"ATA'P A D'ONADU[1]": A CASE STUDY OF THE IRISH TRAVELLERS AS A

MARGINALIZED GROUP

by

KELLY LOUISE MCFADEN

(Under the Direction of Brian W. Dotts)

ABSTRACT

Irish Travellers are an indigenous ethnic minority group in the Republic of Ireland that have long considered themselves culturally distinct from the settled, mainstream population due to their shared history, language, value system, and customs that are unique to their group, most notably their tradition of itinerancy. The purpose of this qualitative case study was develop an understanding of the condition of Travellers in Ireland today through examining the government policies affecting the Traveller community, the unique needs of the Traveller community, the characteristics and program components of a select nongovernmental organization and how it is working to meet those needs, and the direction of the movement for Irish Traveller human rights. I used ethnographic methods, including interviews and observations, to develop the case. The study yielded insights related to the status and needs of Travellers' health and education; the drive for ethnic recognition by the state; the need for conscientization of the Traveller community; the pride of the Travellers for their rich cultural history; and the discrimination that Travellers face at the individual, community, and national levels of Irish society.

INDEX WORDS: Irish Travellers, Human Rights, Nongovernmental Organizations, Education

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[1] "A'tap a d'onadu" is a traditional Shelta phrase meaning "to move and go with purpose"

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to the Pavee Point Travellers' Centre for their invaluable support of me, this project, and their tireless efforts in pursuit of equal human rights for the Irish Traveller community; and to my mother, who has been my inspiration, my rock, and my favorite dog sitter.

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And to my family and friends, you can finally stop asking when I am going to finish.

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CHAPTER 1

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the conditions for Irish Travellers as a marginalized group in Ireland today through the conduit of a nongovernmental organization focusing on Traveller rights. Specifically, I explored the impact of current government policy on the Traveller community, the unique needs of the Traveller community, the general features of the selected NGO's programs, and how those programs are designed to meet the needs of the Traveller community. In this chapter, I provide an introduction to the dissertation: a statement of the research problem, a statement of purpose, a brief discussion on the background of the problem, a statement of goals and objectives, a list of research questions, and a discussion of the significance of the proposed study as well as possible delimitations.

Statement of the Problem

Irish Travellers are a marginalized, indigenous ethnic minority group in Ireland. They have shared customs, language, traditions, and values that make them distinct from the mainstream population. One of the most visible and controversial aspects of their culture is their nomadic tradition. Ireland, like many modern societies, privileges a sedentary lifestyle (Roughneen, 2010). The title of this dissertation, "Ata'p a d'onadu", is a traditional Shelta phrase that loosely means, "to move and go with purpose" (Personal communication, August 15, 2012), which I selected because it demonstrates the centrality of nomadism to the Traveller culture. This fundamental cultural difference creates a host of issues and conflicts between the Irish Traveller community and the settled, or non-Traveller, community.

Public discourse related to the Irish Travellers has evolved from policies focused on the assimilation of the Traveller community into the settled, mainstream community in the 1960s to

a rhetoric espousing acceptance, tolerance, and equality in recent years. Despite this fact, the lived experience of the Travellers does not seem to have changed significantly. In my study, I gathered data through interviews conducted with both Traveller and settled participants, observations of NGO focus groups and other public events, the collection of documents, and taking photographs. The study highlighted key issues within the Irish Traveller community related to health, education, and ethnic recognition. I discuss these findings in detail in Chapter Four.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand Travellers as a marginalized group in Ireland today through the conduit of a nongovernmental organization advocating for Traveller rights. I focused on understanding the effects of current government policy on Travellers today, identifying the needs of the Traveller community as well as how government policies are or are not meeting these needs, understanding what NGO programs are offered, and examining how those programs are designed to meet the needs of the Travellers. In addition, I also sought insights into what additional programs could be offered to better meet the needs of the Traveller community.

Background to the Problem

Travellers experience a quality of life different from their settled counterparts in many areas, including health, education, and labor. The use of the term "settled" to refer to the mainstream population in Ireland comes from the Traveller community and is reflected in both public and academic discourses (Gmelch, 1985; Hayes, 2006; Helleiner, 2000). In general, Travellers experience a disparity in both access to and utilization of healthcare services (Hodgins, et al., 2006; Parry, et al., 2004). As a result, Traveller levels of health and life

expectancy are significantly lower than the average settled person in Ireland (Abdalla et al., 2010). They experience discrimination in attempting to access healthcare facilities and in a marked lack of accommodation for their culture within those facilities (Abdalla et al., 2010; Hodgins, et al., 2006). In addition to general health concerns, drug use among Traveller youth is a rising concern. Traveller youth, because of social and economic factors, are at a greater risk of using and abusing illegal drugs (Department of Health and Children, 2002; Fountain, 2006; Van Hout & Connor, 2008).

Closely connected to the health concerns of the Traveller community are the difficulties with accessing formal educational settings and academic achievement. On the one hand, Travellers experience discrimination in schools from peers, teachers, and school administrators. Traveller culture is neither valued nor respected within the education system and curriculum. In the past, Travellers were educated in segregated classrooms, away from their same-aged peers (Helleiner, 2000; Kenny, 1999). More recently, Travellers have been integrated into mainstream classrooms, but they are often shunted to the back of the classroom and ignored (Devine, Kenny & Macneela, 2008). Incidents of teachers singling out Traveller children, challenging their presence in the classroom, and outright telling them that education will be a waste for them have also been documented (Abdalla et al., 2010). These types of institutional and individual discrimination create a negative school climate for Traveller children not conducive to learning. Furthermore, in some cases, depending on the gender of the child, Traveller children are encouraged by their families to drop out of school in order to contribute to the home economy or assist with domestic labor (Helleiner, 2000). Together these forms of discrimination create challenges for Traveller children to survive and succeed in the Irish education system.

Historically, Travellers have operated on the margins of settled society. Prior to industrialization, Travellers moved between communities, engaging in seasonal labor, repairing tin farming implements, peddling, and begging (Gmelch, 1977). They were also well known for their skill at breeding horses and often traveled to fairs to trade and sell this essential component of farm life (Bhreatnach, 2006). Following industrialization, however, the economic landscape of Ireland changed. As their traditional economic niches disappeared, Travellers adapted and took up new trades, such as collecting scrap metal and engaging in various kinds of manual labor (Central Statistics Office, 2007; Gmelch, 1977). When Travellers attempted to engage in more mainstream labor, they faced intense discrimination from employers and co-workers (Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, 2005; Task Force, 1995). This led some Travellers to attempt to disguise their ethnicity from potential employers, which can have long-term effects on the psychological welfare of the Traveller community (Abdalla et al., 2010). I explore these issues in more depth in the detailed review of the literature in Chapter Two.

Rationale

My interest in the Irish Traveller community, and the rationale for this research, has grown from both personal and scholarly experience. In the summer of 2007 I had the opportunity to visit and study in Cork, Ireland as part of a study abroad program at the University of Georgia. While I had always been told that my family was Irish on my father's side, I had not given my own family history much thought before that time. Living in Ireland for six weeks gave me a greater appreciation for my own Irish heritage as well as sparking within me the desire to return to Ireland in both a personal and professional capacity.

When I was accepted into the Social Foundations of Education doctoral program at the University of Georgia, I decided to study the changing special education system in Ireland. I

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selected Ireland as a broad area of focus in my courses that encouraged students to choose

projects that were of interest to them. During this time early in the program, I took a course on

education in postcolonial contexts. As part of this course, I selected and reviewed a book by Jane

Helleiner (2000), *Irish Traveller: Racism and the Politics of Culture*. This book was my first

introduction to the Irish Traveller community as an indigenous ethnic minority in Ireland.

Looking back, this was the moment that my personal interest in Ireland transformed into a

scholarly interest in the Irish Traveller community.

As I engaged more and more with scholarly literature related to the Travellers, I began to

believe that it was important to try to understand Traveller life from the Travellers' perspective.

There have been many studies *about* the Travellers but not as many *with* the Travellers, an issue

that Martin Collins (1994) illuminates specifically. The impetus for my desire to conduct

research was to better understand Traveller life and needs as well as what is being done, or not

done, to meet those needs. It was important to me to approach this research with the goal of

understanding, not of judging or evaluating Traveller culture. I also hoped to contribute to

scholarly understandings of the Traveller community as well as to engage reciprocally with the

nongovernmental organization site in my study.

Goals and Objectives

The overarching goal for this qualitative study was to learn about the case of the Irish

Travellers as a marginalized group in Ireland today. In order to reach this broader goal, I had

several more narrow objectives that contributed to my understanding and formed the basis for

building a case study of the Travellers:

- To understand what features of contemporary Irish government policy affect the

    Traveller community in Ireland today;

- To understand what factors are influencing the Traveller community in relation to the areas of health, education, labor, legal, social, and cultural concerns;

- To understand the general program features of the selected NGO serving Irish Travellers;

- To illuminate and understand how such programs are working to meet the unique needs of the Traveller community in Ireland.

Research Questions

The goals and objectives listed above led to the research questions that guided my study and data collection:

Research Questions	Rationale	Data Sources	Methods of Analysis
1. What are the contemporary features of Irish government policy that affect the Traveller community in Ireland?	Provides macro-level context in which to situate the findings	Policy documents Scholarly literature Press releases	Informal content analysis Thematic coding
2. What are the unique needs of the Traveller community in Ireland?	Addresses the social, health, economic, and educational context of the Travellers in Ireland	Interviews Fieldnotes Observations Policy documents Law Centre reports Photographs	Thematic coding Memos Analysis of field/observation notes Informal content analysis (documents)
3. What are the general features and program characteristics of Pavee Point Travellers' Centre?	Provides a basic understanding of the organizational structure and function of the nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and their programs	Interviews Program websites Program educational and other materials Fieldnotes Photographs	Thematic coding Memos Analysis of field/observation notes Informal content analysis (documents)
4. What do the selected participants see as the broader issues in the Irish Traveller rights movement and how is the selected NGO acting to address those issues?	Elicits an *emic* perspective for thorough understanding of the political and social context of the Travellers in Ireland through the lens of both Travellers and NGO personnel	Interviews Program websites Fieldnotes Observations Policy documents NGO events and activities	Thematic coding Memos Analysis of field/observation notes Informal content analysis (documents)

Figure 1. Research matrix.

Significance and Delimitations of the Study

While the Irish Traveller community has been a part of Irish society for centuries, Irish Travellers have become the focus of academic study only comparatively recently. While the body of literature is growing, a unique opportunity exists to significantly contribute to scholarly understanding and discourse surrounding the Traveller community. Moreover, much of the research that has been done in recent decades has failed to actively connect with the Traveller community. Researchers have entered the community, gathered data, and then left to analyze in isolation (Collins, 1994). This behavior has not afforded the opportunity for scholars to engage with the Traveller community and construct meanings and understandings collaboratively to ensure the validity of the findings. By utilizing member-checks and staying engaged with the participants in my qualitative study after the data collection phase, I hoped to provide more authentic insights and contributions to understandings of Traveller life in modern Ireland than have been typical of research in this limited field.

While the opportunity for contributions is significant, I anticipated several delimitations to my study. First, members of the Traveller community, like many indigenous communities who have been treated poorly by academics and society alike, may be reluctant to engage with outsiders. In this case, I am an outsider twice over as I am neither a Traveller nor Irish. For this reason, I chose to focus my case study though a NGO serving Irish Travellers in the hopes that I would have access to more participants and a greater quality of data. This did, however, affect the type of data that I was able to gather. For instance, participants frequently reported that "ethnic recognition by the state" was the most important issue in the Irish Traveller community today (Interviews June 1, 2012; June 6, 2012; June 12, 2012; June 15, 2012; Observation field notes, June 11, 2012), which coincides with the stated mission of Pavee Point (Pavee Point

Travellers' Centre, 2012). Instances like this represented a possible lack of data disagreeing with stated institutional values and revealed participants' interest in presenting a united front with respect to Irish Travellers' rights.

My observation data was also potentially limited, as Travellers utilize a language that is unique to their culture called alternately cant, Shelta, or Gammon. They will often use cant when speaking in the presence of settled people, or non-Travellers, as a way to speak freely without letting the outsider into the conversation. Because I do not speak cant, I anticipated that language might hinder my ability to conduct observations, although I hoped that being affiliated with the NGO might mitigate this possibility. On one occasion, early in the field season, I experienced this while waiting for a participant in the communal kitchen area. A group of men was holding a conversation about a topic that I could not immediately identify. After a few minutes, I realized that they were slipping in and out of English and another language. I believe that this language was cant, although I was reluctant to ask as I did not want to appear rude and I had not been introduced to the gentlemen in question (Observation field notes, June 1, 2012).

Another important limitation to this study was time in the field. After I received Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for my study, I was able to have a total of three weeks in the field, which limited the amount of interviews that I could conduct and affected what events I was able to observe. In the future, I hope to be able to conduct more extended research and plan future studies around more important social and cultural events. While I utilized multiple methods to increase the dependability, confirmability, and creditability of my data, including triangulation of data, sources, and theories, reflexive journaling, and member-checking (Creswell, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1985), I do anticipate that the delimitations of this study

prevent the data from being transferable to other contexts. Delimitations are detailed further in Chapter Five of the dissertation.

In the following chapter, Chapter Two, I present relevant scholarly research that informed my study, organized by context. Then, in Chapter Three, I review the study design, the theoretical framework that underpinned my study, the specific methodology, and the methods that I used for data collection and analysis. In Chapter Four, I provide the findings of the study. Lastly, in Chapter Five, I discuss the implications of the findings and universal issues, provide some discussion of the role of the researcher, further elucidate the delimitations of the study, and offer some directions for future research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Irish Travellers are an indigenous ethnic minority who occupy a unique space in Irish history and culture. Travellers have shared customs, language, traditions, and value systems that separate them from the settled population; the most salient distinction is the role that nomadism plays in their cultural identification. The title of this dissertation, "Ata'p a d'onadu", is a traditional Shelta phrase that loosely means, "to move and go with purpose." The participant who shared this phrase with me does not believe that there are any words to talk about life without also talking about movement in the Traveller language; such is the centrality of nomadism to the Traveller community (Personal communication, August 15, 2012). Interactions between Travellers and the Irish government and society have been characterized by rejection, distrust, violence, and cultural assimilation policies, especially targeted at youth and children. Most past and current research concerning the Travellers has focused on understanding their cultural norms and traditions as well as assessing their current political and social status as a group in Ireland as it relates to educational attainment, employment, health and race relations, and other sociocultural issues (see Fanning, 2002; Gmelch, 1985; Hayes, 2006; Helleiner, 2000). Understanding the range of contexts and the interconnectedness of the issues that Travellers face in modern Ireland is important in understanding issues affecting Travellers.

In order to better understand the situation of the Travellers today, it is important to first understand the historical, political, and cultural context of Traveller-settled relations, which have fluctuated along a continuum of tolerance for decades. What follows is a review of the scholarly literature, beginning with the historical context of Travellers in Ireland. Following that, I review government policies and reports that have directly influenced Traveller life, beginning with the

first major legislation targeting Travellers in 1963 and continuing into present day. Lastly, I present a number of cultural contexts that are essential to understanding Traveller life.

This review of the literature has been drawn from many areas of scholarly research that inform my study. While I have chosen to organize the review by contexts, for clarity as well as comprehension, the primary fields from which the literature was drawn are comparative and international education, postcolonial research, globalization research, and Irish Studies. Each of these fields both informed the overall study and provided context in which to analyze and understand the findings. In addition, much of the research overlaps one or more of the relevant fields, which is another rationale behind organizing the review by context.

Historical Contexts

As an indigenous minority group, Travellers have been a part of Irish society for centuries. Understanding the historical context of Travellers in Irish society is necessary to understand Travellers' position in modern times. For my study, there were three historical contexts in particular that I found to be helpful in considering the Traveller case: pre-industrial Traveller life, post-industrial Traveller life, the postcolonial context of Ireland, and Travellers as "other".

Pre-Industrial Traveller Life

Prior to the industrialization and mechanization of farming in Ireland, Travellers carved out a unique niche for themselves as tinsmiths and peddlers. They traveled from community to community and the men searched out labor on farms, either repairing farm implements or performing manual labor tasks (Gmelch, 1977). In addition, they were also accomplished horse breeders and traders during a time that animal power was essential to farming (Bhreatnach, 2006). While the men were occupied on the farm, the women engaged in the peddling of wares

or begging. Children also served an essential role in the economic function of the family through begging or assisting the adults, when they were of an appropriate age (Helleiner, 2000). Travellers during this time were tolerated, not only because they provided important services to the community at a price that was often more competitive than local shops, but also because they would bring news and gossip from other villages (Hayes, 2006). The key to Traveller survival then, as now, was in the "multioccupationality" of the Traveller community, who are willing to adapt and exploit any economic niche that is of benefit to them (Helleiner, 2000).

