair, and inclusive nation state.

IV. Relative Deprivation

Reflecting on the initial Irish response to imposed austerity since 2008 my respondents during these national demonstrations provide a number of reasons and justifications for the initial Irish malaise. The dominant metaphor used is that the Irish were asleep, and now are finally awakening. They now clearly see the social injustices. The unequal recovery is viewed as unjust because there is a belief that everyone endured austerity and therefore are entitled to be rewarded during an economic recovery. Now only some people are reaping the benefits for this collective hardship. The rising tide should raise all boats. But in Ireland, this is not the case.

One woman in her late fifties draws on Irish history to explain why the Irish didn't protest when austerity was first introduced, but explains how they learned to do it - and feel justified demonstrating - with the introduction of water charges:

"The Irish don't have a history of protest. They either have a history of revolution or immigration. So protest is the one in the middle. And they are just finally learning this one. I don't think they are ready to have a revolution because in Northern Ireland they know what it is like. They know how painful it is. And they are fed up immigrating; although our youth are still emigrating. My daughter is heading off to New Zealand soon. So, the people who are not migrating now are finally awakening and realizing that there is another option. And that is to protest and that's where it is going now."

This passage dovetails with previous work, which suggested Irish people remembered the past, particularly a history of migration and violence in Northern Ireland, to articulate cultural and moral reasons why the Irish initially passively accepted austerity (Chapter 4). Moreover, it resonates with current research also illustrating the ways in which protesters recall a version of the past, to understand, and rationalize the present. In this extract, this respondent suggests Irish protesters, including her, have awakened, and have learned to protest. In the context of the interview, it is clear that other measures - such as migration or revolution - have been responses to Irish hardship in other historical epochs, but the democratic process of protesting and voting as a legitimized and effective means to have one's voice heard has emerged as an option. The Irish have "finally realized" protesting is an "option" to mitigate social injustice and create societal change. This comment also highlights a possible cultural manifestation explaining the passive Irish response to austerity in relation to Greece. The Irish did not have an easily acceptable cultural script (Wertsch, 2008), and institutional frameworks, to galvanize protest --until water charges were introduced.

Pursuing this point in order to comprehend why protesters were demonstrating during an economic upturn, rather than a recession, I asked them “Do you think there’s an economic recovery ongoing in Ireland?” I approached one group of protesters, one woman who did most of the talking during the interview, and several men. All were middle aged, and spoke with what I interpreted as working-class Dublin accents. They responded, in quick and overlapping answers, to my question about whether there was an economic recovery in Ireland, and said:

“Woman: Not for us

Man 1: Not for ordinary people

Man 2: Not for us, not for the ordinary Joe Soap (i.e. Joe Blow)

Man 1: Not for the ordinary people. For the rich alright

Woman: I mean how are things different? I am certainly not different.

Man 2: I’m a taxi driver. I was out for eight hours last night and earned 40 euro.”

In this case, people are evaluating their personal situations as worse even though on average the economy is improving. These protesters hear things are getting better – things are “different” with the economy. But they are not experiencing this economic growth in a meaningful way in their lives. The second man’s report of how little he’s earning gives an empirical illustration of how he is no better off in the aggregate economic upturn. Although indicators, such as GDP, illustrate strong economic growth in Ireland, these aggregate increases are not reflected in working-class people’s everyday experiences. The taxi-driver reported earning a paltry 40 Euro for eight hours work. It is an illustration of the ways economic growth is not translated into increased wages for “the ordinary Joe Soap.”

I approached a lone protester who agreed to share his thoughts about the economic situation in Ireland. I asked him too whether he believed there was an ongoing economic recovery in Ireland. His answer chimed well with many others reported by the demonstrators, illustrating a narrative of objective economic growth that was not experienced equally among all sectors of Irish society.

“SP: Do you feel there is an economic recovery going on?”

Man: Not for us (referring to others on the protest)

SP: Do you think there is for anyone?

Man: Well, for a very small proportion of people. If you look at the very wealthiest people in society they have almost doubled their wealth over the last ten years. For the 1%, their wealth has grown on average by 7% per year since 2008. For me, and for people under 25, there has been no recovery whatsoever.”

Again it is clear this respondent is making a comparison with a relevant group in Ireland: even though he was alone in the crowd at the protest, he articulates a clear division between “us” and “a small proportion of wealthy people.” He clearly perceives himself as being disadvantaged in comparison, as relative deprivation theory would predict. The wealthy elite is getting richer in contemporary Ireland but “there has been no recovery whatsoever” for him or others like him. From his perspective, as articulated in other comments during our talk, he, and others in the 99%, are equally as capable, hardworking, and deserving as the 1%, yet they are not reaping the benefits of the economic upturn. He told me that despite his efforts to find a job, he is unemployed. The wealthy, not ordinary people, are harvesting the benefits of the aggregate economic upturn.

In sum, protesters were aware there was an objective economic recovery in Ireland – the notion was omnipresent in the public sphere at the time of these interviews. But they were equally clear that it was not being felt equally for all members of Irish society in their subjective lived experiences. Given this, it is important to comprehend the culturally and temporally specific themes these individuals protested about, and how it relates to motivating demonstrations in the first place.

My earlier research presented in Chapters 4 and 5 illustrated the ways in which both public elites, and unemployed Irish youth, had a tendency to partially blame the economic crisis on the actions of ordinary Irish people. So, in the context of economic recovery, I asked protesters “Who, if anyone, do you blame for the economic crisis in Ireland?” and they put the responsibility firmly at the feet of the political and banking elite in the Republic of Ireland. This stands in stark contrast to earlier interview data which suggested blame for the economic crisis was distributed towards a variety of sources, inclusive of the actions of the Irish public. A man approaching his sixties summarized the views of many other protesters I spoke to during these demonstrations thus:

Man: “We blame the elite for the economic recession. We well understand, the ordinary punter [gambler] understands, that if he goes into Ted Rogers (a place where you can gamble) and puts a bet down on a horse, if he loses that money it’s gone. The stock market is designed in such a way that it’s supposed to be a gamble. So when people lose their money on the stock market they should lose. The government shouldn’t turn around and tell the Irish people for generations to come to pay off these particular bankers and these particular people. And while it has taken the Irish people a little while to get moving they are becoming awake and aware. And they’ve had enough...and that’s the reason why you have tens of thousands of people out here today.”

On September 29th, 2008, the Irish government made the controversial decision to guarantee the six failing Irish banks at the expense of the taxpayer. My respondent is explicitly referring to this controversial action. The bankers and investors gambled with their money, and lost, and it is not right for them to be bailed out after losing. Like the Irish who accepted austerity because they felt culpable, these gambling bankers should reap what they sowed. The fact that they haven't gotten what they deserved is "the reason why you are going to have tens of thousands of people out on the streets." The sense of injustice galvanizes this social movement. I interviewed a couple, and the women – again, middle aged – revealed that it was the introduction of the tax on water that served as a focal point for this social movement, but it has developed beyond this. Another manifestation of the gap between rising expectations and lived realities appeared in morally charged narratives about the homeless crisis in Ireland that was making headlines, being particularly stark in contrast to stories of strong economic recovery:

Woman: "It's not right, the children are being brought up in hotels, because their homes have been taken from them, because they can't afford the mortgage. It's just not right, you should just let them rent a house, they may never own it, but so what, at least they have a roof over their head. We are here today against the water charges, but actually, it's everything, it's no longer only the water, it's a lot of other things."

Although the introduction of the tax on water initially galvanized a protest movement, it mobilized people to protest against what they perceived as growing economic inequality in Ireland. According to my respondent, people are not just against water charges, "but really it is everything," referring to a multitude of social problems and injustices, including homelessness. And indeed, there is a homeless crisis in Ireland, particularly prevalent in

urban areas, such as Dublin. Another demonstrator I spoke to on the streets of Dublin emphasized this issue when he told me:

Man: “Well, there is an awful lot [of people], especially in the lower class, that don’t even have a roof over their head at the moment. Some of them live in cars and all because they can’t afford rent. Governments seem to be putting it on the back burner all the time.”

