

Making a hashtag of it: social media research and digital public participation in North West Ireland

Maynooth University Department of Geography invites you to attend a seminar presented by:

Dr Andrew McClelland
Maynooth University Social Science Institute

Date: February 1st

Time: 4.00pm to 5.30pm

Location: Rocque Lab, Rhetoric House



The use of digital technologies and social media methods are assuming ever-greater prominence within research methodologies and public consultation processes in relation to cultural heritage. In part, this stems from persistent critiques of heritage practices in recent decades centred on the dominance of expert values in decision-making over those attributed by the lay public, with increasing access to innovative digital tools accelerating calls for greater public involvement in the management of heritage. This paper reflects on emerging findings from the #MyValuedPlaces exercise, an online map-based survey undertaken in late 2017 seeking to capture the public's perceptual values of places in the cross-border cultural landscape of the North West of Ireland. In addition to introducing the evolving policy and institutional landscape for cross-border cooperation on cultural heritage on the island of Ireland, the paper briefly addresses the potential of digital public participation to contribute towards the maintenance of positive 'relational geographies' and a 'thin' border within an increasingly challenging socio-political environment. However, numerous questions arise concerning the use of such digital participation methods, particularly in cross-border contexts, and not least for policymakers and practitioners prospectively involved in their practical implementation. Thus, this paper will sketch out preliminary learning from the ongoing research project and point towards how it may impact future policy and practice.

Andrew McClelland is a Postdoctoral Researcher (Marie Skłodowska Curie Fellow) in the Maynooth University Social Sciences Institute and is currently working on the REINVENT Project concerning digital public participation in the management of heritage in contested cross-border contexts. His diverse practice and research-based interests over the past 15 years broadly encompass cultural heritage, planning history and cross-border cooperation on the island of Ireland.

Department of Geography Seminar Series

All are welcome

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