Post-Industrial Traveller Life

Industrialization and modernization have left Travellers without the traditional economic outlets that they enjoyed during more agrarian times (Abdalla et al., 2010, p. 121). With advancements in farming equipment and the ubiquity of plastics and other disposable materials, Traveller labor has had to adapt. One of the new urban niches that the Travellers carved out for themselves in the late 20th century was in the recycling trade. Traveller men, in particular, began searching out scrap metal to collect it, clean it, and turn it into recycling centers in exchange for cash. This new activity, however, posed a serious health risk to Traveller families as the scrap was collected and kept at the campsite and waste material burned, putting potentially dangerous chemicals into the air (Gmelch, 1977). Increasingly in modern times, Travellers are seeking out employment in more traditional sectors, despite the high level of discrimination that they face. Recent census data shows that the most popular labor sectors for employed Traveller men are construction and wholesale/retail trade, while Traveller women are engaged in the fields of education or health and social work (Central Statistics Office, 2007).

Discrimination in the workplace. Travellers in Ireland, like the Romani in both Eastern and Western Europe, are stereotyped as being fundamentally lazy by nature (Hayes, 2006). This

notion that Travellers are unwilling to engage in hard labor, combined with pervasive anti-Traveller prejudice in Ireland, makes it very difficult for Travellers to engage in the modern labor force (Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, 2005; Task Force, 1995). Discrimination in the workplace creates a serious barrier to improvement of Traveller health, welfare, and education. To begin with, young Travellers lose incentive to complete their education because they know that discrimination in the workplace will make it difficult for them to obtain and maintain steady employment. Those who are able to obtain traditional employment often do so because they actively hide their ethnicity from prospective employers. Even engaging in informal economic activity, such as unskilled labor, can be a challenge because of discrimination from employers (Abdalla et al., 2010).

Unemployment post-industrialization. The Task Force on the Travelling Community (2003) report has indicated that the unemployment rate for Travellers in the early 21st century was 90%, with much of that being chronic, long-term unemployment. Recent census data has put that number closer to 70%, according to the self-reporting of Travellers (Central Statistics Office, 2007). The Report and Recommendations for Traveller Education Strategy (2006) has further postulated that 73% of Traveller men and 64% of Traveller women were unemployed as of 2005. One of the ways that the Irish government has sought to combat this unemployment crisis is through the opening of senior Traveller training centers (STTC). These centers provide general education curriculum, vocational education, work experience, guidance, counseling, and psychiatric services to Travellers. They are administered through local Vocational Educational Committees (VECs). Unfortunately, many Travellers are reluctant to utilize these centers, either because they fear judgment from other Travellers or because they lack trust in the administration of these centers (Government Publications, 2007). In this study, I investigated what Traveller

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NGOs are doing to help Travellers train for, find, and keep legal employment, given all of the barriers that exist.

Postcolonialism and the Irish "Other"

As a western nation previously colonized by the West, some scholars question the notion of Ireland as a postcolonial state. Edward Said (2003) makes the case that Ireland suffered many of the same social, psychological, and economic damages that other, more distant former colonies suffered and that, in that sense, there is a strong argument for considering Ireland through a postcolonial lens. "Othering," or the construction and sublimation of a group's identity by a dominant group, in the Irish context is unique and developed partly out of the post-independence efforts to re-gaelicize Ireland (English, 2006; Said, 1978). During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Irish nationalists constructed a discourse that portrayed the Irish as a unified, homogenous culture based on the mythology of the Irish Celt (Fanning, 2002). This nation-building ideology was an attempt to regain an Irish identity outside of the British colonial context. A secondary consequence was that such a discourse provided justification for discrimination and exclusion of minority groups. This myth constructed the Irish to be, above all, homogeneously white, Catholic, sedentary, and nationalistic. Conflicts with minority groups, not limited to Travellers, in the decades following can be attributed, in part, to the challenging of this myth (Brandi, 2007; Fanning, 2002). As in Said's (1978) discussion of Orientalism and the construction of the "other," Irish Travellers were both exoticized and criminalized by the settled population. Travellers of the distant past were romanticized as wandering tinsmiths who were honest but culturally exotic, whereas the modern Traveller is seen as deviant, dishonest, and threatening (Hayes, 2006). Traveller men, in particular, are stereotyped and portrayed as devious thieves who will prey on settled women. Paul Delaney (2006) traces the evolution of this

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discourse through Irish literature, showing the progression from gentle wanderer to dangerous vagrant, which illustrates the postcolonial 'othering' of the Traveller community.

This assumption of mono-culturalism is not a historical artifact and is still a part of current political and social debate (O'Connell, 1994). Recent immigration has brought increasing diversity to Irish society, more so than ever before, and it has sparked renewed debates about Irish national identity and how the state should regulate political and civil rights (Cullen, 2009). This debate has serious implications for Travellers in Ireland as anti-Travellerism is rooted in this same myth of homogeneity. The Irish government has been reprimanded by watchdog institutions, such as Amnesty International who, in a 2006 report, stated that the Irish government was not doing enough to acknowledge and combat racial discrimination in law, policy, or institutional practices (Cullen, 2009). In this study, understanding the roots of anti-Travellerism in Irish social and political history was essential to understanding the current debates over Traveller rights and recognition by the state.

Ethnogenesis and the Search for Recognition

While there are many theories about the origin of the Irish Traveller community, there are not yet any definitive answers to the question of Traveller ethnogenesis, the origin of the Traveller ethnic group although "historical records show that Travellers have been present since at least the twelfth century" (Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, 2005, p. 1). Some speculate, perhaps romantically, that the Travellers are what remain of the native, Celtic chieftains that held power in pre-colonial Ireland (Hayes, 2006; Helleiner, 1995). The first scholarly notions of Traveller ethnogenesis, however, were driven by a dropout model, which holds that Travellers were once settled Irish people who "dropped out" of the sedentary lifestyle and took to the road. The reasons for becoming itinerant could vary widely, from economic need to forms of social

deviance, including alcoholism, illegitimacy, and marriage to a person who lived a nomadic

lifestyle. In this way, Travellers were seen as victims of colonization, forced to take to the road

in order to survive (Abdalla et al., 2010; Gmelch, 1977; Helleiner, 2000; Kearns, 1977). This

further provided justification for government assimilation and settlement programs of the 1960s

and 1970s, as nomadism was presented as a consequence of history as opposed to a legitimate

cultural practice. Scholars, including George Gmelch, Sharon Gmelch, and Patricia McCarthy,

later repudiated this notion of a subculture of poverty (McCarthy, 1994).

The question of the Traveller ethnogenesis, while important, is not central to the most

challenging issues facing Travellers in modern Ireland. While the scholarly community has

recognized Traveller ethnicity since the 1970s, the Irish government still refuses to grant the

Travellers official status as an ethnic group. The Irish government's combined third and fourth

report to the United Nations International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial

Discrimination, released in December 2009, states that "Travellers do not constitute a distinct

group from the population as a whole in terms of race, colour, descent or ethnic origin" (Office

of the Minister for Integration, 2009, p. 5). The report goes on to acknowledge that Travellers

have the right to believe in their own ethnic identity and that they will be accorded all of the

protection and provision of minority status, but this fundamental denial of ethnicity by the state

radiates through all public and private interaction between Travellers and the majority

population.

According to Barth (1969), there are four traditional criteria that define an ethnic group:

they should by and large be biologically self-perpetuating, they should share obvious and visible

fundamental cultural values and traditions, they should create a field of interaction and

communication, and, lastly, they should be both self-identified and identified by others as

belonging to a separate group (p. 11). Notably, he does not identify discernible origin of a group to be essential in defining ethnic group status. The final criterion, that of self- and external identification, seems the most pertinent to the Traveller situation. Sinead Ni Shuinear undertakes a detailed analysis in her 1994 work on Traveller ethnicity and reaches the conclusion that, according to Barth's criteria, Travellers indeed qualify for the designation of an ethnic group. In addition, the United Nations Human Rights Committee has stated that the Irish government's denial of Traveller ethnic identity is unnecessarily restrictive and they should open the discussion of recognizing Traveller ethnicity (Pavee Point and the Irish Human Rights Commission, 2008). Both the Pavee Point Travellers' Centre and the Irish Traveller Movement have listed on their websites statements that affirm their belief in Irish Traveller ethnicity and call for the Irish government to give recognition to the Travellers as an essential component to gaining equality. Understanding the importance that this fundamental denial of ethnic status has for Irish Traveller nongovernment organizations (NGOs) was crucial to my research with those organizations.

Political Contexts

Government reports and policies give a unique window into the evolution of the relationship between Traveller and settled communities. To understand the mission and goals of Traveller NGOs that work closely, not only with the Traveller community but also with the local, national, and European level governments, it is necessary to understand the development and impact of Irish policy on the Traveller community. In this study, it was important to understand what progress has been made politically and what still remains to be accomplished. What follows here is chart outlining the key points of each report and a more detailed review of the most pertinent government reports and legislation from 1963 to the present.

Report	Year	Focus	Key Points
Report of the Commission on Itinerancy	1963	Describe issue of increasing "itinerants"	- Nomadism is a social defect - Nomadism is the root cause of issues "itinerants face - Forced settlement and assimilation - No recognition of Traveller ethnicity
Report of the Travelling People Review Body	1983	How to best facilitate nomadism for those Travellers who wish to move	- Nomadism now seen as cultural trait - Need for accommodation protocols - No institutional discrimination against Travellers
Report of the Task Force on the Travelling Community	1995	Detail the status of Traveller life in Ireland	- Discrimination is present at all levels for Travellers - Inequality inevitable with nomadism
Traveller Health: A National Strategy	2002	Detail the status of the health of the Traveller community in Ireland	- Travellers are disproportionately disadvantaged in health and access to healthcare - Issues in both institutional discrimination and Traveller distrust of health professionals
The Housing (Miscellaneous Provision) Act	2002	Amendment to the Criminal Justice Act of 1994	- Created to address the problem of nomadic Traveller encampments
Report and Recommendations for a Traveller Education Strategy	2006	Provide recommendations for the improvement of Traveller education	- Inclusion, not segregation - Acknowledge Traveller culture in school and curriculum - Anti-racist curriculum - Equal opportunity for education for all students
National Action Plan Against Racism	2006	Address increasing levels of racism in Irish society	- Ireland is increasingly diverse - Need to address the increasing multiculturalism with anti-racist framework
UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	2009	Ireland status report	- UN calls for Irish government to recognize Irish Traveller ethnicity, violation of human rights to not do so
All Ireland Traveller Health Study	2010	Update on the health of the Traveller community	- Most comprehensive - Health of Traveller community still significantly below the settled community

Figure 2. Outline of the political contexts in which the Traveller community is situated.

Report of the Commission on Itinerancy, 1963

The Report of the Commission on Itinerancy (1963) was the first in a series of government-commissioned reports on the Traveller people. The Commission on Itinerancy was established to 1) examine the problems arising from the increasing number of "itinerants" in Ireland, 2) determine the economic, social, educational, and health issues that were "inherent in their way of life," and 3) determine what measures could be taken to improve their way of life via absorption into the general community and make specific recommendations to that end (Commission on Itinerancy, 1963, p. 11). This report mirrored the logic of the dropout hypothesis and called for the forced settlement and assimilation of the Traveller people into a sedentary lifestyle. The report described nomadism as a social defect and nomads themselves as a threat to society who needed to be rehabilitated in order to survive. Any inequalities in Traveller health, education, or welfare were deemed to be a result of the nomadic lifestyle that they led. This report offered no consideration for the fact that the settled population's refusal to recognize or make accommodations for the Traveller culture could be equally responsible for inequalities. In the document, Minister for Justice Charles J. Haughey stated unequivocally that the only final solution to the itinerant problem was that Travellers be fully absorbed into the settled population. During this time, an unofficial bouldering policy was common. Local authorities would roll boulders into the entrances to traditional Traveller halting sites, which were locations where Travellers would regularly camp while traveling, completely blocking them from use. The Travellers would then move to unofficial sites that lacked sanitary provisions. These encampments angered the local populations and further strained Traveller-settled relations. This assimilationist logic guided state interaction with the Travellers for more than twenty years (Commission on Itinerancy, 1963; Roughneen, 2010).

Report of the Travelling People Review Body, 1983

Twenty years later, the *Report of the Travelling People Review Body* (1983) moved away from the assimilationist discourse and began the discussion of nomadism as a cultural trait of the Traveller people. Instead of calling for forced assimilation, it called for the establishment of accommodation protocols that ranged from temporary halting sites to permanent housing that Travellers could access at their discretion. The focus was shifted to determining what could be done to help facilitate a nomadic lifestyle for those Travellers who wished to remain on the road. It is important to note that where the 1963 report used the value-laden term "itinerant," the 1983 report used "Traveller." At this point, however, there was still no political discussion of granting Travellers official recognition as an ethnic group. Additionally, the report made the claim that no institutional discrimination existed against the Travellers in terms of access to state services such as healthcare or education (Department of the Environment, 1983; National Focal Point of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, 2003). This claim, however, was not supported by the contemporary scholarly literature (see Gmelch & Gmelch, 1976; Gmelch, 1985).

Report of the Task Force on the Travelling Community, 1995

By the time that the *Report of the Task Force on the Travelling Community* was issued in 1995, the discrimination that Travellers faced in Irish society was a main thread of discussion. This report illuminated various facets of Traveller life, including issues of housing, health, and education. The third in the line of major reports and legislation concerning the Travellers, the 1995 Task Force report seemed to be the most progressive in its rhetoric. It was the first report to acknowledge unequivocally that the Travellers viewed themselves as a separate ethnic group and that they had the right to follow their own traditions. It was also the first report to acknowledge

that Travellers experienced discrimination, both at the individual and institutional level, and that changes and provisions to government policy were needed to accommodate Traveller needs. Despite this positive change in rhetoric, some problematic elements remained from previous reports. First, a settled lifestyle was still assumed to be preferable to a nomadic lifestyle. The report stated that any Traveller who lived a nomadic lifestyle must be willing to accept a certain amount of inequality as a result of traveling. Furthermore, the report called for local authorities to provide settled housing for every Traveller family in their area, particularly for newlywed Traveller couples, something that the Traveller community did not necessarily desire (Task Force, 1995; McVeigh, 2007).

Traveller Health: A National Strategy, 2002

One of the most important contributions of the *Report of the Task Force on the Travelling Community* (1995) was the number of other, more specific, initiatives and reports that were spawned from its recommendations. *Traveller Health: A National Strategy* (2002) is an example. This report was based on the principle that Travellers are disproportionately disadvantaged in regards to health and access to healthcare. Interestingly, the report placed the onus on healthcare providers to seek out and make connections with disadvantaged groups, such as the Travellers. Unfortunately, Travellers are not accessing healthcare at the same level as their settled counterparts for a myriad of reasons. These include discrimination by healthcare providers, fear and mistrust of healthcare providers, and Traveller cultural beliefs regarding health and illness. The core principle of the report was that Travellers have the right to seek out and access healthcare that is culturally responsive to their needs as an ethnic minority group. While the report contains information that had not yet been documented so comprehensively, there is criticism to be leveled. The healthcare workers who conducted the research were from

the settled population. Travellers, in general, mistrust strangers, and while data collection incorporated more Travellers than ever before, it has been proven to be not as comprehensive as originally thought (Department of Health and Children, 2002).

The Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2002

In the 1995 Task Force report, local authorities were charged with establishing Traveller accommodations of various kinds, including temporary halting sites where Travellers could stay for a few weeks to a few months during the year as they traveled. Because many local authorities failed to provide such accommodation, Traveller groups began to camp wherever they were able to find space for their caravans. These encampments became so large and had such poor facilities that they began to accumulate waste, both organic and inorganic. This drew the negative attention of local communities and, as a result, an amendment to the Criminal Justice Act of 1994 was proposed and passed through the legislature. This amendment, known as the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act of 2002, effectively criminalized all Travellers camping on land that they either do not own or do not have express permission to occupy. The Act stipulates that, without express consent, no one can enter or occupy land or bring anything onto the land that might substantially damage it or substantially interfere with the land and its use by making it unsanitary or unsafe. Whomever is caught in violation of the Act will be removed from the land and can incur a number of penalties, including a fine, having their caravan and other property seized, and arrest (Roughneen, 2010). This law takes a tradition that Travellers have been engaging in for centuries and makes it illegal. This law has clear and serious repercussions, which became evident during my research.