A well-documented feature of the Irish economic recovery was the decrease in the number of unemployed people in Ireland. As recorded earlier, this reached its peak in February 2012, at 15.1% and was at 7.8% in June 2016. However, it is important to note that these figures are confounded due to high rates of migration from Ireland. If migration didn’t occur in Ireland following the economic collapse, it might be assumed the number of unemployed people in the country would be higher. Still, many protesters dismissed the decrease in unemployment as creative bookkeeping by the government and their officials. The claim is the figures might be officially falling, but the reality behind this decline is not reported on, or revealed, by the media, or the government. Although unemployment figures are officially falling, many people are unhappy with being required to work on “job-bridge” schemes. This program requires people to accept jobs that are offered to them for a slight pay increase on their core social welfare payments. If they refuse, they cannot claim any social welfare. Some protesters are dissatisfied with the types of jobs available and others are unhappy with the conditions of work. For example, this middle-aged protester articulated a representative position:

Man: “Next they [the government] will be selling us, and we will be going into slavery. They have these schemes set up; it’s called Job Bridge. It’s slavery. It’s slavery. It’s designed to enslave a person and to make the books look good for Europe and America. To say: ‘Oh look what we done. We have 100,000 jobs extra.’ It’s all bullshit. It’s fiddling books while getting people to work for free.”

Another manifestation of the disjunction between the narrative of objective economic recovery, and subjective lived experiences, is revealed in discourse about the cost of living in contemporary Ireland. This woman, who was accompanied by four other middle-aged women and one man, highlighted this issue when she said:

Woman: "There is far too much austerity on ordinary people, on ordinary working class people, and even middle income people, are being crucified with high taxation, with motor tax, petrol tax, VAT [Value Added Tax], everything, everything you buy in this country, this, it's far too dear, it's far too expensive...and at the same time the politicians are getting these lucrative wages and salaries, expenses and travel costs, and it is unbelievable what they get."

This protester is making comparisons between "ordinary people" and other comparable groups - in this case, political elites - and she finds that they are disadvantaged in comparison, as relative deprivation theory suggests. She said, "There is too much austerity on ordinary people." In contrast "the politicians are getting lucrative wages." This leads to angry frustration and this manifests as her taking to the streets to demonstrate against this perceived unfair inequality.

At the end of these protests, organized by the group *Right2Water*, speeches were often given by left wing politicians, trade unionists, and community activists. These were often skilled orators, and often drew on revolutionary aspects of Irish history as they spoke from stages constructed near salient locations in Irish revolutionary history, to remind the crowd of previous Irish victories over perceived social injustices. They purposely create parallels between previous Irish social movements and current injustices, such as water charges, homelessness, rising prices, and inadequate jobs. Summarizing these grievances,

and spoken with rousing vigor, one prominent left-wing politician, Mary-Lou McDonald, of the Sinn Fein political party, said:

“Let no one be in any doubt that our demand will be an end to water charges and to Irish Water [the company set up to oversee the installation of water meters to determine the amount of what each household used, and what they should be charged], and the beginning of a society based on equality, decency, fairness, and full citizenship for every single one of us, and that means a roof over every citizen's head, that means decent work, that means a decent chance, and fair taxation.”

On February 26th, 2016, the Irish electorate used the central democratic tool at their disposal to vote out the government who oversaw the dramatic economic recovery, with independents and left-wing politicians who campaigned on abolishing water charges, gaining much parliamentary power. Though the protesters were effective in getting their voice heard, the major party – Fine Gael - who oversaw the economic recovery, continued to cling to power in an unstable and minority government (at the time of writing).

On the one hand, the Irish public understands there is an aggregate economic recovery, that official government figures all indicate strong growth. Yet many segments of society are unhappy because they are not experiencing this economic growth in a meaningful way in their everyday lives. Although the Irish accepted the yoke of austerity as the economy collapsed, protests were eventually galvanized and legitimized in the context of an unequally shared economic recovery that led to a feeling of relative deprivation. The *Deprivation - Protest Paradox* means there was no protest for shared absolute deprivation but there was a strong protest movement for relative deprivation.

The disjunction between what people expected to happen, and what did happen, led to angry frustration when one group compared themselves to others, and found themselves disadvantaged. This manifests overall in protesting on the streets and in voting out the governing party. Within this context, my analysis reveals how complaints about the unfair economic recovery are both shared by protesters and yet also heterogeneous in content. Protesters told me about inaccurate employment figures; the homeless crisis; the rising cost of living; the water charges and other taxes; and the initial blame for the economic crisis. Their lived experiences reveal the reasons why the Irish protested during an economic recovery.

The Deprivation – Protest Paradox sheds light on a counter intuitive process. When the Irish economy collapsed, few people demonstrated, and there was little to no violence on the streets. However, when the Irish economy boomed in 2014 & 2015, there were mass anti-austerity demonstrations, stand offs and clashes with the police, the refusal of many people to pay a new tax on water, and other forms of civic unrest. The introduction of water charges galvanized a broader anti-austerity social movement. It was the final straw. It acted as a central idea on which to hook a wider plethora of perceived social injustices.

There is historical precedent for social movements arising during economic recoveries. De Tocqueville (1856/1955) observed a related pattern of revolt and civic unrest in France preceding the French Revolution (1789). More recently, the “Occupy Wall Street” protests occurred across the USA not during the economic collapse in 2007-2008 but when the US economy was growing under the Obama presidency in 2011. Again, this social movement

occurred when the overall economy was objectively improving, but not equally, and not for everyone. This created a sense of unfair economic inequality. It created a growing distinction between the “haves” and “have not’s.” This notion was captured by the well-known trope of the Occupy social movement: “The 1% vs. the 99%”: an idea not lost on the Irish respondents.

V. Relative Deprivation: Extending the theory and joining it with other case studies

In the United States, the perception of relative deprivation since the Occupy Protests has led to further polarization between the two primary political parties. The rise of right-wing Donald Trump for the Republicans and the socialist Bernie Sanders can be seen as a manifestation of perceived unfair disparity. Both politicians tapped into the large swaths of the US population who felt Obama’s economic recovery had not meaningfully impacted their everyday lives. President Trump said he wanted to make America great again by attempting to create a more homogenous USA, with supposed implications for the creation of more jobs and a more economically fair country. Sanders envisioned a more inclusive and heterogeneous USA, but shares a tactic with Trump, to highlight perceived social injustices and relative deprivation of the majority in relation to minority cultural and ethnic groups in the US. His rhetoric is also concerned with creating a more equal and fair society when the growing gap between the 1% and the 99% is reduced. Trump’s case for creating a more culturally and ethnically more homogenous society in order to create more wealth equality dovetails with one prediction of the *Equality – Difference Paradox* outlined Chapter 2: according to the Gini Index of economic performance, the more homogenous a

country the less economic inequality there is. Sanders conceptualized a culturally heterogeneous US society, along with improved and fairer income distribution. This prediction is incongruent with the *Equality – Difference Paradox*.

The Irish case study clearly has parallels, particularly with the unfolding US economic and political context. The *Deprivation – Protest Paradox*, outlined in my analysis in the localized Irish context, highlights the need to extend relative deprivation theory in a globalizing and culturally pluralizing world. In its classic format, supported by experimental psychological research, the relative deprivation theory posits that when an individual or group compares themselves to a salient individual or group and finds that they are lacking, or disadvantaged against, this leads to angry frustration (Pettigrew, 2015; 2016).

Insights derived from the *Deprivation – Protest Paradox*, which dovetail with cultural psychological work on the principle of “universals without the uniformity” complicate basic relative deprivation theorizing. Group comparisons, relative feelings, and the manifestation of anger (if any) all depend on the cultural groups embedded in broader historical, social, moral, economic, political, and legal contexts.

In contemporary Ireland, the protesters are not comparing themselves to some other potentially salient social groups e.g. Syrian asylum seekers, African refugees, or famous Irish celebrities or sports stars, all of whom are in far worse or far better social and economic statuses, and are potentially comparable. The leaders and supports of this anti-austerity social movement make certain and precise comparisons: between those who are

obviously benefitting from the recovery, and those – like them – who hear about it, endured austerity in various forms, to various degrees, - but are not experiencing it in their everyday lives. The salient group – similarly to the US Occupy Movement – is between the haves and the have not's. Future research needs to examine the ways in which relevant reference groups are chosen, and why.

