

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Thérèse McIntyre
Date of Interview	28 July 2010
Location	Boston College-Ireland, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Eileen Kennedy
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Female
Born	Year Born: 1990 Home County: Massachusetts, USA
Education	Primary: Bell School, Marblehead, Massachusetts, USA Secondary: Marblehead High School Third Level: Boston College
Family	Siblings: 3 brothers
Club(s)	N/A
Occupation	Student
Parents' Occupation	Electrician
Religion	Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	N/A

Date of Report	29 July 2010
Period Covered	Early 2000's – 28 July 2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Americas, USA, Galway
Key Themes Covered	Supporting, Playing, Emigration, Involvement in GAA abroad, GAA abroad, Identity, Family Involvement, Challenges, Outsider's Perspectives, Socialising
Interview Summary	<p>00:35 Parents background. Father is a retired electrician. Mother former bank manager; after having children and divorce, returned to education and obtained a para-legal degree. When children were high school aged, became a school lunch lady, which is her current profession.</p> <p>01:10 Parents' connection to GAA/Irish. Mother is Irish citizen. Family has no connection to the sporting side of Irish culture. Family not really exposed to it at home.</p> <p>01:27 Local clubs. Boston GAA Club. Also Irish Cultural Centre in Canton. Eileen intends on more involvement when she returns home because of her experiences in Ireland.</p> <p>01:56 Reason for coming to Ireland. Internship with Boston College, Ireland. Works in office next to GAA Oral History Project Office, so aware of interview discussions going on. Done a few interviews for the Project using video recorder. Learning about Games through the people rather than just the playing.</p> <p>02:33 Experiences of playing. Played a bit of hurling. Boston College event with interns called 'Experience Gaelic Games' – played Gaelic football, hurling, handball as well as dancing. Played a bit of Gaelic football before as boyfriend has an interest in it.</p> <p>03:01 Meeting boyfriend. When they met he was carrying a Gaelic football, but asked Eileen if it was a volleyball or a Gaelic football and when she responded 'a Gaelic football', he asked her out.</p> <p>03:21 Attendance at matches. Dublin-Kilkenny hurling match, which Eileen described as 'a bit sad'. Also attended a Gaelic football match, Galway-Sligo in which Galway lost by a point. Also 'very sad'</p> <p>03:45 Views on impact of GAA in Irish life. Thinks it is a big part of Irish life.</p> <p>03:54 Discusses necessity for more Gaelic sports in United States. Irish-Americans who are trying to connect with their</p>

	<p>culture. Prevalence of music and dance aspects of culture in United States, but lack of Irish sporting culture. Gaelic sports seem more 'foreign' to Americans. Gaelic sports as defining 'Irishness'.</p> <p>04:13 Reasons Irish sports might not be as prominent in the United States. Not a part of the educational system. School system has gym and will play volleyball and baseball, but no familiarity with hurling or Gaelic football.</p> <p>04:38 Gaelic sports at college level. Some involvement. Not as popular at collegiate level; some clubs.</p> <p>04:58 Comparison of Gaelic sports with American sports (football; baseball) in terms of skill level, fitness. More fitness required in Gaelic sports.</p> <p>05:26 Attendance at other matches. Went to a couple of children's games. Boyfriend's cousin (female) plays Gaelic football. Remarks on involvement of parent's in terms of being as passionate as if they were at a 'big match'. Small level vs. big county level.</p> <p>05:58 Boyfriend's experiences as player. Never played as parent's never signed him up for anything. Always carries around Gaelic football and recently bought 'hurls'.</p> <p>06:16 Boyfriend's background. Originally from Massachusetts as well.</p> <p>06:22 Meeting boyfriend. Met at Boston College in an Irish language class.</p> <p>06:28 Experience with Irish language. Has the 'cupla focail'.</p> <p>06:36 Comparison of atmosphere at matches between Gaelic and American sports. Similar to college games (involvement; level of fun). Baseball not as interesting.</p> <p>06:56 Local traditions. At Boston Red Sox game everyone will sing 'Sweet Caroline'.</p> <p>07:11 Compared with Irish matches. Across the board involvement/passion. People generally stay in seats at baseball games unless a home run is scored – then stand up and clap. Normally very little attention paid to game itself.</p> <p>07:22 Team support. Chooses to support Galway as boyfriend's family from there. Both hurling and football.</p> <p>07:39 Grandmother's background – from Kerry. Problems of</p>
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	<p>supporting Galway if they play Kerry.</p> <p>07:48 Meaning of GAA because of personal involvement. Changing opinions before/after arriving in Ireland. Had no real opinions prior to arrival – awareness of Gaelic sports but not the impact on Irish life.</p> <p>08:25 Recent Meath v. Louth match events. Did not see match, but heard about it afterwards.</p> <p>08:37 Comparison of aftermath of Meath v. Louth with American sports. Tightness of security at American games.</p> <p>08:57 Differences in player status. Gaelic players as ‘regular people’ v. the ‘celebrity’ of American sports figures.</p> <p>09:07 Field (pitch) as ‘untouchable’ as the players. ‘Storming of the pitch’ not necessarily a good thing, but reflects the closeness that the people (Irish) feel to the sport that they can interact in that way with the pitch.</p> <p>09:27 Meeting county players. Yes, but did not realise met a county player. One from Kilmacud Crokes that played for Dublin.</p> <p>09:53 Other subjects. Reflects on lack of Gaelic sports in America and intention of interns who are returning to America to start hurling and Gaelic football clubs and incorporate into the already existing dance/music scene in Boston.</p> <p>10:20 Linking GAA Ireland with States to expand Gaelic sports. Expose to more people outside of Irish descent. Irish connected know where to look/find it. Increasing awareness through advertisements. Development of training programs or sending coaches to the States.</p> <p>11:13 Family involvement. Little brothers play with Gaelic football. Compares playing to an ‘addiction’.</p> <p>11:27 Suggestions for increasing exposure of Gaelic games. Importance of introduction at an early age in schools.</p> <p>11:38 Difficulties of learning hurling later in life. Start young and will be more used to games.</p> <p>12:00 Immigration difficulties for Irish living in America. Tough immigration system in America. Play more matches in the States – support level might be affected.</p> <p>12:51 Final thoughts.</p> <p>13:07 Length of time intending to stay in Ireland. Returning</p>
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	home for a short time then moving to Galway for studies. Will continue to support hurling and football. Might join University clubs.
Involvement in GAA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward <input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person <input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):
Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)	N/A
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	N/A
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 00:13:38
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: Thérèse McIntyre

Date: 11 November 2011