Report and Recommendations for a Traveller Education Strategy, 2006

Out of the 1995 Task Force report, the task force members made 167 recommendations in the field of Traveller education and training, and the 2006 *Report and Recommendation for a Traveller Education Strategy* was the result of these recommendations. The impetus for the report was the need for more specific demographic information and research into what, precisely, the Traveller community needed in terms of educational support. The report provided short-, medium-, and long-term goals; the primary focus of all of these was the equitable inclusion of Traveller children in the mainstream education system while providing support and accommodation for Traveller cultural identity, including the nomadic lifestyle. The report provided a comprehensive definition of inclusion, which I have paraphrased here:

1. Integrating Traveller children in a full inclusion model,

2. Providing resources according to educational need,

3. Sharing physical resources between Traveller and settled peers,

4. Inclusion and validation of Traveller culture in the curriculum,

5. Acknowledgement and acceptance of difference,

6. Continual pursuit of mechanisms to meet changing Traveller educational needs

7. Incorporation of principles of equity, diversity, and anti-racist curriculum into professional development training for teachers

8. Acknowledgement and support for Traveller children with disabilities and their parents,

9. Educating Traveller children, both with and without disabilities, in an equitable fashion. (p. 10-11)

This definition of inclusion is, perhaps, one of the most comprehensive in government policy relating to Travellers. Another key principle of the report is the fostering of parental involvement in the Traveller community. Because many Traveller adults did not experience success in the education system themselves, promoting parental involvement in education had been a struggle. In addition, low levels of adult literacy also presented a barrier for parental involvement with the schools (Department of Education, 2006).

National Action Plan Against Racism, 2006

The *National Action Plan Against Racism* (2006), or NPAR, represents an important recognition by the Irish government that Ireland is no longer the mono-cultural society that has so long dominated social and political thought. Instead, the NPAR presented Ireland as an increasingly diverse, multicultural society with needs that were not being met by the then current provisions. Ireland had been increasing in diversity in recent years, particularly since the opening of the European Union borders. The NPAR is underpinned by five elements of a framework: protection, inclusion, provision, recognition, and participation. The reports and recommendation for implementing an anti-racism program in Ireland are not specific to the Traveller community, but the report discusses Travellers consistently along with other migrants, refugees, and minority groups.

UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 2009

Despite all of the progress that has been made in addressing the needs of the Traveller community at the national level, the Irish government still maintains that the Travellers are not a separate ethnic group. The most significant part of the 2009 report from the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination called on the Irish government to officially recognize Travellers as an ethnic minority. The UN report called the denial of legal

recognition for Travellers unnecessary and inappropriate, especially given that many other EU

countries, such as England and Scotland, have granted such recognition (UN Report on Racial

Discrimination, 2009). This pressure from the EU, in conjunction with the pressure coming from

nongovernmental organizations that serve the Traveller community, was a recurring theme in my

research.

All Ireland Traveller Health Study, 2010

The most recent and influential government report related to Irish Travellers is the *All

Ireland Traveller Health Study* (2010). This report was made more significant by the fact that the

data collection was carried out by Travellers trained to be health workers. In this case, Travellers

went out into Traveller communities, convincing other Travellers that it would be beneficial for

them and the overall community to participate in this study. Thus, where the 2002 health report

was a significant improvement over other assessments, this 2010 report was even more so. This

study was completed with the cooperation of Irish government officials and numerous NGOs

serving the Traveller community (Abdalla et al., 2010). Because the study was completed and

published so recently, there has not yet been time to assess the impact of this new data. This

information came up repeatedly in discussions about health and heath issues during my study.

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Cultural Contexts

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A variety of cultural contexts are unique and specific to the Traveller situation.

Understanding these contexts is essential to understanding the needs of Travellers in Ireland

today as well as the NGO programs created to meet these needs.

Nomadism

Understanding the importance of nomadism in Irish Traveller culture is fundamental to

any research on Travellers and the issues that affect them. For Travellers, nomadism is a

psychological orientation; it is the lens through which they view and experience the world (McDonagh, 1994). Like much of the rest of the world, settled living is the norm in Ireland (Roughneen, 2010). Traveller nomadism is unique in that it operates interdependently with wider Irish society, with Travellers often moving for economic reasons that are connected to settled society, such as horse fairs and seasonal work (Hayes, 2006). Accommodation, then, is never seen as permanent. Even Travellers who chose to reside in homes or apartments for years still view them as temporary as long as the option to travel still exists. Housing and accommodation become a contentious issue when Travellers believe as though their right to move on is being threatened (McDonagh, 1994). Travellers choose to travel for many reasons; in some cases, they travel in order to convene with extended family members. One reason they might do this is to look for marriage partners, as Travellers are largely endogamous and marry not only within the Traveller community but also often within specific clans. They might also choose to travel to spread important news or events. Another important reason for travel is to avoid clan conflict. Lastly, they often travel for economic survival (Hayes, 2006; McDonagh, 1994; Roughneen, 2010). Regardless of the reasons for or frequency of travel, it is important to recognize that traveling is a cultural touchstone for the Traveller community and something that Travellers consider to be essential to their identity. Gaining recognition from the state as an ethnic minority would legitimize traveling as a valid cultural expression. In this study, acknowledging the centrality of nomadism in the Traveller culture was important to understanding life from a Traveller's perspective.

Beginning with the *Report of the Commission on Itinerancy* in 1963, Traveller accommodation has been problematic for the Irish government and its local authorities. Initially, a tiered system of housing was established to transition Travellers from a mobile to a settled

existence, with accommodation ranging from temporary halting sites to settled group housing.

For decades these temporary halting sites were the most commonly utilized state-provided

housing. The sanitation and provision of services at these halting sites varied widely. Some

provided electricity, running water, and sanitation services, but many of these sites were little

more than bare ground on which the Travellers could remain without the fear of being evicted

(Gmelch, 1977; Joyce & O'Brien, 1998). While the government has since ideologically shifted

away from the forced settlement scheme, the system of accommodation is still an issue. As of

2006, 28% of Traveller families lived in caravans or mobile homes (Central Statistics Office,

2007, p. 61) and estimates of the percentage of these families living in unofficial encampments

ranges anywhere from 22% to 25% (Norris & Winston, 2005, p. 811). Hodgins, Millar, and

Barry (2006) noted that in a study of Traveller families camped near Dublin, 55% had no access

to water, 50% had no access to working toilets, 60% had no access to a washing machine, and

66% had no access to working showers (p. 1986). These types of living conditions have a direct

correlation with the health status of the Travellers living there, including levels of stress, risk of

infectious disease, and the likelihood of being involved in accidents (Department of Health and

Children, 2002, p.28). There are also clear implications for the possibility of educational success

for children living in these situations.

Even in situations where local authorities provide accommodations, the suitability of

these sites varies. Finding locations for accommodation sites can be challenging because of the

pervasive ethos of NIMBY, or Not In My Back Yard (Power, 2006). Settled communities object

strenuously to having a Traveller encampment located near their towns. As such, accommodation

sites are often relegated five or more miles outside of a town. This distance makes going into

town for supplies or taking their children to the local school difficult for Traveller families. In

addition to being far out of town, accommodation sites are often located near undesirable landmarks, such as cemeteries or landfills. In many cases, housing accommodations in towns are built specifically with no room to park a caravan. This means that to utilize that housing, the Traveller family must either sell their caravan, which would be devastating to the nomadic tradition, or they must be able to secure another location to house the caravan, which is often financially infeasible (McDonagh, 1994).

Language

Language is unique in the Traveller context in that, while it is a cultural marker, it is not a point of political contention in the way that it is in many other postcolonial states (Achebe, 2006; Moriarty, 2008). Like much about the Travellers, the origins of Traveller language, known as Shelta, Gammon, or cant, is not entirely clear. It has been portrayed in the past as a language that was developed to allow Travellers to communicate with each other in front of settled people while running a con or a scam (Gmelch, 1985). Travellers, however, report that its use today is more about the sense of familiarity and closeness that comes with speaking the language rather than an exclusionary tactic. While the speaking of cant might not be political in everyday use, some speculate that the inclusion of certain terms in autobiographical texts might be seen as a political move to emphasize the difference between Travellers and settled people (Hayes, 2006). While language was not a primary concern for my research, understanding the cultural traditions and use of cant was nevertheless insightful during data collection and analysis.

Health

The unique challenges and issues that Travellers face in accessing and properly utilizing healthcare services are three-fold. First, Travellers' cultural beliefs about health, illness, and the nature of death predispose them to avoiding traditional healthcare facilities and providers. These

cultural beliefs, coupled with the institutional discrimination faced by Travellers who do attempt to access healthcare services and the unsanitary nature of some Traveller work and living conditions, create a breeding ground for poor health and wellness. Improving Traveller health has been a primary focus of government intervention since the late 1990s, with little apparent improvement. In this study, understanding Traveller beliefs about health and illness provided insight into how and why Traveller NGOs implement programs designed to increase the health of the Traveller community overall.

Traveller men. Traveller men are twice as likely to die in a given year as their same aged settled counterparts (Department of Health and Children, 2002). A large percentage of this risk can be attributed to accidents to which their lifestyle predisposes them (Hodgins, Millar, & Barry, 2006). Overall, Traveller men have a life expectancy that is 15.1 years less than a settled Irishman (Abdalla et al., 2010). This severe discrepancy cannot be explained by any one factor. The social and emotional pressures that the men face compound environmental hazards implicit in Traveller lifestyle. In Traveller culture, men are expected to be strong and capable. Admitting to illness, in some cases, would be a sign of weakness and often times men will deny their illness and avoid diagnosis to maintain their pride. Traveller men will also attempt to hide illness to avoid causing others to worry, as worrying is seen as something that will cause or contribute to illness in others, particularly heart disease. Given the high incidence of heart disease among the Traveller population, these cultural explanations of illness remain plausible (Abdalla et al., 2010). Beyond socio-emotional concerns, men will often choose short-term relief of symptoms over long-term cures because of their need to resume economic activity (Hodgins et al., 2006; Parry et al., 2004).

Traveller women. At birth, Traveller women have a life expectancy that is 11.5 years less than the average Irishwoman (Abdalla et al., 2010). Much like the situation with Traveller men, the explanation for this discrepancy is not simple. One contributing factor is the size of the average Traveller family. Traveller mothers are younger and have more children than women in the general population, which is comparable to other indigenous minority populations in Australia (Aboriginal peoples), New Zealand (Maori), and Romania (Romani). In fact, Travellers have one of the highest birthrates in all of Europe (Abdalla et al., 2010). In the Traveller community, women are primarily responsible for maintaining the household and raising the children, in addition to contributing to the economic functions of the household, often through begging, peddling, or domestic employment (Gmelch, 1985; Helleiner, 1997). Recent census data indicate that the typical Traveller household has an average of five to six children under the age of 15, whereas a settled household has an average of two children. As of 2006, approximately 27% of Traveller families lived in temporary housing situations, such as in trailers on halting sites, which adds further stress and labor for women, as conditions at these sites are often not sanitary (Central Statistics Office, 2007; Hodgins et al., 2006).

Another primary issue in Traveller women's health is the prevalence of domestic violence. Traveller culture is traditionally patriarchal (Burke, 2007), and women are sometimes subjected to both verbal and physical abuse from their spouses. This looming threat of violence has led to a high incidence of depression in Traveller women. Many Traveller women fall under one or more of the categories that put a person at risk for depression, including being a woman, being a member of a nomadic group, not being in paid employment, having children under the age of six, and having poor support from husbands or friends (Hodgins et al., 2006). Hodgins et al. (2006) have further concluded that

The women portray an image of a Traveller mother as a woman who is physically and emotionally exhausted from the demands of caring for a large family in an uncompromising physical environment, who puts others first, is at risk for violence in her own home, is either ignored or insulted by healthcare professionals in the face of trying to raise children in these circumstances and is disliked or even hated by society at large. (p. 1987)

Traveller youth. There has been a general rise in youth drug use in Ireland (Van Hout & Connor, 2008) but the social marginalization that Traveller youth experience may put them at a higher risk for drug and alcohol abuse than their settled peers (Department of Health and Children, 2002). Some of the typical social venues that are available to settled youth, such as gyms, leisure centers, and swimming pools, are not open to Traveller youth because of their ethnicity. This exclusion not only has the potential to breed resentment, but being removed from typical social outlets also leaves Traveller youth more likely to turn to drugs for recreational entertainment as well as the mitigation of emotional distress caused by the discrimination. Van Hout and Connor (2008) conclude that, "due to their segregation, their experiences of discrimination at school and in the wider community, and their low literacy skills, young Travellers often typify the most common risk factors for drug use" (p. 9). Men, in particular, are more likely to abuse both drugs and alcohol from a fairly young age (Van Hout & Connor, 2008). Travellers are at a further disadvantage in that, as a community, they are less aware of and less likely to enroll in drug treatment programs, not only because of the lower level of formal education but also because of the lack of cultural responsiveness of said programs in reaching out to the Traveller community (Fountain, 2006). Pavee Point has created a drug initiative program, the mission of which is to identify the incidence of drug use within the Traveller

community and to seek out ways to provide treatment, counseling, and other services to these youth (Pavee Point Travellers' Center, 2012).

Cultural beliefs. There are many pieces to the puzzle of the poor health of the Traveller community. One important facet of this issue is the lack of consideration healthcare providers have for the traditional cultural beliefs of Travellers. For example, the concept of hope is important to Travellers when discussing aspects of their health. They see it as a bad omen to discuss terminal illness aloud because doing so removes their hope that they will recover. Some even believe that discussing it will worsen or quicken the illness, contributing to the death of the individual. Related to this is the concept of hospice care, which Travellers often eschew, because it is seen as an admission that death is inevitable in the near future (McQuillan & Van Doorslaer, 2007; Parry et al., 2004). Failure to accommodate traditional Traveller beliefs makes healthcare services difficult for Travellers to engage in equally with the settled population.

Institutional discrimination, which *Traveller Health: A National Strategy* (2002) describes as a type of "benign paternalism, [a] 'we know best' attitude" (p. 15), is not limited to the sphere of health. Young Travellers will often attempt to hide their ethnicity in order to gain access to public spaces such as pubs or the cinema, which their settled counterparts frequent without second thought (Abdalla et al., 2010). When it comes to the healthcare sphere, cases of general practitioners not accepting Travellers as patients because they do not wish to upset their settled clientele have been documented as recently as 2005 (Norris & Winston, 2005; National Focal Point of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, 2003).

Connected to these issues is the lack of trust that Travellers have in the healthcare system. They do not trust that healthcare providers have their best interest at heart, they do not trust that their wishes will be honored, and they do not trust that they will be treated as equal to non-

Travellers (Abdalla et al., 2010; Hodgins et al., 2006). Even in situations where Travellers seek

out medical care, they are more likely to wait until the illness is severe and less likely to follow

doctors' instructions than are their settled counterparts (Hodgins et al., 2006; Parry et al., 2004).

If the state wishes to improve the health of the Traveller community, it will need to not only

address issues of education and discrimination, but it will also need to provide direct, targeted

interventions designed to foster trust of the healthcare system in the Traveller community. These

institutional, individual, and cultural barriers provide some insight into why the health of the

average Traveller is so poor in comparison to the average settled person.

Education

Education, like health, work, and other areas of Traveller life, has a ripple effect within

the Traveller community. Travellers have, overall, not experienced success in the Irish school

system, due partly to the system's failure to recognize, respect, and accommodate Traveller

cultural needs. In order to understand more comprehensively the life of the Traveller in Ireland

today, it is essential to understand their issues and challenges in accessing and achieving in

primary, secondary, and tertiary schooling.

Educational exclusion. Nomadism, without proper accommodation from the school

system and support from the family, can and does pose serious barriers to success in the

educational sphere. Attendance is a primary concern for Traveller children as the average

attendance rate is approximately 80%, with a range of 35% to 100% (Department of Education,

2006, p. 37). Those with the poorest rates of attendance generally live in unofficial halting sites

that, as previously discussed, lack proper facilities and sanitation. There are some provisions to

assist Traveller families, such as the Visiting Teacher Service for Travellers (VTST) that serves

children from pre-school age through the end of secondary schooling, including providing

transitional services for those moving into tertiary education. The goals of this program are to maximize Traveller participation in schooling and to promote cultural inclusiveness. Unfortunately, these programs often have limited funding and cannot meet the needs of the Traveller community (Department of Education, 2006; Minty, 2008). Despite VTST and other services, such as dedicated pre-schools for Traveller children, the dropout rate for Travellers is extremely high, especially in comparison with the settled population. As of 2006, of Travellers aged 15 and above who no longer attended school full-time, 69% had either dropped out after primary school or had no formal education at all. Of that same population, less than 1% attended any kind of tertiary educational institution (Central Statistics Office, 2007).

The education of Traveller children in Ireland, like that of children with disabilities (Carey, 2005), has traditionally been marked by segregation (Kenny, 1997). Whereas children with disabilities were often educated in completely separate facilities, Traveller children were put into special classroom within the school building (Kenny, 2004). This model was consistent with international trends in education during the waning of the 20th century but has since fallen out of favor. Instead, a model of inclusion has been adopted, and as of 2004, there are no longer any officially segregated classes for Travellers in Ireland (Department of Education, 2006). This does not mean, however, that issues with segregated schooling for Travellers no longer exist. The Irish education system is still in transition from a model based on segregation to one based on inclusion (Carey, 2005), and Travellers, because of the environmental barriers that they face as well as other factors, are at a higher risk of being misidentified as students with special needs. This tendency to be misidentified as having special needs is consistent with findings for other marginalized groups, such as Native Americans in the United States (Gritzmacher & Gritzmacher, 2010).