The temporal dimension helps account for this. Interestingly, not one Irish protester said that those who are currently benefitting from the economic recovery lost more in the economic downturn. Although Irish protesters draw on the past to make sense of the present, they draw on a particular version of the past. They do not recall the effects of the downturn had on those who had most to lose. They only see unequal recovery. Not unequal recession. This highlights issues of perceived absolutism. The protesters remember enduring austerity – of being on the border of actual poverty if their social welfare is cut – and therefore austerity measures affect them more deeply. In contrast, they believe the downturn for those wealthier people has a lesser effect, even though in objective terms their relative loss is greater. The temporal unfolding of events, and how these are remembered, is important to conceptualize to understand economic crises and the rise of protests.

Previous work has argued that revolutions are most likely to occur when a prolonged period of socioeconomic development is followed by a short and quick reversal of this upswing (Davies, 1962). This temporal account differs from mine in a number of respects. First, in the Irish case, a prolonged period of economic growth was followed by a sharp

recession in 2008. However, people did not protest at this point. Instead, as I have documented in Chapter 4, the Irish endured austerity as the economy receded and stagnated. Second, the Irish protested during an economic recovery, not decline: this observation contradicts previous temporal accounts of relative deprivation. Moreover, the application of cultural psychological processes of remembering and imagining develops previous temporal accounts of relative deprivation by providing an extended analytic framework to comprehend cultural constructions of the past and future and the comprehend the impact these processes have on feelings of relative deprivation in the present.

In the Irish context, like the US Occupy movement, the manifestation of my culturally sensitive “big three of protest” is legal protest, overseen by the police and the tactics they use to control demonstrators to keep the peace. It is easy to imagine how perceptions of unfair economic inequality can manifest in more violent behaviors. Greece and Spain, for example, have seen protesters clash with riot police in Athens and Madrid since the global crisis began in 2008 (Power, 2015; Power & Nussbaum, 2014). Similarly, in more dictatorial societies, agents of the State – inclusive of (secret) police – might prevent assembly in the form of peaceful protest (Moghaddam, 2013). Another manifestation might be the rise of satire in Ireland to highlight societal, economic, and political injustices. Voting in rival political parties or a realignment of political allegiances to form governments is another. Therefore the manifestation, if any, of angry frustration resulting from social comparisons depends on what is, and has historically been, allowed.

Cultural manifestations of temporal events are steeped in historical, economic, political, and legal contexts have implications for basic relative deprivation theory, that is primarily supported by experimental work, despite having its origins in qualitative research. The theory needs elaboration in a globalizing and culturally pluralizing world. It needs to answer questions about who compares who to whom, how, why, with what outcomes (if any).

First, salient reference groups are potentially shifting. Analyses of the Arab Spring (Moghaddam, Warren, & Vance-Cheng, 2012) for example, illustrate the ways in which young people in North Africa are forming “cognitive alternatives” about how their worlds could or should be, by exposure to western media, including Internet sources. However, the daily-lived experiences of North African youth are unlike their media consumption. Like the Irish case, a sense of relative deprivation arises – between what people think the world could or should be like, and its actuality. Moghaddam, Warren, and Vance-Cheng (2012) show how cognitive alternatives can galvanize social movements. In the North African context – and perhaps globally – reference groups are not necessarily within physical boundaries. Salient groups can be online, imagined, or peripherally or partially known; either through media or the Internet: lifestyles can be misunderstood, misinterpreted, or idealized beyond actuality. Despite these potential inaccuracies, these imagined other social realities could potentially create angry frustration. This happened in the Irish case. The manifestation of rising expectations – either realized, partially, in full, or not at all, depends on broader contextual issues.

The *Deprivation - Protest Paradox* is fundamental to understand protest and economic development in a globalizing and culturally pluralizing 21st century. The Irish case study dovetails with large scale “Occupy Wall Street” protests in the USA when an unequal economic recovery followed the great recession of 2008.

Above a perceived level of absolute deprivation – where one struggles for the basics in life, as might be seen in economic protests in Venezuela due to food shortages in 2016, - relative deprivation is experienced due to the perception of increasing relative disadvantage during economic growth. All Irish citizens experienced austerity in some form. Their complaints were situated in the localized Irish context, informed by moral imaginings, and by using of the past, to articulate a series of problems with contemporary Irish society. The government was seen as illegitimate and had to be voted out of power. Protesting highlighted this representation of the government. According to the demonstrators, political change needed to occur. Followed by economic change. The distribution of economic resources during the recovery didn't need to be uniform. It needed to be perceived as being fair. There is not a moral foundation for economic equality, just fairness of distribution (Tyler, 2011).

Chapter 7

Conclusion

In this conclusion, I first summarize the literature reviews of Chapters 1 and 2. Next I turn my attention to the *Deprivation – Protest Paradox*: I outline the main findings of the three empirical chapters. I discuss limitations of these studies and ways to overcome these shortcomings in future work. Next, I develop the findings from this chapter by articulating a new theory aimed at providing a framework to understand social movements. The “big three of protest: remembering, imagining, and relative deprivation” are offered as three interrelated ways to comprehend social change through democratic engagement over time. I outline ways to test this theory in future research. After this, I describe “The S.A.G.E. model of social psychological research.”

I. Summary of findings, limitations, and future research

Global economic inequality is increasing (Atkinson, 2015; Chin & Culotta, 2014; Dorling, 2015; Piketty, 2014; Suez & Piketty, 2014). In this dissertation I have demonstrated that economic protests and riots can occur due to the perception of economic inequality, not from economic inequality itself. It is therefore important to understand the psychological dynamics behind responses to increases in wealth and income disparities. The central question that I examined in my dissertation was to explain why did the Irish accept austerity as the economy receded only to protest during a recovery. By answering this question, I wanted to inform our understanding of two larger and related questions: under what conditions do people accept economic inequality without engaging in democratic

activities to affect change; and under what conditions does their tolerance turn to protesting and other forms of civic engagement?

It is clear from the evidence presented in this dissertation that people do not demand a perfectly equal Pareto-type distribution of resources. People do not require parity. They certainly do not care enough about it to take to the streets to make optimal distribution of economic resources from which it is impossible to reallocate so as to make any one individual better off without making at least one individual worse off. Instead, they want equity, that is, a distribution of economic resources that is deemed fair. But Irish people do not accept growing income or economic equality that they deem unfair. In this sense, there is no “equality” moral foundation. There is only a fairness, or proportionality, foundation (Haidt, 2012; Starmans, Sheskin, and Bloom, 2017). The tipping point from tolerance of economic inequality to intolerance is culturally specific to the extent that notions of fairness are culturally specific. A mathematical formula will not capture this tipping point. Humans are subjects, not objects: theories and methodologies aimed at understanding cultures and moral reasoning, rather than bleaching human life of these subjectivities, is needed (Power, 2014). People don’t simply respond directly to objective economic conditions, but to their subjective experiences and what they think those experiences mean (Power and Nussbaum, 2016).

In the opening chapter I presented two narratives of capitalism. The first story focused on the ubiquity of rising economic inequality, particularly income inequality, throughout the capitalist world since the 1970s. I discussed the omnipresence and moralization of this

phenomenon among social scientists, economists, and politicians. Rising wealth-and-income inequality is considered immoral: it is a phenomenon that must be alleviated. Yet we live in the most prosperous and peaceful time in human history (Pinker, 2011; Poser, 2016). The second story emphasized how industrial capitalism began lifting hundreds of millions of people out of poverty (Haidt, 2015). It led to increased life expectancy, the formalization and proliferation of educational opportunities, increased international trade and globalization.

Economic inequalities have become stark: the richer become richer and leave the rest in their wake. I highlighted reports from Oxfam illustrating the accumulation of much of the world's wealth in the hands of a tiny minority. I discussed some implications of this trend for democratic processes. In particular, I highlighted how democratic elections are unduly influenced by wealth, which helps separate people from engaging in democratic activities.

In order to find common ground between the two narratives of capitalism, and their implications for democracies, I reported on relevant social psychological literature. The dominant conclusion from this research is that people do not demand economic parity: they do not necessarily want equal distribution of economic resources, such as wealth and income. They want economic equity: they want a distribution of economic resources that is perceived to be fair. This finding motivates the two related questions driving my research: under what conditions can and do residents of democracies tolerate inequality without engaging in democratic activities to effect social change? And under what circumstances does their tolerance turn to protest and other forms of democratic engagement?