Nomadism is a central component of Traveller life and identity development, but a tension exists between the nomadic lifestyle and the mainstream education system. According to the 1995 Task Force report, Traveller families who choose to travel during the school year cannot reasonably expect for their children to have access to an adequate education. This puts the onus on the Traveller family to exercise their cultural right to nomadism and lifts the blame from the school system. One way that Traveller families have chosen to mitigate this tension is by choosing to travel only during the summer months so that the children can attend school uninterrupted (Boyle, 2006; Scanlan, 2006). Irish Travellers are not the only population to struggle with bridging the divide between cultural nomadism and inflexible education systems. Scottish Travellers, traveling show people, and Romani populations across Europe and beyond deal with these same types of issues (Padfield & Cameron, 2009). Traveller and Romani children face additional concerns about ill-treatment, bullying, and social exclusion (Helleiner, 2000; Padfield & Cameron, 2009).

Some of the mechanisms that work to suppress and disenfranchise minority groups in the United States education system are pertinent and applicable to the Traveller situation in Ireland, such as tracking, standardized testing, perceived irrelevancy of the curriculum, unresponsive pedagogy, harsh disciplinary policies, and negative interactions with peers or teachers, particularly bullying (Astramovish & Harris, 2007; Darmody, Smyth, & McCoy, 2008). One of the ways that Traveller youth attempt to cope with these issues is through truant behaviors. In an effort to gain a temporary feeling of power or control, these children fail themselves in the long term. Although this acting out "represents a form of student resistance, it is not necessarily an effective strategy and serves instead to reproduce social class inequities in education and labour market outcomes" (Darmody, Smyth, & McCoy, 2008, p. 370).

Understanding the educational needs of the Traveller community was important to this study in two ways: first, so that I understood the education initiatives of the Traveller Rights NGOs, and second, so that I could better understand the ripple effect that poor educational outcomes have on all other areas of Traveller life.

Individual discrimination. Within the confines of the school, Traveller children face discrimination not only from their peers but from their teachers and school officials as well. Traveller children report being bullied, being called derogatory names, and being provoked into fights as the most common forms of discrimination (Abdalla et al., 2010; Devine, Kenny, & Macneela, 2008). As a result, many children attempt to hide their Traveller identity in an effort to avoid conflict (Department of Education, 2006). Traveller children also face discrimination from teachers, as they are often assumed to be less capable than their settled peers. Traveller children report incidents as unassuming as being placed in the back of the classroom (Abdalla et al., 2010) and as malicious as being told directly that, as Travellers, they have no real need of an education (Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, "Travellers and Education"). There are even accounts of children being forced to change clothes and shower because they were thought to be dirty due to the lack of facilities in some Traveller encampments (Helleiner, 2000). This sort of strain places undue psychological and emotional burdens on Traveller children who are at a disadvantage in the Irish education system from the outset.

Conflicts between work and education. When talking about youth, education, and work, a distinction must be made between youth who work and child labor. Kenny (1999) provides a useful conceptualization of youth work as any activity that children engage in that directly contributes to production, indirectly facilitates the work of other persons, provides adults with free time, or replaces the labor of others (p. 376). In the Traveller context, youth work is

heavily gendered. Young men will often engage in more direct forms of labor, either through formal or informal employment, while young women more often engage in indirect forms of labor through child-minding and assisting their mothers in domestic labor activities. At a young age, children of either gender will contribute to the family income by peddling, begging, or providing entertainment, such as busking (street performing) or singing in pubs, to settled audiences (Helleiner, 2000). Travellers often have conflict with the settled community over the issues of youth work, especially in reference to younger children. The issue is divided between respecting Traveller family and culture and protecting children from exploitation. For youth, conflict also exists between the need to contribute to the family economy and the need to attend and complete primary and secondary schooling. Romani children in Romania face similar issues and concerns in relation to youth work. For some, youth work is legitimized as "duty, professional training or gender socialisation" within the Romani community (Pantea, 2009, p. 44). Again, a balance must be struck between the welfare of the child and respect for the cultural traditions of the group.

Tertiary schooling. As in the workplace and primary and secondary schooling, Travellers will sometimes change their accent and their manner of dress in order pass as a settled person so that they can avoid discrimination and bullying in tertiary educational settings (Abdalla et al., 2010). Gauging Traveller participation in tertiary education is difficult because there is no mechanism for identifying Travellers other than self-identification. Estimates suggest that only 28 Travellers were enrolled in tertiary education institutions in Ireland in 2004. There are currently action plans in place to increase Traveller participation in tertiary education, including educating Traveller families about the routes to and benefits of a college degree (Department of Education, 2006). At the University of Limerick, an initiative was created in

2005 to attempt to increase the level of Traveller participation at that university. As of 2005, according to the school's records, no members of the Traveller community were enrolled nor were in a position to enroll in the near future. So as part of the Traveller Access Initiative, three groups were targeted. First, primary and secondary level students were provided extra tutoring and homework support in the school setting. Second, adult Traveller men and women were provided literacy and trade classes. Third, five mature Traveller women were enrolled at the University of Limerick (Heneghan, 2006). This is one example of a tertiary schooling initiative that took place at one institution. In my research, participants focused more on improving conditions at the primary and secondary level in the hopes that the benefits of adequate early schooling would naturally increase the rates of participation at the tertiary level.

Re-skilling adult travellers. Historically, many barriers (social, political, and psychological) have impeded Travellers' access to and achievement in mainstream schooling. These barriers have resulted in an adult Traveller population with extremely low literacy skills who cannot engage adequately in the Irish job market or in Irish society in general (Department of Education, 2006). One of the ways that Travellers are responding to this need within their own community is by encouraging adult Travellers to enroll in literacy programs offered through Vocational Education Centers all over the island (Committee to Monitor and Co-ordinate the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Task Force on the Traveller Community, 2005). In addition to literacy training, adult Travellers can also receive training in general education curriculum, vocational skills, and curriculum and job skills (Government Publications, 2006; Government Publications, 2007). Achieving adult literacy will be a monumental step for the Irish Traveller community and will work to break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy that has marked the experience of so many Travellers to date.

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Media Narratives and Counter-Narratives

Traveller identity in the public sphere has most often been constructed and represented by people outside of the Traveller community. One primary outlet for representing Traveller identity has been local, national, and international media sources. These modern representations of Travellers though the media are often the only sustained contact that settled people have with the Traveller community (Bhreatnach, 1998; Hayes, 2006). Thus, the negative stereotypes that are often represented take on greater importance because this lack of contact between the two communities means that the settled community does not have real life experiences with which to balance the sensationalist press (Bhreatnach, 1998; Kabachnik, 2009). Many times Travellers are constructed as a dangerous "other" by the decontextualization of events in order to make more compelling headlines (Bhreatnach, 1998). Print media in this way have the power to distort cultural discourse, reinforce prejudice, and increase hostility between Travellers and settled people (Hayes, 2006). One prime example would be Eamon Dillon's 2006 work *The Outsiders: Exposing the Secretive World of Ireland's Travellers.* This work that claims to be investigative journalism portrays Travellers as little more than dim-witted fighters, bandits, drug-runners, con men, and thieves. Romani communities in Slovakia and other European countries face similar concerns as they are often portrayed as poor, uneducated, and isolationist in popular media outlets (Vermeersch, 2005). Another example is the program *My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding*, produced and aired by Channel 4 in the United Kingdom. This program purports to give an inside view into the Traveller communities in Britain and Ireland, but there is little evidence to suggest that their presentation of Traveller culture is in any way representative of the wider Traveller community.

The portrayal and construction of Travellers as liars, thieves, and con men is not limited to the Irish context. There are several examples from Hollywood that portray Travellers in the United States in the same stereotypical manner. The film *Snatch* features a family of Travellers living in a filthy caravan site, hosting illegal fights, and waiting for the next con (Ogden, 2005). The film *Traveller* highlights a Traveller family in North Carolina as secretive con men that use a mysterious language to conduct their cons. In addition, the film also includes a Romani family from Turkey who are also con artists (Kabachnik, 2009). These representations are not limited to film; an episode of a popular TV drama, *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* aired an episode titled "Graansha" that featured an Irish Traveller family who, again, lived in a filthy caravan site and made their living conning homeowners and other settled people (Wolf et al, 2003). These discourses, I would argue, are especially damaging in the United States because Travellers are virtually unknown to the general population. In this study, understanding the damaging effects that the media can have on the settled population's view of the Traveller community helped me to understand how the discrimination of many settled communities against Travellers is perpetuated by the popular imagination.

In recent decades, Travellers have been working to dispel Traveller stereotypes in the media by producing counter-narratives in the form of plays, documentaries, films, and novels. Unlike the popular media portrayals, which present Travellers in an overwhelmingly negative light, many of these counter-narratives seek a balanced view of Travellers and attempt to show the heterogeneity of the Traveller community. One such Traveller, Rosaleen McDonagh, is a community worker, political activist, academic, and playwright. In 2008, she, along with Feenish Productions, produced a short documentary about her life as a Traveller woman living with a disability. A major part of this film is her addressing some of the most harmful stereotypes about

Travellers, both through the lens her own life and through the production of her play, *Stuck* (McDonagh & White, 2008). Another such counter-narrative is the docu-drama *Pavee Lackeen: The Travelling Girl* (2004), which represents the reality that Travellers face in modern Ireland as told through a fictional character, a young girl called Winnie. The film is not filled with professional actors, but the cast is drawn instead from members of the Traveller community (Ogden, 2004). This film humanizes and personalizes Traveller culture and identity in a way that is accessible to those outside the community. Human rights media can serve multiple purposes. One strategy is to bring to light human rights abuses to shame those in power and try to spur political and legal action. Another use is to attempt to secure some form of justice when formal legal justice in unlikely (Hinegardner, 2009). In the case of the Travellers, this human rights media seems to be as much about educating the public about Traveller culture as it is about bringing to light the discrimination and challenges faced by the Traveller community.

Autobiography is another mechanism through which Travellers have been finding their own voices and are publicly articulating Traveller identity in print (Burke, 2007). This feat is especially impressive considering the low literacy levels of the Traveller population (Hayes, 2006). The first autobiography of a Traveller to be published was Maher's 1972 work *The Road to God Knows Where: A Memoir of a Travelling Childhood.* In this work, Maher describes life on the road, his struggles for education, and the discrimination that he faced from the wider settled community (Maher, 1972). Fourteen years later, Nan Joyce published her autobiography *Traveller: An Autobiography* (1986). Unlike Maher, Nan did not have the literacy skills to write her own book. Instead, she dictated the work to a recorder, and Anna Farmar then transcribed it. More recently, Martin Collins (2000) has had a short autobiographical piece published in a book on what it means to be Irish in modern times. In this work, coming almost thirty years after

Maher's accounts, Collins's descriptions of a life of discrimination, prejudice, and struggle for education mirror Maher's closely. Some themes seem to run universally through these and other autobiographies, such as the need for literacy and education, the desire to be included in wider Irish society on one's own terms as a Traveller, the fear of cultural annihilation, worry over negative stereotypes and how they might be internalized by the younger generation, bafflement at the level of hostility and prejudice that Travellers experience at the hands of the settled population, and the documenting of cases of abuse and physical violence that the authors have suffered (Hayes, 2006).

Celebrating Traveller Ethnicity

One core principle that seems to run through Irish Traveller NGOs is the need to publicly recognize and celebrate Traveller ethnicity. The largest, most accessible example of this is the creation of Traveller Pride Week (TPW). TPW is a collaborative effort between multiple Traveller NGOs and organizations and is an entire week dedicated to acknowledging the role that the Travellers play in modern Ireland. The event that kicked off the most recent TFW was the 3rd annual Traveller Pride Awards, which took place on 1 December 2011 in Dublin. These awards serve not only to celebrate the achievements of the Traveller community but also to continue to highlight the obstacles that still exist. Travellers can win an award in one of seven categories: Education, Culture, Community, Enterprise and Employment, Music, Sport, or Youth. According to the Irish Traveller Movement, the highest aim of these awards, and the entirety of TPW, is to instill pride in the Traveller community. A secondary goal is to provide the general public with a positive image of Travellers, to which they are not often exposed (Irish Traveller Movement, 2011).

NGOs and the Human Rights-Based Approach

Nongovernmental organizations have an increasingly important role in the social and legal provision for marginalized and stigmatized populations, who frequently lack the power to influence political decisions that affect their lives (Astramovich & Harris, 2007). Martens (2002) defines NGOs as "formal (professionalized) independent societal organizations whose primary aim is to promote common goals at the national or the international level" (p. 282). It is the responsibility of these organizations to hold the government accountable to its citizens, especially the minority or disenfranchised communities (Malhorta, 2000). Increasingly, NGOs are entering into cross-sector partnerships with businesses and government agencies in order to meet the environmental, social, political, and emotional needs of marginalized populations (Babiak & Thibault, 2009). When NGOs work in concert with instead of in adversarial position to the local government, they stand a greater chance of being able to effect meaningful policy changes that will benefit their constituent groups (Pillay, 2010). While there are many NGOs currently operating in Ireland, two primary organizations center their activism on issues important to the Traveller community: Pavee Point Travellers' Centre and the Irish Traveller Movement. In my research, I conducted interviews and observations with Pavee Point and was able to obtain publicly accessible documents for both organizations. The reason for this difference is detailed in Chapter Three.

Rights-based, as opposed to needs-based, approaches to minority issues have been gaining popularity in recent decades. The human rights-based approach has been utilized by Romani populations in Europe (Vermeersch, 2005) and Australia (Morrow, 2009), as well as Native American populations in the United States (Akhtar, 2007). In Ireland, dialogue has been opened on the rights of Travellers, minority groups, immigrants, and people with disabilities

(Cullen, 2009; Hayes, 2006; Quin & Redmond, 1999). Since the 1980s, Traveller advocacy organizations have campaigned for the recognition of Traveller ethnic identity by both the settled population as well as the Irish government (Helleiner, 2000). As recently as 2009, however, the Irish government still denied that the Traveller community constitutes a distinguishable ethnic group (Office of the Minister for Integration, 2009).

When it comes to minority and immigrant rights in Ireland, the government has failed to ratify several international conventions on human trafficking, protections for undocumented migrants, and rights to family reunification. In fact, in 2004 the government proposed and passed a constitutional amendment that removed the right to citizenship for children born on Irish soil (Cullen, 2004). Ratifying these international conventions would have signaled an agreement by the government of Ireland to be held accountable to a series of benchmark improvements in migrant treatment and policy as well as for potentially failing to meet them (Tsutsui & Wotipka, 2004).

Pavee Point Travellers' Centre. Pavee Point Travellers' Centre is a nongovernmental organization in Ireland that was founded in 1985 by social activist John O'Connell. Pavee Point works on a partnership model between Travellers and settled people and seeks to promote social justice, solidarity among the Traveller community, socioeconomic development for Travellers, and the human rights of the Traveller community. Two key points underpin the philosophy of Pavee Point: that Travellers themselves must be involved in activism in order to see real, sustainable progress and that settled people have a responsibility to address those factors in Irish society that marginalize or oppress the Traveller community. Pavee Point has multiple initiatives at the local, national, and international levels designed to address some of the most critical needs within the Traveller community in relation to education, health, drug use, violence, and

community development. Pavee Point also works closely with the government on research and initiatives to make sure that Traveller well-being is promoted as completely as possible. Another important function that Pavee Point fills is the dissemination of information about Travellers and Traveller culture to the settled community. These community outreach programs are designed to dispel the misunderstandings about the Traveller community that are born out of ignorance or the media (Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, 2012).

In order to understand the environment in which Travellers exist in Ireland today and the surroundings in which this study was grounded, it is important to detail the historical, political, and cultural contexts of Traveller-settled relations. The Traveller was a once tolerated, not marginalized indigenous minority group in Ireland. They are, in fact, the only indigenous minority group in Ireland, which has created a unique space for them in the cultural fabric of the nation. Travellers face discrimination at the individual, societal, and institutional levels and only recently has the Irish government begun to recognize and develop strategies to combat this discrimination. Despite these efforts, stereotypes and prejudice and still alive in the minds of settled Irish. Recently, Travellers have engaged in social and media outreach to educate the settled community about their culture and to begin to build bonds of understanding between the two communities. In the next chapter, I discuss my study and the specific context in which it was conducted.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I outline the methodology for this qualitative study, including the study design, theoretical perspectives, research questions, data types, participants, sites, data collection procedures, and data analysis techniques. I also address concerns of reliability and validity within the study as well as logistical and methodological issues. The research matrix in Appendix A summarizes my research questions, rationale, data sources, and methods of analysis.

Design

In order to answer my research questions, I chose a qualitative, flexible, single-case design with embedded units of analysis (Yin, 2009). Case study research is, in essence, the study of a real-life phenomenon in its contextual situation within a bounded system (Creswell, 2007; Yin, 2009). Furthermore, Yin has argued that the case study method is particularly applicable when the researcher wishes to focus on contemporary events. Single-case studies are especially useful in examining either typical or especially unique phenomena for the purposes of further understanding or refining the applicable theory (Stake, 2005; Yin).