I ended Chapter 1 by suggesting the answer to these questions can inform how the two seemingly opposing narratives of capitalism can modulate on another, via democratic activities, such as protesting and voting. Both narratives of capitalism are needed for human development. Too much emphasis on one obscures the important aspects of the other. Too much focus on redistributing wealth from a tiny minority deflects from a more pressing moral concern: alleviating poverty (Frankfurt, 2015). But over- emphasis on generating economic growth shifts emphasis from the well being of people who live within economic systems. It also neglects the detrimental role unequal economic distributions have on democratic processes (Moghaddam, forthcoming).

Narratives of capitalism, globalization, inequality, and morality all occur in historical and cultural contexts. In Chapter 2 I reviewed literature on the related topics of culture, economics, and development. I drew on research from across the social sciences to illustrate the importance of understanding cultural context to comprehend economic systems. People are embedded within these economic and cultural systems and experience and understand them from this position. The literature on the history of economics revealed a cyclical history of booms and busts over the last 800 years. I highlighted notable detractors from the idea that cultural considerations are important to understanding economics (Diamond, 1997; Sachs, 2000; 2005). However, a broad range of research from multiple disciplines and using different methods of measurement documents that cultural factors do play key roles in shaping economic processes and outcomes (Banfield, 1958; Harrison & Huntington, 2000; Landes, 1999; Weber, 1905/2009; 1951; 1958). The *Equality*

– *Difference Paradox* highlights the interaction between culture and economics (Jindra, 2014; Minnow, Shweder & Markus, 2008; Shweder, 2017; Shweder & Power, 2013).

The two narratives of capitalism, highlighting different effects of economic growth, occur in historical and cultural contexts. Culture matters in understanding economic growth and development. Therefore, culture matters in terms of understanding how to think through the two narratives of capitalism. The democratic activities, such as protesting, that help modulate these two primary forces of human development occur within distinct socio-cultural, historical, political, legal, and moral contexts. To understand the circumstances under which people tolerate economic inequality, and when this tolerance gives way, it is necessary to investigate these questions within well-specified cultural contexts.

In Chapter 3 I focused on the 2008 financial crash. Specifically, I detailed the political and economic zeitgeist leading up to the 2008 economic collapse. I focused on data illustrating the economic recession and subsequent recovery in the Republic of Ireland. In Chapters 4-6 I outlined the *Deprivation – Protest Paradox*. The multi-method social, cultural, and moral psychological analyses presented in these chapters explained why the Irish initially met austerity without protesting during an economic recession, only to protest and create civic discontent during a stark economic recovery. These are the central interlinked and empirical chapters of the dissertation.

In Chapter 4, I showed how public elites drew on the past to make sense of the present. Migration, community, and a controversial moral principle that in life you “reap what you

sow” were three interrelated themes told to me by this group to explain why the Irish didn’t protest on the streets when the economic collapsed and the banks were bailed out. These findings add to the literature that argues remembering is a dynamics socio-cultural process discussed in Chapter 2 and 6 (Bartlett, 1923; Halbwachs 1925/1992; Wagoner, 2017).

I then reported media coverage on my presentation of these findings. The ideas were supported, rejected, and appropriated by different commentators, given different social positions (see Moscovici, 1961/2008). The mixed response to these findings by members of the public motivated further studies. A preliminary investigation showed support for these findings. Unemployed Irish youth internalized the master narrative that in life “you reap what you sow.” These interviewees attributed blame for the economic recession to a number of sources: the government, external institutional actors such as the EU and Irish Central Bank, the global financial downturn, but also to the actions of ordinary Irish people. Unemployed Irish youth held easily available narratives that highlight the culpability of ordinary Irish people, including themselves, for causing the economic collapse. The narratives told to me by this group of unemployed youth chimed with those told by the public elites: ordinary Irish did not take to the streets to protest austerity in part because they believed they helped cause the financial collapse.

These master narratives, used to explain suffering and the endurance of hardship, can also be seen as legitimizing folk psychological understandings: these are tales told to make sense of unfair subjective worlds, to legitimize systems, and to maintain the status quo (Jost

et al. 2004). In future research, a randomization strategy could be used to select people to interview from different social groups. For example, I could have compiled a list of “public elites” who had influence – as evidenced in exposure in mainstream and social media – in the public sphere. I could have then randomly sampled people to interview from this list. This might have helped get a broader and more representative sample of individuals to speak to. However, one advantage of the snowballed sample through referral was to build trust with new interviewees, which in turn allows for more open and honest response. Earning the trust of respondents is important in all social scientific research, but it is particularly salient within the localized Irish context because the community of influential elites is small. Moreover, having trust with this atypical group of participants led to them openly attribute blame for the recession on the actions of ordinary Irish people.

Moreover, in future research I could also use a randomization strategy to speak with a broader sample of unemployed Irish youth. One potentially fruitful strategy is to seek interviews outside offices where people collect their weekly social welfare payments. The advantage would be potentially gaining access to a broader range of unemployed youth. One disadvantage is to conduct interviews outside, a setting in which people are likely to be in pairs or groups. The topic of unemployment is sensitive and people might not be willing to discuss personal details in the presence of friends or family. Another disadvantage of this randomization strategy is that the interviews would likely be short. In the future, I could recruit a random sample outside social welfare offices and request interviews at a different time in a private space. The advantage of interviewing a snowballed sample of unknown, unemployed Irish youth is in gaining an in-depth reflection on their subjective

and lived experiences. The semi-structured interview format with this group, as well as the public elites, allowed for in-depth discussion, questioning, and exploration of peoples' understandings and experiences of the 2008 economic collapse.

In Chapter 5 I presented evidence from four quantitative studies aimed to test some qualitatively-derived hypotheses. I aimed to test the “reap what you sow” hypothesis.” When Irish people are experimentally primed to feel responsible for the economic collapse they should be more likely to support protest less, think austerity is fairer, and think the actions of ordinary Irish people caused the economic collapse in comparison to a group who were primed to think external factors caused the economic collapse. I found no support for the “reap what you sow” hypothesis. Therefore, the results did not dovetail with the insights from the qualitative work or the predictions of system justification theory. Indeed, the results provide tentative support for the opposite effect: one group of young, less wealthy participants, who were compensated for the study, tended to support protest more if they thought the actions of ordinary people contributed to the economic collapse in Ireland. The correlational study revealed a similar pattern: in contrast to the expectations derived from the qualitative work, some of those who found it hard to migrate from Ireland didn't support the status quo. They supported protest.

There are a number of possible reasons why different methods led to diverging results. I outlined these possible reasons in Chapter 5. These data were collected as the economy improved and as the dust from the crash began to settle. In future research, it would be important to collect supporting experimental data with parallel timing of qualitative work,

and vice versa. The experimental findings did not add support to the qualitative work, but the research presented in Chapter 4 offered discursive justification and reasons why the Irish accepted austerity. That is, the experimental studies were not undertaken to challenge the qualitative findings, which were both coherent and well attested, but rather to provide deeper insight into the underlying psychological dynamics. That they failed to provide those insights is unfortunate, but does not in any way undermine the substantive qualitative conclusions themselves.

In Chapter 6 I further develop the *Deprivation – Protest Paradox*. I began the chapter by detailing the shift in context in Ireland on an economic, political, then social level. A new charge on water consumption was introduced in a climate of widely reported economic recovery. Although the Irish had passively endured the austerity during a recession their tolerance for accepting economic inequality began to change in this newly emerging economic context. The findings revealed how protesters were aware of an aggregate economic recovery in Ireland. But they were not experiencing expected benefits from this economic recovery in their daily lives. Instead, a new charge on water was introduced. They suffered austerity during a recession, but having to pay again for water led to frustration and galvanized a protest movement.

I detailed evidence and presented interpretations of interview data from protesters so as to develop this insight. Protesters drew on the past, and projected into the future, and looped back around to inform their orientation in the present. They used the past and the future to create the present (Power, forthcoming, c; Zittoun & Gillespie, 2015). (In the following

section of the conclusion I outline the “big three of protest: remembering, relative deprivation, and imagining”).