Yin (2009) has identified five primary reasons why one might choose the single-case study method; the two most applicable to my study were that of unique and revelatory cases. Revelatory cases, by Yin's definition, are cases that provide an opportunity for a researcher to access phenomena that has been previously inaccessible. For these reasons, I believe that my research offers a case that is simultaneously unique and revelatory and that is why I chose the single-case method. While there are many ethnic minority groups in Ireland today, the Irish Travellers occupy a unique space within Irish society as the only indigenous ethnic minority.

Added to that, there has been very little research conducted that has incorporated Traveller nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) as a key element of analysis.

Within the single-case method, multiple units of analysis can be used. This occurs when there are logical sub-units within the overall case (Yin, 2009). In the context of my study, the individual NGO programs constituted the embedded units of analysis. At Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, these programs included the Education and Training program, the Pavee Point Drugs program, the Youth program, the Violence Against Women program, and the Information program. With respect to Yin's cautioning against analysis focused exclusively on the embedded units, I made a conscious effort to broaden the level of analysis to consider the whole case as well.

Choosing qualitative methodology allowed me to obtain an *emic*, or insider's, perspective (Merriam, 1998) and was accomplished through the use of interviewing as a primary data collection strategy. In addition to conducting interviews, I observed NGO and other events, collected and reviewed both policy and program documents, examined the program websites, took and analyzed photographs, and analyzed news and other media outlets. Utilizing multiple sources of data allowed me to develop a fuller picture of the case of the Irish Travellers as an oppressed group in Ireland today.

Theoretical Perspectives

I used two theoretical perspectives in the design and analysis of my research: postcolonial theory and globalization theory. Simon Gikandi (2006) has identified these two paradigms as both dominant and interdependent in the modern social sciences. Lunga (2008) has argued that postcolonial discourses and globalization discourses should be considered in light of one another, as they have the potential to aid in understanding local phenomena, such as unequal power

relations or resource imbalances, within the broader global landscape and vice versa. These two frameworks, when used simultaneously, offered the opportunity for me to enhance my understanding of the context of my data in a more interconnected and cohesive fashion. In the following section I offer a more thorough explanation of the elements of postcolonial and globalization theories that informed my understandings.

Postcolonial Theory

Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin (2006) have suggested that postcolonial theory defies singular definition and instead can be considered more generally as a discussion about experience on a range of topics, such as "migration, slavery, suppression, resistance, representation, difference, race, gender, [and] place" (p. 2). These discussions, according to Lunga (2008), can take place in one of three broader categories that help provide a clearer picture of what is meant by the term "postcolonial." These three categories encompass the geographical spaces of formerly colonized countries and people, the time period following the end of active colonization, or the literature written by the colonized that seeks to celebrate cultural identity, illuminate agency, or discuss resistance to colonial dominance (Lunga, 2008, p. 192).

In relation to the second category, which defines postcolonial as referring to the time period after colonization, Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) questioned the idea that the end of physical occupation coincides with the end of the effects of colonization. I found this to be an important notion when considering Ireland as a postcolonial state. Furthermore, the Irish context is complicated by its physical proximity to, and economic reliance on, its former colonizer even after achieving independence. In the edited volume *Ireland and Postcolonial Theory*, Said (2003) makes the argument that Ireland has many commonalities with the postcolonial experience of

other former colonies, such as India or Algeria, and that there is a strong argument to be made for examining Ireland through a postcolonial lens.

Taking a critical perspective is a key element of postcolonial theory that informed my study. Part of taking a critical perspective meant being sensitive to the issues of power, domination, and inequitable distribution of resources that I found in the course of my research. In this way, using a critical perspective refers less to an ideological orientation and more about a process of critique (Giroux, 2009) that I utilized to better illuminate and understand the complexities of the marginalized position that the Irish Travellers experience within wider Irish society.

Globalization

Globalization is a multi-faceted construct that is characterized by an intensification of worldwide relations (Giddens, 1990; Held & McGrew, 2000) that has political, social, and economic ramifications. Globalizing influences are facilitated by new information, communication, and transportation technologies that allow for people and ideas to move around the globe faster and more efficiently than ever before (Hayhoe & Mundy, 2008).   Friedman (2005) describes this process as a *flattening* of world systems. A comprehensive understanding of globalization also incorporates the notion that not only are geographic constraints receding but also that people have a knowledge and consciousness of that recession (Morrow & Torres, 2003; Robertson, 1992).

Taking this understanding and considering it in conjunction with the tenets of postcolonialism, Said (2003) postulated that globalization allows for subalterns in different parts of the globe to engage in "cross-colony identification and renewed investigation into an occluded or suppressed past" that can be analyzed by "many of the new cultural methods of analysis

available universally" (p. 180). This dialogue between the global and the local (Arnove &

Torres, 2003) has important implications for movements for Traveller rights in Ireland and

abroad as the "increased possibilities for global travel, communication, and cross-cultural

sharing have prompted the formation of international indigenous alliances and cross-indigenous

partnerships and scholarship" (Madjidi & Restoule, 2008, p. 95). The inclusion of globalization

as a primary theoretical framework allowed me the opportunity to understand my study not only

in the situated context of Ireland but also in the broader context of the rest of the world. For a

figure visualizing the theoretical perspectives underpinning my research, see Appendix B.

Research Questions

In order to investigate the research questions of my study, I first conducted background

research on the Irish Traveller community. Prior to receiving Institutional Review Board (IRB)

approval, I spent a significant amount of time reviewing scholarly literature, policy documents,

and other relevant sources to establish foundational knowledge of the historical and

contemporary factors influencing the Irish Traveller community today. Once I received IRB

approval, I worked with a key informant to identify possible participants with whom I conducted

semi-structured interviews, as well as to identify NGO events and activities at which I was able

to conduct observations. I continued to seek out government policy documents, program

materials, newspaper articles, and other data sources that aided me in addressing my research

questions. Below is a matrix detailing my research questions, rationale, data sources, and

methods of analysis.

Research Questions	Rationale	Data Sources	Methods of Analysis
1. What are the contemporary features of Irish government policy that affect the Traveller community in Ireland?	Provides macro-level context in which to situate the findings	Policy documents Scholarly literature Press releases	Informal content analysis Thematic coding
2. What are the unique needs of the Traveller community in Ireland?	Addresses the social, health, economic, and educational context of the Travellers in Ireland	Interviews Fieldnotes Observations Policy documents Law Centre reports Photographs	Thematic coding Memos Analysis of field/observation notes Informal content analysis (documents)
3. What are the general features and program characteristics of Pavee Point Travellers' Centre?	Provides a basic understanding of the organizational structure and function of the nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and their programs	Interviews Program websites Program educational and other materials Fieldnotes Photographs	Thematic coding Memos Analysis of field/observation notes Informal content analysis (documents)
4. What do the selected participants see as the broader issues in the Irish Traveller rights movement and how is the selected NGO acting to address those issues?	Elicits an *emic* perspective for thorough understanding of the political and social context of the Travellers in Ireland through the lens of both Travellers and NGO personnel	Interviews Program websites Fieldnotes Observations Policy documents NGO events and activities	Thematic coding Memos Analysis of field/observation notes Informal content analysis (documents)

Figure 3. Research matrix.

Access to Setting and Data

Travellers, like many indigenous or vulnerable populations around the world, have been

victims of academic exploitation (Collins, 1994). As such, gaining access was a concern. This

issue factored into my choosing Irish Traveller NGOs as the site for my proposed study. I had

been able, through email, to establish a connection with both the Pavee Point Travellers' Centre

and the Irish Traveller Movement Law Centre prior to the onset of my field season.

I traveled to Ireland on a reconnaissance trip from the 9th through the 16th of March 2012. During this time, I was able to meet with key personnel at both the Pavee Point Travellers' Centre and the Irish Traveller Movement (ITM) Law Centre. At the time, both organizations had agreed to participate in my anticipated research and formal letters were forthcoming. As a result of the meeting with Pavee Point, I anticipated that I would be able to interview between six and ten participants, both Travellers and settled people. I also anticipated that I would be able to conduct observations at events housed at Pavee Point, such as community meetings and other discussion forums.

As a result of the meeting at the ITM Law Centre, I anticipated that I would be able to interview between six and eight participants. I also anticipated that I would be able to conduct observations at the ITM Annual General Meeting (AGM), which was to take place in Dublin on the 16th and 17th of June 2012. I was able to submit my ITM affiliation forms, which guaranteed me access to the AGM. Despite the initial response from the ITM, I was unable to gain access once in the field. My original contact left the Law Centre to take a position elsewhere. At that time, I contacted the then Director of the ITM asking for assistance in reestablishing contact with the Law Centre. I was redirected to the Assistant Director, who was unresponsive to my multiple email inquiries. During the field season, I attempted to schedule a face-to-face meeting with the Assistant Director but was unable to do so. I was able, however, to conduct observations at Traveller Pride Week events where both Pavee Point and ITM representatives were present.

Originally, both NGO sites expressed an interest in having access to my case study report and conclusions as a form of reciprocity. In addition, I asked them to consider if there were any tasks that I could accomplish for them, such as the writing of reports or pamphlets, either during my field season in Ireland or after I had returned to the United States. As the ITM was

unresponsive, I decided not to share my report with that organization. I made arrangements with Pavee Point, however, to submit the results of my study to them after its completion. They did not request any other tasks to be completed.

Role of the Researcher

Many ethical considerations influence how qualitative research is conducted, analyzed, and shared. Researchers have, intentionally or not, repeatedly exploited vulnerable populations in the name of advancement of their fields (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). As a researcher, it was important for me to gain informed consent from my participants; to be as transparent as possible and not deceive my participants about the nature of my research; to protect the confidentiality of my participants; to minimize or nullify possible risks to my participants' physical, mental, or emotional health; and, finally, to stay within the bounds of propriety set by IRB and guidelines set by professional associations (Creswell, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

In addition, I had concerns that this methodology would unintentionally exploit the existing structures of power and hierarchy. Glesne (2006) writes about the colonial roots of the interviewing method, whereby the interviewer is in the position of power because he or she creates the questions and thus guides the interaction (p. 106). In this model, the participant is seen as a receptacle of knowledge that the researcher must exploit for data. It was my intention to resist this model and instead to attempt to co-construct knowledge so that the participant and I could "learn from each other and create a dynamic in which no one person is pitching the questions while the other is sending words flying" (Glesne, 2006, p. 107). One of the ways that I sought to accomplish this goal was by using semi-structured interviews and allowing the participants to guide most of the conversation. While I developed and used an interview protocol, I was also open and responsive when a participant seemed to want to take the conversation in a

particular direction. This practice also gave me greater insight into the experiences and perspectives of the individual participant. Knowledge in the context of research is attained inductively and is deeply rooted and contextualized within the lived experience of a person.

Qualitative methodologists believe that the researcher, instead of attempting to withhold him- or herself from the research, is instead an integral part of the research process (Creswell & Miller, 1997). As a non-indigenous researcher working with an indigenous population, I felt that I needed to be particularly sensitive to my role. An essential piece of this process was to establish myself as a "non-threatening outsider" (Glesne, 2006, p. 98) whose primary goal was to understand and represent the perspectives of my participants free of bias or judgment. Building a rapport with my participants was critical in this area. One of the simplest methods of establishing and cultivating rapport was engaging in what I thought of as the "ritual of tea." After having spent several cumulative months in Ireland in my life, I am left with the impression that tea is an essential component of hospitality for the Irish. There was something comforting about the boiling of the water, the selection of the tea bag, and the steeping of the tea that seemed to facilitate conversation between my participants and myself. This time of tea preparation was also an opportunity for casual conversation where my participants and I could find areas of commonality or engage in pleasantries. They would often inquire about how I liked Ireland or what I thought about the weather, casual topics of conversations that often led to a mutual sharing of interests, which helped to establish a certain rapport.

Data Types and Collection Procedures

Qualitative data, according to Basit (2003), "are textual, non-numerical and unstructured" (p. 152). In my study, I used interviews, observations, documents, program websites, photographs, and press releases to gather the data necessary to address my research questions.

Each of these data types provided unique information and served to confirm findings from the others through triangulation.

Interviews

According to Creswell (2007), research using ethnographic methodologies often features the utilization of a participant who serves the function of a gatekeeper, or a key informant. The person either is typically a member of the cultural group or otherwise has insider status with the desired group. Initial contact is made through this individual, which then leads to the inclusion of other participants. I made initial contact with my key informant in February 2012 and we remained in touch via email until the onset of the field season in May 2012. Initially, I had hoped to interview six to eight individuals. With the assistance of my key informant, I was able to identify 10 additional participants, through a combination of criterion and opportunistic sampling (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002). I used the following initial selection criteria:

1. Participants had to be adults between the ages of 18-65.

2. Participants had to self-identify as either a member of the Traveller community or the settled community.

3. Participants had to self-identify as affiliated with the movement for Traveller rights, either through affiliation with an NGO or individually.

A majority of my participants were affiliated directly with the Pavee Point Travellers' Centre as employees or volunteers, and the remaining participants were active in the movement for Traveller rights through other means.

I created two interview protocols, one for use with the key informant and one for use with the remaining participants (see Appendices C and D). For the former, I included questions related to the history and founding of Pavee Point as necessary background information, in

addition to questions related to the research questions. Instead of using the research questions verbatim, however, I constructed questions that would elicit the desired information as well as leave the conversation open for direction by the participant. I designed the interview protocols to be used in semi-structured interviews, and, as such, the actual order and wording of the questions was flexible and adaptable to the individual conversations (Knox & Burkard, 2009). I also documented any situational or contextual factors related to the interviews that might have affected the quality of the data; these included the location, the time of day, the conditions in the room, and perceived behavior of the participant. I documented these factors in my field notebook either during or immediately after the interview.

After careful consideration, I decided not to digitally record the interviews as doing so could negatively impact the quality of data that I received. I was concerned that participants would be less forthcoming if their responses were recorded verbatim. Therefore, each interview began with a consent script that addressed my role as the researcher, my requests of the participants in the interview process, an assurance of confidentiality, and the participant's right to refuse to participate or answer any individual questions. With the permission of IRB, participants were not required to sign a consent form, but gave verbal consent before I proceeded. I chose, on the recommendation of my committee, to forgo written consent because it could have created an unnecessary barrier in working with a potentially vulnerable population. As part of the consent script, I asked participants for permission to take notes during the interview process; all participants agreed. All personally identifying information was kept separate from the interview notes and participant interviews were labeled with neutral codes that could not be traced back to individual participants' identities. For the purposes of this narrative, participants were assigned pseudonyms to facilitate clarity in the writing. I obtained permission

from the director of the Pavee Point Travellers' Centre to continue to use their organization name in this dissertation document and other publications resulting from this research.

In the end, I was able to interview a total of 11 participants: nine were affiliated with Pavee Point (seven men and two women) and two (both men) were affiliated more broadly with the movement for Traveller rights. Furthermore, nine of the eleven self-identified as members of the Traveller community. I attempted to contact an additional three individuals who have publically identified as both Travellers and leaders in the Traveller rights movement, but I was unable to reach them. Further demographic details about my participants have been withheld to protect the confidentiality of their participation, given that such details are not necessary to the analysis of the data and understanding of the research findings. I have included a table to help explicate the given demographics of my participants.

Participant	Traveller Identification	Gender Expression	Age Range	PP Affiliate
Sean	Yes	Male	36-55	Yes
Nathan	No	Male	36-55	Yes
Aaron	Yes	Male	18-35	Yes
William	No	Male	18-35	Yes
Chris	Yes	Male	36-55	No
Alan	Yes	Male	18-35	Yes
Molly	Yes	Female	36-55	Yes
Beth	Yes	Female	55+	Yes
Robert	Yes	Male	18-35	Yes
Seth	Yes	Male	18-35	No
Cain	Yes	Male	18-35	Yes

Figure 4. Participant demographics chart.

Each interview lasted between one and three hours with 1.5 hours being the average. Each interview began with a short introduction, a review of the purpose of the study and the consent script, and general conversation to establish rapport with the participant. During the interview, I attempted to allow the participant to steer the conversation while prompting him or her with the questions and content of the interview protocol. Each interview ended with me

asking if there were any topics that we did not cover that the participant thought it would be important for me to know about.

Observations

Observation is an essential part of data collection in many qualitative studies, both for generating new data as well as for triangulating information gleaned from other data types. Observation sites should be selected deliberately and types of observations recorded should be purposeful (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Another important decision that has to be made during observations is how and what to record. It is not possible, or even desirable, to record every single momentary event during the observation time. Creswell (2007) has recommended developing a protocol to focus observations on information immediately relevant to the study in question, which I did (see Appendix E). I conducted observations in a variety of settings, based on access and availability. In addition, I took photographs to supplement and enhance field notes.

I anticipated that I would have the opportunity to conduct observations in several settings. Pavee Point holds periodic information sessions that are open to the public and designed to provide general information about the Traveller community to interested parties. Unfortunately, these meetings are based on anticipated attendance and the two that were scheduled during my field season were both cancelled due to low anticipated attendance. I had also hoped to be able to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Irish Traveller Movement, but it was rescheduled and I was unable to attend.