In contrast to the elites in Chapter 4, the protesters drew on revolutionary aspects of an Irish past to create a lineage between the anti-austerity social movement and previous Irish rebellions. The elites purposefully distanced the violent aspects of the Irish past from then contemporary reactions to austerity to articulate a more peaceful present where people solve their problems through democratic means. The important theoretical point is that remembering is a dynamic socio-cultural process. Culture is not static, inevitable, or inalterable. It is created, used, and appropriated by the different social, political, and economic groups who are embedded within it. All cultural groups might remember the past to inform the present and orient towards the future, but this process occurs in unique localized contexts. There can be universals in the use of memory without uniformity in the content or in when, how, and to what ends it is used. The protesters also imagined a future where essential water services in Ireland have been privatized, like in other countries such as Bolivia. They made moral appraisals of this imagined world and judged the privatization of water to be bad. The privatization of water services was a neoliberal policy that ought to be stopped. Their imaginings are informed by the past, and they looped back towards the present to inform feelings of relative deprivation in the present (Zittoun and Gillespie, 2015; Zittoun and Cerchia, 2013).

Relative deprivation theory helps us to understand the *Deprivation – Protest Paradox*.

When a group of individuals compares itself to another salient group or individual, and

concludes they are lacking or discriminated against in comparison, then this can lead to angry frustration. Cultural psychological theorizing highlights the importance of understanding how this possibly universal tendency manifests in localized cultural contexts. In Ireland protesters compared themselves to political and wealthy elites in Ireland who have been benefitting from the economic recovery that the now protesters had expected to experience. However, despite the aggregate growth in the Irish economy, and hence people's rising expectations, many claim not to have not experienced this aggregate economic recovery in their everyday lives. The protesters highlight concrete manifestations of the disjunction between the narrative of objective economic recovery, and personal social realities: homelessness, the rising cost of living, taxation of water, an under-funded health care system, and precarious employment. These are all easily accessible examples of the gap between expectations and social realities. The protesters, and the politicians and community organizers supporting their rallies, see a gap between those who benefitted from the recovery, and those who have not.

Collective remembering is a powerful tool to understand social movements, civic discontent, and how societies organize themselves in globalizing and culturally plural social worlds. The Irish initially drew on memories of a violent past to justify a peaceful acceptance to harsh austerity. But the context in Ireland changed as the attribution of blame for the crisis moved away from the actions of the public and was laid solely at the feet of a banking, governmental, and European elite. How the Irish used the past also began to change. Collective remembering helps account for what comparisons social groups make and those comparisons they do not make. Collective remembering also helps explain how

people use to past to motivate action in the present, and to orient social movements towards imagining, and creating, a future more congruent with their desires. The link between remembering and imagining informs feelings of relative deprivation.

Interviews with groups of protesters, coupled with observations and interviews with relevant stakeholders during months of localized anti-water charge protests, revealed three overarching themes that, when combined, provided a framework to conceptualize the discourse from the protesters. This framework helped make sense of protester motivations and aspirations. The model accounted for how protesters positioned themselves, helped reveal sources of their frustration, and helped explain how people legitimize, justify, and galvanize social movements. Moreover, within this overarching temporal framework including the processes of remembering, imagining, and relative deprivation, it was possible to explore lived experiences and localized meaning making processes. For example, remembering and imagining informed feelings of relative deprivation. The feelings of relative deprivation amongst protesters manifested themselves in a variety of complaints, including the perceived unfairness of water charges, the general rise in the cost of living in the country, the shift in blame for the recession from ordinary people to the government, and a perceived illegitimacy of “the government” as well as public expenditure cuts to social projects, health, and education and precarious work conditions.

II. The Big Three of Protest: Remembering, relative deprivation, and imagining

The first major implication of this research program is the generation of a novel temporal account of social movements. The “big three of protest” emphasizes the importance of

three interrelated dynamic socio-cultural processes: remembering, relative deprivation and imagining for understanding the course of social movements. All three processes might be universal across all social movements, but they do not manifest uniformly. This psychological theory serves as a guiding framework to comprehend how social movements develop; how protesters galvanize and maintain these movements, how people explain, justify, and legitimize their involvement within these protest movements, and ultimately how people try to create social, economic, political and legal aims by taking to the streets.

All protests, rallies, marches, demonstrations, and social movements, will differ in their motivations, justifications, and representations. However, the tentative theory I propose suggests remembering and imagining will inform feelings of deprivation – relative to others – through democratic engagement, such as protesting. This theory is derived from my analysis of observations and interviews with anti-austerity protesters in the Ireland. Previous work has argued that revolutions are most likely to occur when a prolonged period of socioeconomic development is followed by a short and quick reversal of this upswing (Davies, 1962). This temporal account differs from mine in a number of respects. First, in the Irish case, a prolonged period of economic growth was followed by a sharp recession in 2008. However, people did not protest at this point, as previous iterations of the theory would suggest. Instead, as I have documented in Chapter 4, the Irish endured austerity as the economy receded and stagnated. Second, the Irish protested during an economic recovery, not decline: this observation also contradicts previous temporal accounts of relative deprivation. Moreover, the application of cultural psychological processes of remembering and imagining develops previous temporal accounts of relative

deprivation by providing an extended analytic framework to comprehend cultural constructions of the past and future and to comprehend the impact these processes have on feelings of relative deprivation in the present.

Based on the evidence presented in Chapter 6, it is possible to conceptualize the relation of remembering and imagining being like the lines in an infinity symbol (also see Power, forthcoming c; Zittoun & Gillespie, 2015). There is a continuous looping from the past to the future, and back again, always converging on the focal point in the center. Such an elaboration shouldn't imply symmetry regarding the equal weight both the past and future have on appraisals, perceptions, thoughts, and actions in the present. Rather, the metaphor is meant to illustrate the continuous temporal interconnections between remembering and imagining and the impact these dual processes have on the present, as well as how the past and future is understood and used.

The "big three of protest" informs the generation of a new hypothesis: that civic discontent – in the form of refusing to pay taxes, protesting on the streets, as well as engaging in other democratic activities such as contacting politicians, signing petitions and voting out governments, - occurs more frequently when the perception of unfair economic inequality is higher rather than lower. Actual or absolute inequality may be less frustrating than perceived inequality due to rising, yet unfulfilled, expectations.

This hypothesis of perceived unfair economic inequality has practical implications. Protests and riots can occur when people's expectations are not realized or made manifest in ways

they find meaningful. As Europe and the rest of the world exited the 2008 global financial crisis at varying paces, governments, EU institutions, and mainstream media could take measures to create (the perception) of greater economic equality. Aggregate economic recoveries, which are not experienced equally, can cause civic discontent. Absolute deprivation – in the case of food shortages in Venezuela in 2016 and 2017 can cause people to take to the streets in the form of (violent) protest. This case contrasts with the Irish case study, yet feelings of relative deprivation are common to both countries. Frustration can be caused by the gap between expectations and lived experiences.

There are alternative ways to analyze the protest data that could offer different insights and interpretations. Specifically, the descriptive utility of the “big three of protest: remembering, relative deprivation, and imagining” has been outlined throughout the dissertation to make sense of data collected at protests. However, if it is to become proposed as a theory capable of explaining the galvanization and dynamics of protest, it needs to be falsifiable. I propose future research projects that are needed to advance the framework that will eventually lead to the articulation of a precise and nuanced theory capable of predicting the generation, development, and dissipation of social movements.

In future studies, interpretative phenomenological analyses could provide deeper and more nuanced understandings of individual protester’s specific experiences, cognitions, and understandings of their positions within economic, cultural and historical systems. From these case studies, it would be possible to augment pre-existing theories and develop new ones. Conversation analysis could identify specific strategies used by a sub-sample of

individuals to position and justify their actions through discourse. Another analysis might focus on differences and similarities of police–protester interaction at both local and national level protests. An analysis sensitive to how these two groups oppose, and support one another, would have implications beyond the demonstrations in the localized Irish context. It would inform our understanding of unequal power dynamics, social dominance, and perhaps pathways to social change. Another possible analysis would have been a frequency analysis. Words that were frequently used e.g. “injustice,” “social change,” “government,” “water,” “homelessness” would provide superficial quantitative insights to generate major themes of the protester discourse. I could then interpret these frequently occurring words to also generate overarching themes. I could check the validity of these themes with reference to illuminating extracts. A related analysis would involve coding extracts of transcripts quantifying the number of related extracts, and forming themes based on the frequency of this quantification. A limitation of the two previous analytic strategies is an emphasis on explicit verbalization in the generation of meaning. In the analysis of discourse given by the public elites, for example, a frequency analysis wouldn’t have revealed that “memory” or “remembering” were dominant themes. The same is true of discourse from the protesters: “imagining” “remembering” and “deprivation” were implicit, not explicit themes. In order to understand the narratives told by protesters, an analysis sensitive to unspoken meanings, with a localized historical and cultural context, was needed. Quantification of this data in the future will firm up insights, and test the “big three of protest” theory, but these insights could not have been gleaned in the way presented in this research within keeping an eye beyond pure quantification of stated discourse. One advantage of generating codes from the interview data, and then developing

master narratives, that subsumed these initial interpretations, was the articulation of a new theory aimed at comprehending the psychology of social movements.