Fortunately, I was able to conduct observations at other sites and events. After my initial meeting with my key informant, I was invited to explore the Pavee Point facilities, take photographs, and generally get a sense of the physical space the organization occupied. I was

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also invited, at a later date, to observe two focus group sessions that were being conducted with female community health workers from the Traveller community at the Pavee Point facilities. These sessions were extremely informative and contributed greatly to my findings. I was able to conduct off-site observations around the city of Dublin at several important events. While Traveller Pride Week has historically been held in December, it was rescheduled in 2012 for the month of June. As such, I was able to attend both the launch of Traveller Pride Week at the Mansion House and the launch of the Clondalkin Travellers Development Group's LGBT Traveller health research results at the Ashling Hotel, both in Dublin. I also attended the Olympic Torch ceremony at the Mansion House; I had been told that a man from the Traveller community carried the torch and I was interested to see what, if any, conversation occurred around his ethnic identity. I documented data from these observations in my field notebook, using the established protocol as well as recording any extraneous observations that contributed to my overall understanding of the setting or event.

Documents

Documents, including government policies, program materials, program reports, program website materials, and newspaper articles, were important sources of data that, in conjunction with interviews and observations, allowed me to triangulate findings between multiple sources (Creswell et al., 2007). I gathered document sources both in digital and physical copies, as available. For instance, many of the Irish government's public policy documents were available for free and accessible on their website under the specific department from which they originated. The same was true of many program materials and pamphlets; additionally, I anticipated that there would be other documents available at the program sites, which proved to be the case. I was able to gather research reports and summaries, information pamphlets for both

Traveller and settled audiences, Traveller-produced magazine publications, service directories for Travellers, NGO policy documents, position papers, policy discussion documents, newspapers, and government policy documents from a variety of sources. For a list of documents collected during data collection, please see Appendix F.

Other Data Types

For all observations and interviews conducted in the field, I created expanded field notes. I utilized a system whereby I wrote original field notes on the right side of the notebook in black ink and expanded field notes on the left side of the same page; I used color-coding to distinguish between several types of comments. In these expanded field notes, I included observer comments, methodological notes, theoretical notes, and personal notes. Observer comments were typically related to extraneous information that I noted but did not have time to record initially. Methodological comments included any information that might have impacted the data collection process, such as unusual conditions in the setting, perceived participant reactions to questions, or challenges in collecting data. Theoretical notes centered on emerging themes or relevant theoretical connections to other data sources. Personal notes served as a mechanism to track my feelings and reactions to situations in order to provide context for later analysis. These also served the function of reflexive journaling, providing an outlet for self-reflection and analysis during the field season.

Where permissible, I took photographs to supplement observational data. This was particularly useful in documenting the physical site and location of the Pavee Point facility. I analyzed the photographs as a data source separate from, but complimentary to, my observation data. In addition, many photographs are publically available on both the Pavee Point and the Irish Traveller Movement websites. I analyzed these photographs as data in addition to my own.

Data Management

I managed data through field notes (both condensed and expanded), notes taken during interviews, memos, and reflexive journaling (Suzuki, Ahluwalia, Arora, & Mattis, 2007). The identities of the participants were kept confidential. I removed any identifying information from field notes and replaced it with researcher-generated codes. Any documents that used the actual names of the participants were kept in a secure location either in my workspace in Ireland or in my office at home.

<div align="center">

Reliability, Validity, and Verification of Data

</div>

As Lincoln and Guba (1985) have pointedly asked, "How can an inquirer persuade his or her audience (including self) that the findings of in inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of?" (p. 290). As a qualitative researcher, I established reliability, validity, and verification of my data by taking steps to increase the dependability, confirmability, and creditability of my data (Creswell, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I accomplished this in three ways: triangulation, an audit trail, and member-checking.

Triangulation

Triangulation should not be limited to one aspect of the research; rather, I triangulated my data sources, methods, and theoretical perspectives (Patton, 2002) in order to seek out corroborating evidence within my study (Creswell, 2007). First, I triangulated my findings by utilizing multiple sources of data, including interviews, observations, and documents. I further triangulated my findings through the use of multiple data types and theoretical perspectives. Utilizing multiple methods of triangulation increased the robustness of my conclusions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Triangulation of multiple sources of evidence also served to increase the construct validity of the case study (Yin, 2009). An important component of triangulation in my

proposed study was the creation of memos as outlined in Charmaz (2006) and discussed further in the data analysis section.

Audit Trail

I established construct validity and reliability by detailing a chain of evidence (Yin, 2009) through reflexive journaling, which, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985), contributes to the creditability, confirmability, dependability, and transferability of a study. Reflexive journaling is a way for the researcher to keep a daily record of both his or her own thoughts and experiences and also the methodological decisions and thought processes behind them (Kleinsasser, 2000). This provides a record that can be analyzed by the researcher, an outside audience, or both. The reflexive journal also works as part of auditability, or confirmability, whereby an outside party can follow the research trail by examining raw data, methodological process notes, and the data analysis process in addition to the final product. The goal of reflexive journaling is to establish that the conclusions of the study are grounded in the data, not in the researcher's personal constructions (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Lincoln & Guba, 2000).

Member-Checking

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), member-checking is the most important validity criterion. I utilized member-checks to confirm my findings and verify that I interpreted the data in a manner consistent with the views of my participants and that I had not misconstrued their realties (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Lincoln & Guba, 2000). As I sought to understand, in part, what life is like for Irish Travellers in Ireland today, it was essential that I go back to my participants after their interviews were conducted. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) notes that researchers have "the power to distort, to make invisible, to overlook, to exaggerate and to draw conclusions, based not on factual data, but on assumptions, hidden value judgments, and

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often downright misunderstanding," and further that they possess the ability to potentially increase knowledge or to perpetuate ignorance (p. 176). This is particularly true in the case of research conducted on or with indigenous peoples. Martin Collins (1994) cites several prominent examples of past research that has drawn inaccurate conclusions and perpetuated ignorance regarding the Traveller community in Ireland. In order to mitigate possible misunderstandings, I conducted informal member-checks at multiple times during both data collection and analysis. Informal member-checks occurred after the interview process, when I asked participants to further elaborate upon or to explain an issue based on my understanding of the topic after reviewing the interview and writing extended notes. This was especially helpful when I was unable to correctly identify a word or phrase because of my inability to decipher an accent. Additionally, as I was frequently at the Pavee Point facility, I was able to speak to participants to clarify and verify information after the interviews had been completed.

Methods of Analysis

I analyzed my data through analytic induction, utilizing coding to identify patterns and themes in the data that were then expressed in memos and narratives (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003; Patton, 2002). I began writing and preliminary analysis immediately upon entering the field as it helped me to maintain focus, clarified what I had yet to learn, and invited "[me] to examine [my] own biases, assumptions, emotions, and so forth, and to make them a matter of record in a form readily accessible for [my] own future use" (Wolcott, 1999, p. 201).

Coding

I coded all data using initial and then focused coding (Charmaz, 2006). I began data analysis with initial, or open, coding. I worked through my interview and field journal data line-by-line, highlighting or otherwise noting key words or phrases that appeared. I used colored,

adhesive tabs with abbreviated labels to indicate initial thoughts and ideas from the data; pink tabs represented initial codes and yellow tabs indicated questions or points for further consideration during heavier analysis. Some initial codes, such as CON (Conscientization) or RECOG (Recognition of Ethnicity) were prevalent enough to remain while others, such as COM (Communication) were absorbed into larger themes. After initial coding was complete, I returned to the data to see which ideas or codes appeared most prevalently across the data, and from there I began to refine my codes and put them into more dense categories, which eventually coalesced into themes. During this process, codes remained active and changeable as I achieved new insights.

When I felt confident that the initial coding process had been adequately completed, I returned to the data for focused coding, in which I coded the same data again with refined codes connected to each theme. I elucidated themes through the use of memos (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003; Charmaz, 2006; LeCompte, 2000), which I discuss in more detail below. I used this coding process for interview, observation, and field note data. While coding does take place with the research questions in mind, it was important to be open to the data and to consider unanticipated issues or dilemmas that emerged. Below is a list of all of the final codes and their respective frequency counts.

Theme/Code:	Frequency Count:
Discrimination as a Lived, Daily Experience of the Traveller Community	
NOM – Nomadism	13
ATT – Attitudes	21
MED – Mediation	5
GOV – Government	4
JOB – Jobs/Employment	7
SELFD – Self-determination	7
SOC – Social discrimination	10
Conscientization of the Travellers: Helping the Traveller Community to See, Understand, and Act for Human Rights	

VOC – Voice/Vocabulary	5
RADY – Radicalize youth	5
ACT – Activism	10
POL – Politicization	2
The Importance of Pride in Traveller Culture to the Traveller Community	
SELF – Self-esteem/Identity	10
PRES – Preservation of culture	2
RM-P – Role models, positive	6
RM-N – Role models, negative	2
STEREO – Stereotypes	5
COMM – Communication	4
TPW – Traveller Pride Week	6
CULT – Culture	6
The Impact of the Lack of State Recognition of Traveller Ethnicity	
GEN – Genocide, cultural	2
RIGHT – Human rights	5
INT – International	3
LEGAL – Legal recognition	3
IDENT – Identity	8
PROT – Protections	3
DEN – Denial	2
LACK – Lack of recognition, consequences	4
Barriers to Traveller Access and Success in Education	
LIT – Literacy	5
ENG – Engagement	12
EDISC – Education discrimination	12
IMP – Importance of education	4
JOB – Jobs and education connection	4
ORG – Organizations role in education	5
NEED – Educational needs	10
PEXP – Participants' experiences	6
ACT – Activism and education connection	3
CULT – Culture and education	7
Discrimination and the Lack of Culturally Relevant Healthcare for Travellers	
OG – *Our Geels*	6
SDH – Social determinates of health	3
HDIS – Health discrimination	7
CULTR – Culturally relevant services	7
HED – Health and education connection	15

Figure 5. Final codes and frequency counts.

Memoing

 A key aspect of developing and understand theory in qualitative research is the use of memoing, a process developed by Glaser (1978). Memoing is a process that works in conjunction with coding, in which the researcher constantly reflects on the developing codes and records ideas about the theory that is developing. Memos can vary in length and content but become the primary building block for themes during and after the data analysis phase (Creswell, 2007; Schwandt, 2007). Charmaz (2006) has identified five areas in which coding can assist during analysis:

a) Grappling with ideas about the data,

b) Setting an analytic course,

c) Refining categories,

d) Defining relationships between and among categories, and

e) Fostering a sense of confidence and competence in analysis. (pp. 517-518)

Although this method is often used by grounded theorists for the purpose of generating theory, I used memos as the primary way of organizing and analyzing data as they have achieved widespread acceptance among qualitative methodologists given the rigor and structure they provide for analysis. As detailed in the previous section, I used an inductive method of coding that led to the creation of memos. Each memo related to a specific theme and included my working definition of the theme, key characteristics associated with the theme, specific conditions under which the code operated, direct quotes from the data that illustrated the theme, and negative case examples. These memos further facilitated triangulation of data as, once completed, they were expanded to include information from across other data sources and types. These memos were also used as a source for comparison across sources and types of data, as

required for a constant comparative approach. For a sample thematic memo, please see Appendix G.

Constant Comparative Approach

I used a constant comparative approach whereby I identified incidents, events, and activities and constantly compared them to emerging themes to develop and saturate the theme. This approach involved comparing not only within the specific data source but also across all of the relevant data. Comparing data across multiple sources and types aided in increasing the confirmability of findings and helped to illuminate relationships between themes. In addition to comparing within the data collected during the case study, I also engaged in comparison with the scholarly literature and theoretical frameworks that guided my research. It is important to note that the constant comparative approach was not begun after data analysis but is, instead, an approach taken throughout the data collection and analysis processes (Creswell, 2007). Constant comparison allowed me to be reflexive and responsive to my data inductively.

Gaps in the Data

Although I collected as much data as was feasible, there were gaps in the data. Collins (1994) reported that some Travellers have omitted information given to researchers, either to protect their own reputations and families or in an effort to give the researcher what they thought he or she was looking for from the Traveller. In either case, these omissions were not something that I was able to predict. While I engaged in measures to build rapport with my participants and make it plain that I was not looking for specific answers but rather was seeking to understand their thoughts from their own perspectives, I have no way of verifying whether participants were completely honest in their responses to my questions. In relation to observational data, there may be gaps in the data based on the delimitations of scheduling and time in the field. Because my

field sites were located in Ireland, it was not possible to return repeatedly for various events that took place outside of the designated field season. Therefore, there were some events and opportunities that could have yielded further insights but that I was unable to explore due to time and location constraints. Lastly, because I chose a nongovernmental organizations focused on Traveller rights as the site for my case study, my data collection was potentially limited to Travellers and settled people who are affiliated, even tangentially, with the NGO and the movement for Traveller rights. Thus, this study was not able to incorporate experiences or insights from people who are not affiliated. Including perspectives of other members of the Traveller community would be valuable in future extensions of this work.

Logistics

I approached both Pavee Point Travellers' Centre and the Irish Traveller Movement in February 2012 to inquire about their willingness to participate in my dissertation research. Both organizations initially responded positively and I met with representatives from each NGO during my reconnaissance trip in March 2012. Subsequently, due to staffing changes, the ITM became unresponsive. Pavee Point, however, remained willing and provided the needed letter of support in May 2012. I arrived in Dublin, Ireland on May 23, 2012 and began data collection after receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board on May 31, 2012. I was present in the field until June 20, 2012. During the data collection and initial analysis phases, I visited the Pavee Point facilities frequently, multiple times per week, to conduct interviews and observations, meet with my key informant, obtain documents, take photographs, and stay abreast of relevant events and activities. As is consistent with the constant comparative approach, I began initial analysis while still in the field collecting data and engaged in more in-depth

analysis during the analysis and writing phases. I plan to maintain ties with Pavee Point for the

possibility of future research with the organization.

CHAPTER 4

THE CASE OF THE IRISH TRAVELLERS

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the conditions for Irish Travellers as a marginalized group in Ireland today though the conduit of a nongovernmental organization (NGO) that focuses on the rights of the Irish Traveller community. Eleven participants, nine of whom self identify as members of the Traveller community, shared with me their stories of culture, education, discrimination, and their perspectives on the needs of the Traveller community in Ireland today. Most of these participants were also affiliated with the Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, a NGO working for Traveller human rights in Ireland, and they were able to give insights on the programs, goals, and impact of the organization. The research questions that guided this study were:

1. What are the contemporary features of Irish government policy that affect the Traveller community in Ireland?

2. What are the unique needs of the Traveller community in Ireland?

3. What are the general features and program characteristics of Pavee Point Travellers' Centre?

4. What do the selected participants see as the broader issues in the Irish Traveller rights movement and how is the selected NGO acting to address those issues?

In this chapter, I provide an introduction to Pavee Point Travellers' Center followed by three profiles of select participants. Then I provide the findings of the study, for which I have given the names below:

1. Discrimination as a Lived, Daily Experience of the Traveller Community

2. The Impact of the Lack of State Recognition of Traveller Ethnicity

3. Barriers to Traveller Access and Success in Education

4. Discrimination and the Lack of Culturally Relevant Healthcare for Travellers

5. The Importance of Pride in Traveller Culture to the Traveller Community

6. Conscientization of the Travellers: Helping the Traveller Community to See, Understand, and Act for Human Rights

A diagram summarizing the main points of the narrative accompanies each theme. The table below provides a summary of the findings by research question and by theme,

Research Question	Major Findings	
What are the contemporary features of Irish government policy that affect the Traveller community in Ireland?	Participants emphasized current government policies that criminalize nomadism and establish barriers to freedom of movement; these included the Horses Act (1996), the Housing and Miscellaneous Provisions Act (2002), and the Habitual Residency requirement.	
What are the unique needs of the Traveller community in Ireland?	Participants' responses were varied: reduction in discrimination, recognition of Traveller ethnic status, the reimplementation of a mediation program, and improvement in educational outcomes were most common.	
What are the general features and program characteristics of the Pavee Point Travellers' Centre?	Pavee Point operates duel programs that address both physical needs of the Traveller community as well as macro, policy-level needs.	
	Physical Needs	**Policy Needs**
	Youth: advocates for education, conscientization, provides outreach opportunities **Health:** provides health education, community health workers **Information:** liaises with media, settled community **Education:** develops and delivers training programs **Drugs:** provides information and education **Violence Against Women:** provides training to organizations on combating this issue	**Youth:** makes policy submissions through involvement with the National Youth Council **Health:** collects data and makes policy submissions **Information:** advocates for the recognition of Traveller ethnicity by the state **Education:** makes policy submissions to the Dept. of Education and Science **Drugs:** advocates for culturally-relevant services **Violence Against Women:** advocates for culturally-relevant services
What do the selected participants see as the broader issues in the Irish Traveller rights movement?	Participants identified ethnic recognition by the state, improvement in education, increasing advocacy and political involvement of the Traveller community, and addressing taboos within the culture as broader issues in the Traveller rights movement.	