Further evidence is needed to test the utility of the “big three of protest” across a variety of different contexts. Specifically, this model can be used to generate interview schedules aimed at gathering data sensitive to temporal accounts of social movements. For example, an interviewer can ask questions such as “what is the aim of the protest today?” and can be sensitive to answers indicating justifications or reasoning’s concerned with previous social movements or imaginings of future realities that need to be altered. The researcher can then probe these initial responses to provide more information on how remembering and imagining impact feelings, cognitions, and actions in the present.

It can also be used as a framework for coding and comprehending interview data from protesters. For example, a precise coding frame – inspired by the overarching themes of the “big three of protest” can provide initial categorizations to help comprehend the development of social movements including their genesis, ambitions, maintenance, and dissolution. In a similar way, the theory can be used to make sense of naturally generated data – in the form of protest behaviors recorded on phones and shared on social media. It was typical to see people record aspects of protests on their phone during the national demonstrations and then share them on social media. One motivation was to show the number of demonstrators who had taken to the streets. This video evidence was used to counteract perceived inaccurate mainstream media representation of the numbers of demonstrators during these national protests. It is likely there was hyperbole on both

sides: protesters and mainstream media seemed to over and under report the number of demonstrators during the national marches. Protesters during the local anti-water charge protests regularly filmed interactions between police and in-group demonstrators. Controversial footage, for example of police arrests of a number of protesters at once, was often uploaded to social media and received hundreds of thousands of views. These videos often generated comment and debate from online viewers. The framework of remembering, imagining, and relative deprivation can guide analyses of this “naturally” occurring count online by providing a starting point of the generation of specific codes to categorize the motivations behind observed behavior and recorded discourse. It can also be used to make sense of the reporting of protests from various mainstream sources throughout the course of the social movement. A framework sensitive to temporal stability, and changes, within the course of a social movement can reveal the underlying attitudes, cognitions, and perceptions of members of protests. It can then help reveal interactions with police and has implications for how marches and protests aim to create democratic change. The theory can inform that ways in which people engage with protest as a democratic process to modulate perceived unfairness, such as the unfair distribution of economic resources. Moreover, the theory will also inform how people tolerate inequalities, and when this tolerance wanes. In this sense, the theory, and related empirical research, adds to our understanding regarding the ways people can become democratic citizens (Moghaddam, 2013, 2016, forthcoming; Power, forthcoming a).

The theory can be developed using a variety of analyses of pre-existing or “naturally” generated data from and about protesters and the social movements they create.

Therefore, the theory can be utilized and extended from research aimed at analyzing data that is ecologically valid. Beyond this first wave of research, it will become possible to form hypotheses that can be tested using experimental techniques. This is another way the theory can be utilized and developed but at a different level of analysis, using a variety of other methods. The advantage is to test the robustness of the theory from multiple levels with a variety of procedures and samples. These experimental procedures, and other forms of quantification of ecologically valid data, must be conducted in ways that are sensitive to the localized context that they are aimed at understanding people who are culturally embedded. These analyses can help generate valid and reliable data to test the utility of the theory and ultimately to extend its parameters and nuances to explain social movements and democratic engagement.

Social movements have precursors. In Chapter 2 I highlighted the importance of understanding cultural context to understand how people comprehend and experience economic systems. It is important to understand the narratives – such as in life you “reap what you sow” – that can have the effect of nullifying the pressures toward the formation of protest and related forms of democratic engagement. It can be difficult to study why phenomena do not happen. One way to counteract this is to be sensitive to what could happen, ask why it doesn’t, and allow these answers to inform the basis of further research when a phenomenon does occur. For me, it was curious why people in Ireland, in contrast to EU neighbors, accepted austerity. This motivated me to conduct research aiming to illuminate cultural and moral psychological reasons why this was the case. The later shift in context led to a shift in cognition and behavior. The previous research formed a basis from

which to understand anti-austerity protests in Ireland. This format allowed me to identify the *Deprivation – Protest Paradox*: without a temporal account, sensitive to how people use time through the processes of remembering and imagining to inform their feelings, thoughts, and actions in the present, I would not have been able to identify that the dynamics of non-protest followed by protest in Ireland constituted a form of paradox. Conducting research with protesters “in the moment” – as the protests were occurring – is an innovation on traditional research examining feelings of relative deprivation. Initial formulations of this research used post hoc historical and sociological analyses (e.g. de Tocqueville, 1857/1955; Davis, 1962; Runciman, 1966; Stouffer, et al, 1949). These findings were abstracted by social psychologists who then manipulated the phenomenon in carefully controlled laboratory experiments that didn’t have the same ecological validity (Pettigrew, 2015; 2016). This lack of ecological validity led to the decontextualization of research results. Conducting ethnographic work during protests, on local and national levels, was a methodological innovation to address these problems characterizing previous attempts to develop the relative deprivation phenomenon. It solved them by conducting randomly sampled interviews as protests were occurring. This meant I captured people’s meaning-making processes, as they were being generated, rather than relying on post hoc justifications. In this way, my research improves on previous attempts to understanding intergroup comparisons and feelings of deprivation.

III. The S.A.G.E. model of Social Psychological Research

The second major implication of the research presented in this dissertation is the development of a novel model for conducting social psychological research at multiple levels of analysis (Power, Velez, Qadafi, and Tennant, forthcoming). Here I present a summary of this approach. Encapsulated in the acronym is a proposal to have a Synthetic approach to social psychological research, in which quantitative and qualitative methods are *Augmentative* to one another, and qualitative methods can be *Generative* of new experimental hypotheses, and can capture *Experiences* that evade experimental reductionism. Psychology was founded in multiple methods of investigation at multiple levels of analysis. We discussed historical examples and our own research as contemporary examples of how a *SAGE* model can operate in part or as an integrated whole.

Returning to psychology's roots, the discipline's foundational methodologies and formulations are steeped in tensions and possibilities of integrating varied approaches. In Wundt's 1897 *Outlines of Psychology*, he presented a two-fold vision of psychology. First, he proposed that basic causal processes of psychophysical experience were to be determined by careful laboratory experimentation. This process entails manipulating independent variables and quantifying observed changes in dependent variables. Second, Wundt also articulated a version of psychology aimed at understanding higher order experiences within diverse social contexts (Trinidad, 2007). He advocated the use of observational and ethnographic techniques to understand people in cultural contexts. The dual approaches were intended as complementary.

However, these dualities were never fully realized in his time. His students at Leipzig opted for basic psychological research conducted in the laboratory and focused on quantitative measurement. American psychologists also appropriated only the part of his vision for a scientific psychology analogous to contemporary approaches in the “hard sciences,” such as physics. Emphasis was placed on laboratory experimentation. This formulation of social psychological research – the careful manipulation of independent and dependent quantifiable variables in the context of the psychological laboratory – is most dominant today, particularly in U.S. social psychological research (Power, 2011; Rozin, 2009). The rise of behaviorism reified the experiment and marginalized the importance of understanding context (Rozin, 2001). The gestalt movement, with its focus on context, failed to gain predominance in psychology outside the area of perception. The marginalization of context has been lamented in social psychology (Asch, 1952/1987; Power, 2011).

This emphasis on quantitative research has challenged the importance of qualitative methods. A further devaluation of qualitative methods has emerged from fundamental critiques that question the possibility of empirical social psychology at all. These arguments focus on various difficulties in studying social psychological phenomena, such as the high number of variables influencing phenomena in the world of qualia (the world of human subjectivities, see Shweder, 1996), the constantly changing shared meaning systems, and the uniqueness of particular times and places. Random control trial is one research design used to address these concerns, but this can come at the expense of practicality and applicability to real world issues (Power, 2011; Rozin, 2009). A new

conceptualization that describes and justifies the synthesis of quantitative and qualitative methods may offer a more nuanced and integrated approach to addressing these critiques of empirical social psychology. The research presented throughout this dissertation is one example of this.