How is Pavee Point working to address those issues?	The selected NGO is working to address those issues through political advocacy, community development, youth advocacy programs, legal support, and the demystifying of the Traveller culture through events such as Traveller Pride Week.
Themes	**Major Findings**
Discrimination as a Lived, Daily Experience of the Traveller Community	Discrimination was the uniting theme of all of the data. Discrimination was reported in all areas of Traveller life and was viewed as a daily factor in the lives of most Travellers. Working to address discrimination and promote equality is the number one priority of the selected NGO.
The Impact of the Lack of State Recognition of Traveller Ethnicity	Ethnic recognition by the state is seen as essential to the future of the Traveller community and the movement for Traveller rights. Recognition was frequently cited as a human right and the consequences resulting from a lack of recognition often related to the lack of protection and provision for Travellers in Irish society and in government policy.
Barriers to Traveller Access and Success in Education	Education was identified as a key need for the Traveller community as a history of discrimination and lack of participation has severally handicapped the Traveller community. Educational outcomes are affected by discrimination, bullying, lack of perceived benefits, and lack of cultural relevance in the curriculum.
Discrimination and the Lack of Culturally Relevant Healthcare for Travellers	The status of Traveller health is significantly below that of the settled community. Discrimination was identified as a primary cause, as well as low literacy levels and the lack of culturally relevant service provision and accommodation.
The Importance of Pride in Traveller Culture to the Traveller Community	Despite the long history of discrimination, racism, and prejudice, participants reported feeling pride in their Traveller ethnic identity. For the NGOs, this was expressed through Traveller Pride Week. Additionally, the need to combat negative stereotypes and promote positive role models was essential.
Conscientization of the Travellers: Helping the Traveller Community to See, Understand, and Act for Human Rights	Participants identified the conscientization of the Traveller community to be paramount in the ongoing struggle for Traveller human rights. The ability to recognize and articulate discrimination is an essential process for working to address social inequities.

Figure 6. Table summarizing major findings by research question and theme.

Pavee Point Travellers' Centre: History and Description of the Context of the Study

During the course of the interview with Sean, a senior administrator within Pavee Point, he explained to me the origin of the organization. Pavee Point Travellers' Centre began in 1983 but was not officially created until 1985 due to funding issues. It was begun by a settled man

(non-Traveller), John O'Connell, in response to conflict between the settled community and the

Traveller community in Tallaght, a suburb of Dublin. Travellers had been unofficially camping

in halting sites in Tallaght since the 1930s. As Dublin continued its outward urban sprawl in the

early 1980s, the settled community began to encroach on the space that the Traveller had

occupied for decades. Conflicts became increasingly violent and Travellers were attacked and

their caravans damaged. There were no arrests and no investigations into the increasing acts of

violence, which sent the message that Travellers could be attacked with impunity. There were

some, very few, members of the settled community that felt sympathy for the Travellers but there

was little coordination or communication among them. John O'Connell began from the

standpoint of analyzing what was being done to support the Traveller community at the time and

then created a nongovernmental organization to help improve the situation for the Traveller

community in or near Dublin (Sean, Interview June 1, 2012).

Figure 7. Photo of a memorial in the break area of Pavee Point, dedicated to Pavee Point's founder, John O'Connell (picture in the center).
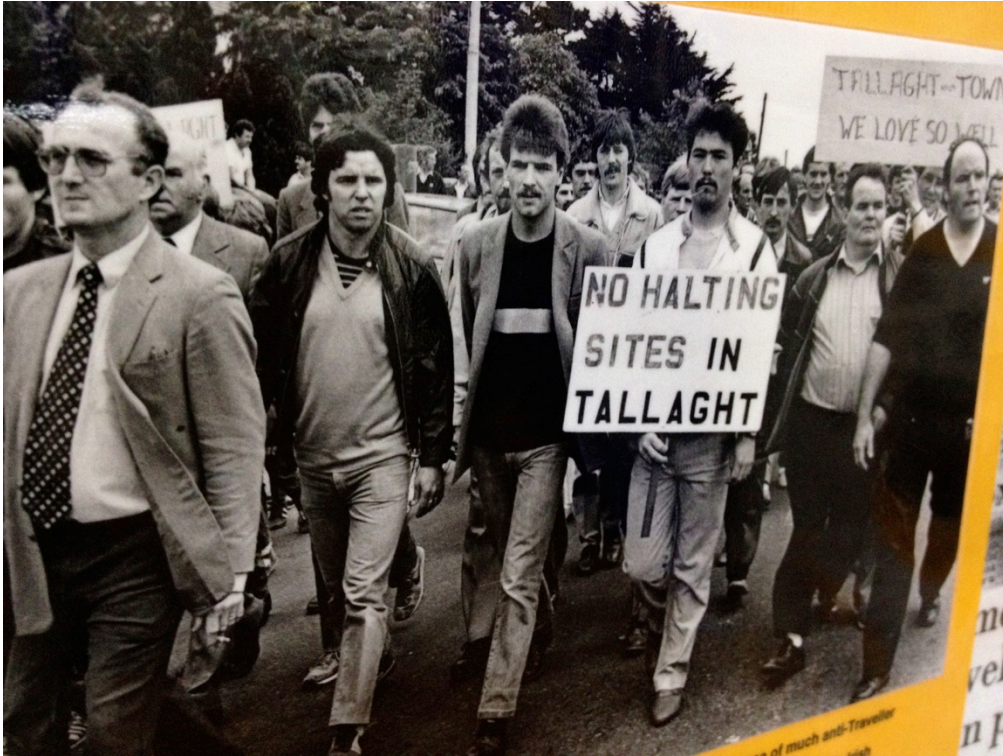
Figure 8. Photo of a display detailing the history of Pavee Point from the protests in Tallaght that sparked the founding of Pavee Point.

The organization that he created was known as the Dublin Traveller Education and Development Group (DTEDG) but it changed names to the Pavee Point Travellers' Centre when its focus expanded to a national and international scope. According to an information pamphlet provided by the organization, the aim of Pavee Point is to "contribute to improvement of the quality of life and living circumstances of Irish Travellers, through working for social justice, solidarity, socio-economic development and human rights" (Pavee Point, n.d). This is accomplished through a partnership approach between the Traveller and the settled communities (Sean, Interview June 1, 2012; Aaron, Interview June 6, 2012; Pavee Point, 2013). The work at Pavee Point is based on two key principles, 1) that real improvement in Travellers' living circumstances and social situation requires active involvement from Travellers themselves and that 2) Non-Travellers, or the settled community, has a responsibility to address inequalities that

exclude Travellers for equal participation in Irish society (Pavee Point, 2009). Presently, Pavee Point (2013) has programs or working groups in the following areas: Information, Health, Youth, Drugs, Violence Against Women, and Education and Training.

Physical Setting of the Pavee Point Travellers' Centre

The Pavee Point Travellers' Center is located to the north of Dublin's city center. The neighborhood in which the facility is located a mix of residential and commercial occupants. It is located two blocks down from Montjoy Square Park, which serves as an easily visible landmark when looking for Pavee Point. Pavee Point is located approximately one mile from where O'Connell Street begins after crossing the Liffey River, which can be considered to be the center of the city.

There is no signage near the Pavee Point facility, save for the sign located on the lawn in front of the building, pictured below. It is possible that this lack of signage could make it difficult for someone not familiar with the Dublin city area to find Pavee Point. There was not a clear, articulated rationale behind this minimal signage. To help mitigate this potential confusion, however, Pavee Point does provide simple walking directions from the city center on their website (Pavee Point, 2010).

Figure 9. Photo of the sign in front of Pavee Point.

The building itself was built in 1800 as a Methodist church and was acquired by Pavee Point in the late 1980s. The age and historic value of the building necessitates that a significant amount of funds be allocated for maintenance and repair. The benefit, however, is that the large size and relative flexibility of the space have allowed Pavee Point to construct a facility that can be used for multiple purposes (Pavee Point, 2006).

Figure 10. Photo of the exterior of Pavee Point.

I was unable to access the second level of the facility, which appeared to hold offices for the

staff, but the bottom level had a multitude of spaces. When visitors enter the front gate, they

walk through a small parking and lawn area to the front door. Once inside, there is a receptionist

booth to the left where visitors must stop to check in. Of the numerous times that I visited the

facility, there were many different employees who staffed the reception desk. To the left of the

reception desk is a doorway that leads to a small room and the stairs to the upper level. To the

right of the reception area, down a short corridor, there is a small waiting room. This, I was told,

was recently completed and outfitted with a small mosaic tile table and two chairs (Field notes,

May 25, 2012). In that room there is also a small cabinet with pamphlets and other literature for

visitors to peruse while they are waiting. Continuing to the right from the waiting room is a large

kitchen area, complete with a stove, refrigerator, and microwave oven. This is a communal

kitchen area for the use of anyone at the facility. I was entreated several times to make myself at

home and make a cup of tea. Off of the kitchen, there is a large room with an equally large table,

which seemed to serve as a gathering table for staff and visitors. Many times I encountered

people having lunch or their afternoon tea at that table, engaging in conversation with whomever

happened to be around. Continuing around the perimeter of the building, there are a series of

small to medium-sized rooms, which could be used for a variety of functions. It was most often

one of these smaller rooms that I utilized for conducting interviews with staff and volunteers of

Pavee Point. In the center of the building was a large room with space enough to seat 50 or more

people. This space appeared as if it would be used for large gatherings and possibly for the

monthly information sessions, as there was a podium and projection screen located at one end.

There was also a large shelving unit on which pamphlets and other informational literature was

available for the taking (Observation field notes, June 1, 2012).

Figure 11. Photo of the large meeting/presentation area inside Pavee Point.

Throughout all of the rooms that I was able to view, one of the greatest consistencies was the proliferation of Traveller-related art, artifacts, and posters, pictured below. One of the objectives of Pavee Point is to promote pride in the Traveller community and to preserve the cultural heritage of the Travellers (Sean, Interview June 1, 2012). Often during my visits, someone would stop and explain various artifacts to me. The individuals seemed to derive a sense of pride from being able to share with me these pieces of Traveller culture. For example, the tin and copper bowls and pitchers in the dining area were made by hand using the pre-Industrial techniques for which the Travellers are historically known (Observation field notes, May 25, 2012). There was also an example of a traditional Traveller woman's dress on a mannequin in a side room. During a break from a focus group that I was invited to observe, several of the women, who volunteered that they were old enough to have worn this type of clothing, demonstrated to me how and why Traveller women dressed in that particular way. They seemed pleased to be able to share their knowledge with me (Observation field notes, June 11, 2012).
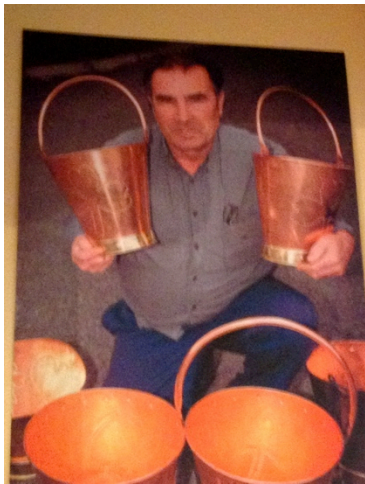
Figure 12. Photos of artwork and cultural artifacts inside Pavee Point.

In addition to the cultural artifacts that adorned the rooms, there was an abundance of informational posters, newspaper clippings, and other advocacy-related paraphernalia on the walls. These seemed to be a mixture of Traveller-oriented and non-Traveller-oriented media. There was one piece, in particular, that detailed part of the history of the Traveller rights movement and the evolution of Pavee Point through mainstream newspaper clippings.
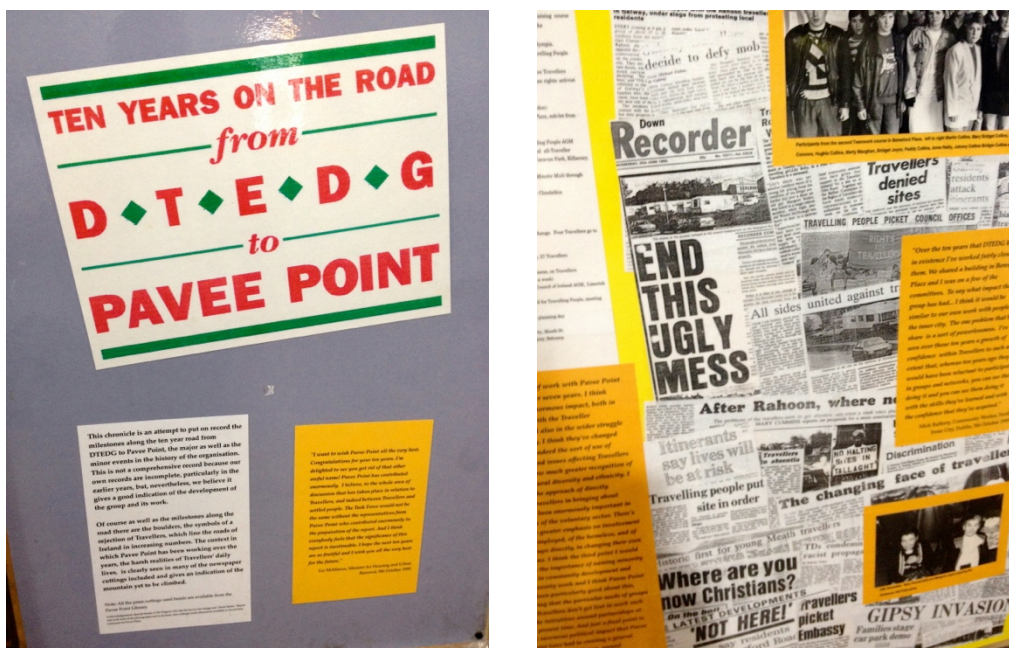
Figure 13. Photos of a display that chronicles the history of the founding of Pavee Point.

Overall, the facilities at Pavee Point seem to be well-suited to the variety of tasks that they engage in on a day-to-day basis. In addition, the physical space of the building and artifacts contained therein are independently educational for outside visitors.

Selected Participant Profiles

In order to help build a more complete narrative of my data and findings, I included three short biographies of three disparate participants, who are very different from one another and whose selection gives a greater depth and insight into my participants. This is intended to give the reader a more clear understanding of the types of people I worked with without compromising their confidentiality. The three that I selected are Sean, a senior administrator at

Pavee Point; Beth, a Traveller healthcare worker at Pavee Point; and Seth, a mid-twenties Traveller man with no affiliation with Pavee Point.

Sean

I do not know what I was expecting when I first met Sean but a short, dark-haired, brash man with a firm handshake and a friendly smile was not exactly it. Sean is currently a senior administrator with Pavee Point and has been involved with the organization almost since its inception. He identifies as a Traveller and was a participant in Pavee Point's very first program. Since then, he has held many positions within the organization from volunteer all of the way up to administrator.

Sean grew up in a Traveller community and did not meet a settled person until he was sent to primary school. Even then, his academic and personal lives were very separate from each other and he does not recall having any settled peers. Sean did not begin to understand his identity as a Traveller until he took a course with Pavee Point as a young adult. This course opened his mind and allowed him to take a critical view of the space that Travellers occupied in Ireland. He was given the vocabulary to both understand and express his experiences of discrimination and that seems to have been a defining moment in his life. In the present, Sean is an activist for Traveller human rights and often interfaces with the Irish government, the media, and the settled population in an attempt to education and advocate for equal human rights for Travellers in Ireland.

Beth

I first met Beth when I was invited to attend a focus group of Pavee Point health workers being help at the Centre. Beth is a grandmother and a proud Traveller woman. She recalled somewhat fondly the old days of the nomadic life on the road that she lived wither parents when

she was young. Beth never attended formal schooling and did not learn to read until it was time for her confirmation in the Catholic Church. Beth now works as a health worker with Pavee Point, going out into Traveller communities and educating Traveller women about their health needs and the care and resources available to them. A large part of her work is penetrating the cloud of silence that typically involves discussions of health and demystifying the Irish healthcare system. She is also an advocate for Traveller human rights and can be found interfacing the media and the settled community.

Seth

Seth is somewhat of an anomaly in the Traveller community as he has completed third level schooling, which is rare. He is fluent in English, Irish, and Shelta, the indigenous language of the Traveller culture. Seth is not affiliated with any Traveller human rights NGOs but he is still an activist. Seth chooses to express his activism by running a blog where he collects and retells stories, customs, and traditional traveller crafts and medicines. In creating this blog his hope was to fill a missing niche and contribute to the increasing sense of the need for openness of the Traveller community. It is the hope of some that this openness with the settled community may help to reduce violence, stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination against the Travellers in Ireland.