While quantitative and qualitative are different on an ontological level (Shweder, 1996), the prevalent contemporary conceptualization of these methods as in opposition is misguided and negatively impacts the development of social psychological science (Power et al., forthcoming). Both forms of procedural inquiry can inform one another. Mixed methods can be used to overcome the limitations of one approach, from one angle, at one level of analysis. Qualitative methods can be *Augmentative* to quantitative ones by moving beyond drawing inferences from survey and experimental data to capturing the meaning (if any) underlying statistical outputs. Qualitative methods can also be *Generative* of new experimental hypotheses that can then be tested in laboratories, with quantitative datasets, and in the field. Finally, qualitative methods can be used to investigate and document *Experiential* phenomena as lived and comprehended by people in their unique socio-cultural contexts.

The *Augmentative*, *Generative* and *Experiential* aspects of the methodologies can be *Synthesized* together so that qualitative and quantitative methods can be used to explore psychological phenomena in a progressive loop. This is a wise, or *SAGE*, model of social psychological research. The aim of the model is to highlight some benefits from using mixed methods and provides a framework to guide research in this tradition.

The advantages of our approach are to overcome the shortcomings of each social psychological method when used in isolation. However, conducting multi-method analyses may incur several drawbacks and multiple challenges: multi-method research is more time consuming, requires further methodological expertise, and may struggle to find a home in journals that solely accept quantitative or qualitative methods (Power, et al., forthcoming). Being methodically fluid also requires time, practice, and broad expertise to master diverse procedural techniques and the integration of possibly contradictory findings from multiple angles at different levels of analysis. It can be beneficial to master these challenges and provide a framework to help scholars think through some relevant issues. For example, the experimental and correlational studies presented in Chapter 5 were incongruent both internally with one another, and with the findings from the qualitative studies that were reported in Chapter 4. Qualitative research methods can be generative of experimental hypotheses: but incongruence between findings at different levels of analysis is commonplace. I obtained mostly contradictory results at two different levels of analysis. The experiments were not conducted in a vacuum. I asked Irish people about their attitudes and opinions of austerity, protest, and blame, in a context of a stark unequal economic recovery, not a recession. This factor alone may help explain the differences between results. The lesson from this conjecture is the timing of experiments, and the context in which they are conducted, may be highly influential and may account for variance in results obtained from various methods.

Mixed method research can lead to sounder and more nuanced social psychological research that captures people – and the worlds they inhabit – in more meaningful and in-

depth ways. In turn, this has the potential for social psychology to inform policy creation and development. However, this does not need to be the outcome of academic inquiry.

IV. Implications and reflections

The development of the “big three of protest: remembering, relative deprivation and imagining” and the “S.A.G.E. model of social psychological research” are the two major implications of this dissertation. At the end of Chapter 6, I discussed the parallels between the anti-austerity protests and disgruntlement and frustration in Britain and the USA when aggregate economic growth was experienced unequally. Feelings of relative deprivation from certain groups of voters aided the rise of populist politics in both these countries. The election of Trump as president of the United States, and the decision by the British to exit the EU can partly be explained by feelings of relative deprivation (Pettigrew, 2017).

Remembering a past in which people who now feel displaced, with their previous privilege eroded, informed current feelings of deprivation. Imagining a future in which their position was perceived to be further diminished also informed decisions to act democratically to elect representatives and vote in their interests. In this way, the “big three of protest” has implications for understanding these two cases. The theory can also be applied to study the rise of populist politics throughout the world by explaining how people remember a version of their past, and the history of the country, and how they use these memories to visualize their futures. For example, people can remember an idealized version of their country and community, and imagine this idealized version being (further) eroded in the

future. They can therefore act in the present – by voting in politicians who promise to enact populist and protectionist policies.

Therefore, my research has implications beyond the EU stimulus-austerity debate. But within that context, genuine differences in culture, history, and morality undergird economic thought and must be understood if economic theory is to be translated into policies that improve lives. Knowledge gained can be applied to other emerging crises, before they escalate to the level of the Eurozone crisis. By comprehending the cultural and moral basis underlying opinions of, and reactions towards, economic growth or contraction, it may be possible to understand people's engagement with democratic activities. Better understanding of intergroup and intercultural differences, and national identities, will make it possible to promote intercultural dialogue in the face of new EU crises. Such dialogue and understanding is needed to promote peace, reduce violence, and create a democratically integrated EU. I believe these are potential outcomes of some of the findings of my work. But I do not argue they are a necessary motivation for academic research.

In an essay titled "The usefulness of useless knowledge," it is stated "Institutions of learning should be devoted to the cultivation of curiosity and the less they are deflected by considerations of immediacy of application, the more likely they are to contribute not only to human welfare but to equally important satisfaction of intellectual interest which may indeed be said to have become the ruling passion of intellectual life in modern times " (Flexner, 1936, p. 545). I agree with this proposition. Throughout this research proposal I

have followed my curiosity: one set of answers revealed the necessity of answering more questions. I did not consider immediate applications of my research. I believe it is important to conduct rigorous research and to try and communicate complex ideas simply. It is important to make academic research available to a broad audience. When ideas enter the public sphere they are refuted, accepted, modified, and used in different ways (Jovchelovitch, 2006; Moscovici, 1961/2008). The implications, if any, of my research agenda are largely unknown. But the research was not conducted with a specific agenda in mind. I simply followed my curiosity and communicated these insights to others in a variety of forms. I agree with the statement made by Flexner. I hope this dissertation is an example of academic freedom, an example of a researcher not afraid to follow the argument where it leads, rather than conducting research to inform specific political or public policies affecting “social justice.”

My US colleagues commonly ask me, either informally, or at conferences, about the implications of my research for galvanizing social movements to effect social or political change. I do not support an axiomatic assumption that the main focus of my research is to create pathways to inform social change. This may be an implication of my work, but it is not its main intention. Similarly, this research can offer pathways for corporations – such as Irish Water – to better understand their customers. It also informs ways governments can understand their people, their levels of tolerance for economic inequality, and what they think they deserve in different economic contexts. My research is also not intended to provide policies and other suggestions for governments and corporations to stop protests

or to more fairly (re)distribute economic resources. Again, my research might be utilized in this way.

Personally, there are some points made by the elites and those on the streets that I agree with. I think the idea that in life “you reap what you sow” is an important cultural trope in Ireland. The interviews with the elites added an important explanatory perspective to the Irish context. Despite the lack of support from the experiments, I weigh heavily the findings from the qualitative work that suggested the actions of ordinary people contributed to the economic crisis in Ireland or at least were perceived to have. However, further investigation, and replication of experiments, is needed before I can conclusively adjudicate between findings or meaningfully reconcile these differences. I also think the economic recovery in Ireland was disadvantageous to ordinary people who endured fiscal hardship and suffered emotionally as friends and family migrated. I am very sympathetic to a disjunction between the wants and needs the protesters articulated and to the government who believed an aggregate economic recovery was morally good, even if it was unequal. I believe the distribution of blame for causing the recession was unfair. It was curious that Irish people internalized a message that they were partly culpable – perhaps they were – but it is also difficult to understand global financial institutions, purposefully complex and interconnected economic systems, especially when large proportions of wealth and income are hidden, as the Panama Papers revealed.

I believe in the democratic right to protest, though my participation in protest is limited to my ethnographic work. It was striking to see how protesters modulated themselves to keep

the peace. Even in situations in which protesters were being arrested for seemingly innocuous situations – relative to other situations where they were not arrested - the group, and individuals controlled themselves. They did not become an unruly mob. This insight runs contrary to over a century of research on “contagion” (Warren & Power, 2015). This is the omni-present idea that “in crowds, man descends the rungs of humanity” (Le Bon, 1903). Another interesting insight that challenged my own views of protesters and social movements was the age of participants. There was a broad range of people interviewed, but I was initially struck that mostly young college students did not constitute the majority of the marchers. I interviewed very determined and articulate working class pensioners who themselves were new to demonstrating and other democratic activism. Liberal students fighting for social justice with the deck stacked against them were a minority on these demonstrations.

On April 8th, 2017, there was another national demonstration against water charges. The charge of water had already been suspended, with various government parties suggesting a continuation of this temporary halt to charges, others arguing for charges for “excessive use of water,” and others arguing for the total abolition of these charges. The April 8th protest was to highlight support for the last policy. The Irish water rebellion is a clear example of how prolonged social movements and activity at the ballot box can affect government policy on a specific matter of national importance. The protesters did not justify the system: they protested to change it and to make changes beneficial to them within pre-existing parameters. The larger issue in the Irish context was to demonstrate

frustrations, perceptions of unfairness of economic distributions, and to demand a more equitable economic and social system.

I am sympathetic to this cause. Yet I am aware of the broader context of Irish economic history. As demonstrated in Fig. 1 in Chapter 3, the Irish GDP levels are currently higher than their peak during the infamous “Celtic Tiger” economy. The Celtic Phoenix is in full flight. But it doesn’t feel this way. If the banks were not bailed out in 2008, the Irish economy might have gone bankrupt. If there had not been a strong but unequal economic recovery beginning in 2013 in Ireland, people might be happier as there would not be an increasing gap between beneficiaries of the recovery and ordinary people. In this alternate case, at least there might not be street demonstrations. I am sympathetic to the people who helped engineer economic growth in Ireland, despite the hard-felt recession. I can see how unequal economic growth can still be beneficial. I can also identify with people’s frustration of not immediately experiencing this growth, when others in society are, especially after enduring and suffering, like those who are benefitting, during the recession.

So, under what conditions can and do people accept inequality without engaging in democratic activities to effect social change? And under what circumstances does their tolerance turn to protest and other forms of civic unrest and democratic engagement? Cultural groups, who make moral judgments about what constitutes fair or unfair economic distributions, in historical, legal, socio-economic and temporal contexts, answer this question in democratic countries through expressing their opinions, or taking to the streets, or voting. The evidence clearly suggests that residents of democratic nations do not

insist on an optimal Pareto-type distribution of resources. People do not ask for parity. They want fairness, not equality. The Irish case study is one localized context that shows how cultural and moral values impact perceptions of fairness, and the manifestation, or not, of democratic activities to curb disproportionate economic growth.

Psychologists have been known to get predictions wrong. Indeed, social psychological research reveals how wrong our future predictions can be (Gilbert, 2009). But I end this dissertation with a prophecy on water.

V. A prophecy on water

It is difficult to disentangle the timing of civic unrest in Ireland – during a period of rapid economic growth, rather than decline – from the substantive issue that finally galvanized protest: charging for water. Water was often represented as a fundamental human right by my interviewees. And it is particularly plentiful in Ireland, a small island, where it seems to rain incessantly, even in summer. Parallels were drawn with other anti-water charge demonstrations throughout the world. Protesters spoke about how Bolivian social movements developed at the turn of the millennium when they privatized their water supply, only for people to revolt and overthrow the government. The Irish protests about who controls, and pays for water, are not a unique case in the contemporary world.

Water is fundamental to survival. Droughts and floods, rising global temperatures and changing weather patterns, are altering the ways in which people conceptualize and

represent water. Globalization and climate change are threatening the dynamics of water supply. Commodification of this resource, at least in the Irish case, mobilized a social movement, with ensuing claims that it was a universal human right. It is likely others think like this. Water occupies a special representational category, one that will likely become more essentialized and problematic when access to supply is more controlled, less reliable, and more salient. Access to water blurs the line between absolute and relative deprivation. How societies remember their past with water, and how they imagine their (possibly dystopian) futures when it is commoditized, privatized, controlled and limited, has implications for how future generations will comprehend this resource in a more volatile world. Shortages, or rather, perceived shortages, in the form of controlled or unfair access, could create widespread civic discontent, and social movements. It may even generate rage and drive revolution.

Appendix 1

I. Prime i) You reap what you sow condition: Ordinary people to blame

THE IRISH TIMES Dublin 16°C

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People reap the benefits of their hard work



Earlier in the week, the Taoiseach, Bertie Ahearn quipped, "the boom is getting boomier." Is he right? A snapshot of the cosmopolitan Irish suggests that yes, good times will keep on coming, writes [Seán de Paor](#)

Fig. 15. You reap what you sow condition

The main text of the "reap what you sow" condition read:

The fortunes of the Irish have turned. Centuries of occupation, immigration, unemployment and famine are distant memories. These have given way to the new cosmopolitan generation of Irish entrepreneurs, innovators, and intellectuals who create their own opportunities through their own hard work, and enjoy their prosperity.

Ireland now boasts the most educated workforce in all of Europe. The technology and finance sectors are booming, having subsequent knock on effects for all other sectors of the economy. For the first time in our history we have net migration; generously receiving migrants from throughout the EU and beyond. Moreover, the government can showcase full employment, boosted by a thriving construction industry. This has led to benefits for virtually every citizen in Ireland. Taxes are low relative to European counterparts and public expenditure is continuing to grow.

Local businesses throughout the country are thriving in this context. Fiona Heaney, owner of the Au Natural Café off St. Stephen's Green, is one of many entrepreneurs reaping the benefits of her hard work and the booming economy. She says "We're busy from one end of the day to another. Irish people want to eat high quality, organic foods. It is part of a cultural shift in Ireland, we now live the lifestyle our parents would only have dreamed of - and we created it ourselves."

Indeed, this shift is obvious to the record numbers of tourists who visited Ireland in the first half of this decade. Many of those I spoke to who were returning to holiday in Ireland commented on their surprise at how cosmopolitan and international the country has become. "I first came here in the early 90's with my husband, to visit Dublin" said Nancy O'Toole, a native of Worcester, MA, "but returning now over a decade later, is like visiting a whole new Ireland. The people are still wonderful, but the quality of lives they live, the amount of vacation time and international travel they take, the quality of their education, the cars, and their homes, is just breath-taking. The country is a testament to the hard work of the people," she adds.

It is clear Bertie was not alone. The "boom is getting boomier." These are sentiments reflected by the Irish at home, and those who come to visit us. Perhaps for the first time in our history we have our fate in our hands. And what the Irish have constructed for themselves is to the envy of the rest of the world.

II. Prime ii) External factors condition: Ordinary people not to blame

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The booming Irish construction sector



Earlier in the week, the Taoiseach, Bertie Ahearn quipped, "the boom is getting boomier." Is he right? A snapshot of the cosmopolitan Irish suggests that yes, good times will keep on coming, writes [Seán de Paor](#).

Fig. 16. External factors condition.

The main text of the "external factors condition" read:

The fortunes of the Irish economy have turned. Centuries of occupation, immigration, unemployment and famine are distant memories. These have given way to the new cosmopolitan generation of entrepreneurs, innovators, and intellectuals who have generated sustained economic wealth and prosperity in Ireland.

Ireland now boasts the most educated workforce in all of Europe. The technology and

finance sectors as booming, having subsequent knock on effects for all other sectors of the economy. For the first time in our history we have net immigration; generously receiving migrants from throughout the EU and beyond. Moreover, the government can showcase full employment, boosted by a thriving construction industry, strong trade links with the UK and US, as well as a huge influx of foreign investment, particularly from the EU. This has led to benefits for virtually every citizen in Ireland. Taxes are low relative to European counterparts and public expenditure is continuing to grow.

Local businesses throughout the country are thriving in this context. Fiona Heaney, owner of the Au Natural Café off St. Stephen's Green, is just one example of the success stories for young business owners in Ireland. "I work anything up to 40 hours per week" she informed me "but with all this foreign investment, it makes sense for Irish people to take advantage of the opportunities that have been presented to us."

Indeed, the increasing number of tourists from abroad have noticed this new-look Ireland." It's wonderful what EU investment and strong international trade has done for Ireland. It's always been a beautiful country, but it's fantastic that the economy is now thriving. I remember visiting with my husband during the early 1980's and things were so bleak for people. Now things have really turned around" said Nancy O'Toole, a native of Worcester, MA, "the Irish are enjoying the benefits of a thriving Europe" she added.

It is clear Bertie was not alone. The "boom times are getting boomier." These are sentiments reflected but the Irish at home, and those who come to visit us. Perhaps for the first time in our history our fate has been placed in our own hands. What the Irish have constructed is the envy of the rest of the world.

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