Discrimination as a Lived, Daily Experience of the Traveller Community

Discrimination was a common thread throughout participants' experiences in relation to education, accommodation, social interaction, employment, and health. Discrimination was identified in some contexts as the most important issue facing the Traveller community today. It was presented as a day-to-day reality for Travellers and something that they were "used to" (Observation 3, 4, June 11, 2012). As illustrated in Figure 14 below, three key findings focused

on discrimination faced by the Travellers: (1) the context of Traveller discrimination as reflected in the attitudes of the settled community, (2) the reality of discrimination pervading all areas of Traveller life, and (3) participants' perspectives on combating discrimination. Each theme is accompanied by a figure that provides a visual representation of that theme. They are organized identically and the topmost orb addresses the general context of the theme, the middle orb addresses the specific issues within the theme, and the bottommost orb addresses my participants' views and reactions on the theme. This structure is consistent throughout. This section addresses the research questions related to the unique needs of the Traveller community, the program characteristics of Pavee Point, and what participants saw as the broader issues in the movement for Traveller rights.

Discriminaiton is pervasive and touches or influences every area of a Traveller's life

The institutional and individual discrimination that Travellers face begins in the minds and attitudes of the settled community

Focus on combating settled attitudes, including anti-nomadism, and offering education and services that help to combat racism on all levels

Discrimination as a Lived, Daily Experience of the Traveller Community
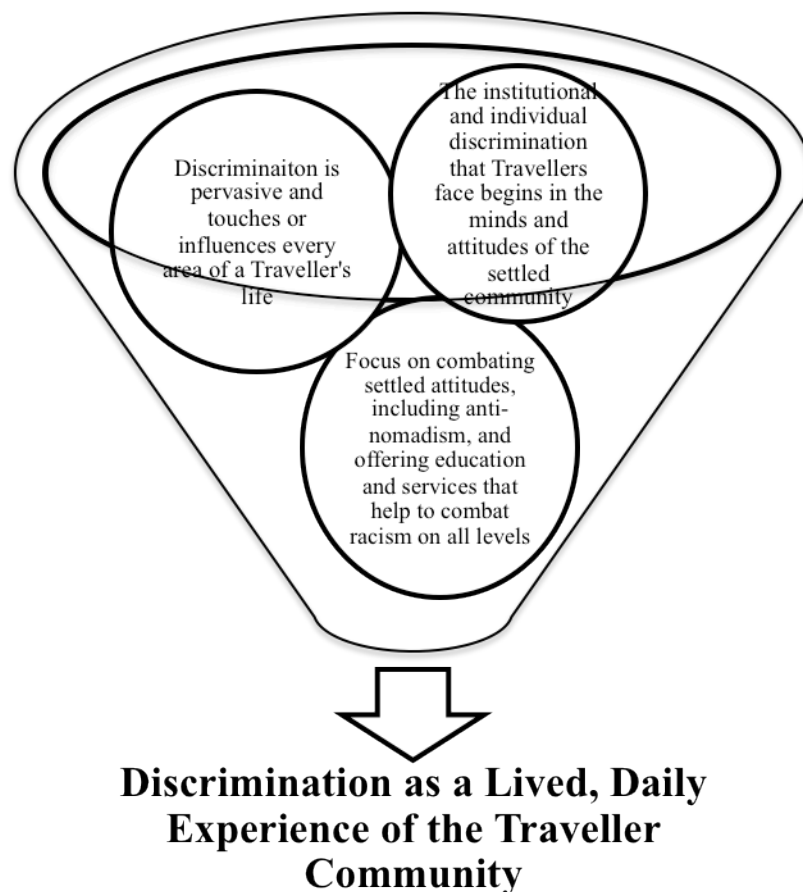
Figure 14. Discrimination as a lived, daily experience of the Traveller community diagram.

The Context of Traveller Discrimination as Reflected in the Attitudes of the Settled Community

In the 1980s, Travellers were viewed as "failed settled people" and treated with a sense of benign paternalism, a "we know what's good for you attitude" (Sean, Interview June 1, 2012; Nathan, Interview June 4, 2012). Some older Travellers remember the 1980s as a time when there was a certain amount of tolerance for the group because they were more nomadic and they would eventually move on to another town (Chris, Interview June 8, 2012; Alan, Interview June 11, 2012). Participants shared a sense that "settled people believed that you had the right to travel but not to camp in their area" (Sean, Interview June 8, 2012). Travellers were tolerated because they were subservient, obedient, and passive to the dominance of the settled community. It was not until the attempted forced assimilation, and the resistance of the Traveller community, that discrimination began to rise.

There seemed to be little consensus among participants on the question of whether discrimination against Travellers was increasing, decreasing, or remaining the same. Some participants reported a lack of genuine interest from the settled community in improving conditions for the Travellers as well as a belief that discrimination is lessening, although still present (Nathan, Interview June 4, 2012; Molly, Interview June 12, 2012). Others reported that they sensed a hardening of attitudes toward Travellers and an increasing level of hostility and discrimination from the settled community (Sean, Interview June 8, 2012; Robert, Interview June 15, 2012; Observation notes, June 11, 2012). Nevertheless, many participants agreed that no matter the direction that discrimination was moving, they did not believe that it would ever truly disappear and that the "discrimination that is there will never go away, it will always be there" (Alan, Interview June 11, 2012; Beth, Interview June 13, 2012). The experience of low social

status and exclusion prevents Travellers from participating equally in settled society, mostly due to the widespread hostility that settled people feel towards the Traveller community. According to Minceirs Whiden (2010), "this hostility is based on prejudice which in turn gives rise to discrimination and affects Travellers in all aspects of their lives" (p. 7).

The Reality of Discrimination Pervading All Areas of Traveller Life

Name-calling, refusal of service, and suspicion of guilt are the most common types of discrimination reported in social spheres. One participant likened being a Traveller to having a "social disability" that one cannot escape (Seth, Interview June 15, 2012). When I was participating as an invited observer at a focus group session held at the Pavee Point offices, every person in attendance reported that they had attempted to hide their identity in public at one point in order to avoid being bullied or persecuted (Observation 3, June 11, 2012). Travellers are often called "smelly," "dirty," and "knackers" (Robert, Interview June 5, 2012). While no one could explain to me the precise origin of the word "knacker," I was told that it was "the same as calling a Black person the 'n-word' in America" (Seth, Interview June 15, 2012). It was considered by some to be the most offensive term for a member of the Traveller community today (Alan, Interview June 11, 2012).

In addition to being subject to name-calling, many Travellers are denied access to commercial spaces. One participant stopped during our interview to take a phone call. After it was over, he explained to me that his daughter was getting married and the call had been from one of the possible wedding venues. He had been told that they were completely booked up and that there was no possibility that they would have an opening. He told the person on the other end of the line that he intended to "drop by and take a look at their books." He explained to me that it is common for facilities to claim to be full when they realize that a member of the

Traveller community is attempting to make a reservation. These organizations hold an unfounded belief that Travellers are needlessly destructive and that they will wreak havoc during any social gathering (Field notes, June 8, 2012).

This type of discrimination was confirmed during a later observation when a young Traveller woman told a story about attempting to go on holiday near Cork, Ireland. She had been in the process of booking a room at a bed and breakfast over email when she needed to call and give her payment details over the phone. As soon as the proprietor heard her accent, he knew that she was from the Traveller community and told her that all of the rooms were taken and that she would not be able to stay. She felt as though this was a clear lie, as there had been no problem finding a room the day before via email (Observation 3, June 11, 2012). Stories like this one were common. The participant also reported being denied entry into pubs on the basis that there were already too many Travellers inside, to which one participant responded that there were "always too many Travellers, never too many settled people" (Observation 3, June 11, 2012) or because they had had too much to drink, even though they had not consumed any alcohol (Robert, Interview June 15, 2012). There was even a case of Olympic boxer John Joe Nevin's family being denied entry into a pub on the night of his silver and gold metal victories during the 2012 Olympics in London (McGuire, 2012). Even when they are permitted into stores, Travellers are watched more closely and often followed under the assumption that they are going to steal from the shop (Seth, Interview June 15, 2012).

Travellers are possibly the most discriminated against minority in the Republic of Ireland (Cain, Interview June 19, 2012). One woman, a former university professor from Cork, Ireland, reported that they were heavily discriminated against and that the situation of the Travellers today is analogous to the situation for African Americans before the American Civil Rights

Movement (Personal communication, June 18, 2012). Some participants believed that there is less discrimination against Travellers in Great Britain, where they are legally and socially recognized as an ethnic minority group (Robert, Interview June 15, 2012; Observation 4, June 11, 2012).

Even after the 1995 *Report of the Task Force on the Travelling Community*, the most progressive government report to date, the Traveller community has been further marginalized by subsequent government policy. The Horses Act (1996) and the Housing and Miscellaneous Provisions Act (2002) both further criminalize nomadic behavior, as explained in the review of the literature (William, Interview June 6, 2012; PPTC & IHRC, 2008; Irish Traveller Movement, n.d.; Minceirs Whiden, 2010). In addition, the government has allowed for the privatization of sanitation services in some towns and cities. In areas with accommodation facilities for Travellers, such facilities often have poor sanitation as service providers refuse to enter the halting sites and remove waste. In addition, Travellers are often left without post or emergency medical services for the same reason (William, Interview June 6, 2012; Observation 3, June 11, 2012; Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, 2005). Lastly, one participant reported that welfare benefits had been cut several times by the government and that this left the "rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer" (Molly, Interview June 12, 2012).

Several stories were reported to me of Travellers having to hide their identities in order to acquire or maintain employment (William, Interview June 6, 2012; Observation 3, June 11, 2012). One participant knew of a Traveller woman who had gone so far as to change her name, which was distinctively Traveller in origin, in order to find employment in the settled community (William, Interview June 6, 2012). This high level of discrimination in employment has consequences in education as well, as students are unwilling to buy into the promise of education

when they know that they will likely be unable to find work even with qualifications. In this way, Traveller youth do not see tangible benefits for completing mainstream education (Aaron, Interview June 6, 2012). Resulting from this discrimination, many Travellers are labeled as "work shy" despite the fact that they are actively seeking work (Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, 2005). According to Pavee Point's (n.d.) *Good Practice Guidelines*, only 14% of Travellers aged 15 and over were considered to be "at work" in 2006 (p. 4). This "lack of education and employment are symptoms of marginalisation and discrimination" (Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, n.d.b., p.4).

Participant Perspectives On Combating Discrimination

According to the Traveller Money Advice and Budgeting Service (TMABS), 26% of Travellers who reported being discriminated against said that it had a serious or very serious effect on their lives (Stamp, 2011, p. 13). Some of the responses that Travellers can have to racism and discrimination are internalization of the values of the dominant system, isolating themselves within their own enclaves, retreating into internal authoritarianism, self-limitation, adopting stereotypical behavior expected by the majority, or "escaping" to pursue individual acceptance and success (Kenny & McNeela, 2005, p. 59). Any of these responses has the potential to be psychologically damaging to Travellers. One participant reported a pervasive idea that Travellers have to tolerate racism and discrimination in order to get ahead socially and economically in the settled community (Seth, Interview June 15, 2012). This fits with the idea that the settled community sees Travellers as homogenous, that all Travellers are "painted with one brush" (Beth, Interview June 13, 2012). Because Travellers are often seen as a homogenous group that should be derided by settled society, little opportunity exists for individual freedom and expression. One participant lamented that he felt unable to make mistakes because they

would reflect negatively on his entire culture. His errors were magnified because of his ethnicity and his whole life politicized because he was a Traveller. In our interview, he expressed his desire to "just have a day off" (Seth, Interview June 15, 2012). Another participant reported a "sense in which the basic need is to be able to do as an individual and as a community exactly that which they want to do," but in order to do this, Travellers need freedom from discrimination and improvements in the areas of health, education, and empowerment (William, Interview June 6, 2012).

For many Travellers, "nomadism entails a way of looking at the world, a different way of perceiving things, a different attitude to accommodation, to work and to life in general" (Department of Education and Science, 2002, p. 7). Many Travellers wish to be able to travel but cannot for fear of all of the restrictions and laws that have been enacted that criminalize many traditional nomadic behaviors (Alan, Interview June 11, 2012; Robert, Interview June 15, 2012). Research commissioned by the Irish Traveller Movement estimates that one quarter of the Traveller population is traveling at any given time during the year, although this number would be higher if not for the barriers mentioned (Donahue, McVeigh, & Ward, n.d.) In fact, many younger Travellers want to settle in houses for the majority of the year and then travel in the summer when doing so will not conflict with school obligations (Observation 3, June 11, 2012). Several barriers to traveling have been put in place in order to "settle the Traveller down" (Molly, Interview June 12, 2012). One such impediment is the habitual residency condition. Travellers have not, historically, had much respect for what they see as the artificial political boundary between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland (Nathan, Interview June 4, 2012). If, however, Travellers cross into Northern Ireland and remain too long, they will no longer be considered habitual residents of the Republic of Ireland and become ineligible for

necessary social services such as access to the healthcare system and welfare assistance (William, Interview June 6, 2012; Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, n.d.k., 17).

Instead of criminalizing traveling and contributing to the anti-nomadic sentiment that is common in Ireland, some participants asserted that the government needed to provide better accommodation for the Travellers who still want to travel. Some Travellers are forced to camp by the side of the road with no electricity or sanitation services because of the lack of provision and accommodation. Those who do have access to temporary halting sites are forced out into undesirable locations such as near landfills, graveyards, motorways, and dumps; up steep hills; and far from town. What these locations have in common is that they are located away from settled society (Sean, Interview June 8, 2012; Alan, Interview June 11, 2012; Observation 3, June 11, 2012; Fahy, 2001). The sentiment "not in my backyard" is certainly pervasive among the settled population with respect to Travellers, as reflected in the photo below.
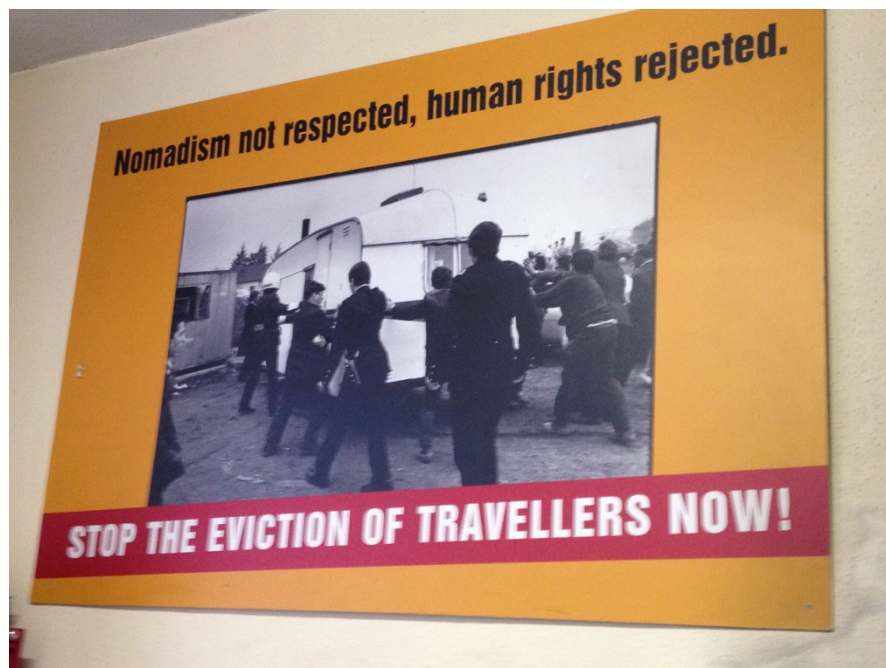

Figure 15. Photo of a sign protesting the eviction of Travellers.

When asked a question about the biggest need of the Traveller community today, three participants responded that mediation was critical (Aaron, Interview June 6, 2012; Alan, Interview June 11, 2012; Robert, Interview June 15, 2012). Pavee Point previously offered a mediation program that would intervene and provide mediation services between Traveller families (feuds), Travellers and the Garda (police), Travellers and the Local Authority, and Travellers and the wider settled community. This program was groundbreaking when it was first introduced in the late 1990s but it is now defunct because of a lack of funding (Aaron, Interview June 6, 2012; Robert, Interview June 15, 2012). Many factors contribute to conflict and thus contribute to the need for a mediation program:

- Oppression due to racism/discrimination

- Internalized oppression within the community due to poor treatment and lack of recognition by the state

- Lack of integration of Travellers into the community, which reinforces isolation and social exclusion

- High unemployment

- Power, pride, and family loyalties

- Loss of traditional mechanisms for conflict resolution (moving the caravan onto to a new location). (Minceirs Whiden, 2010, p. 20)

The Irish Traveller Movement also intercedes in some cases of mediation through their Law Centre. The primary functions of the Law Centre are to offer legal outreach clinics, engage in policy work, provide legal education, and engage in strategic casework. Mediation could potentially fall under the umbrella of legal outreach clinics, where ITM legal staff provide personal legal service and intervention, or under strategic casework, where the ITM offices select

specific cases in which to intercede. These cases have to meet three primary criteria. They must establish and protect the human rights of Travellers, be of widespread benefit to the Traveller community, and fit with the goals and missions of the ITM (Cummiskey, 2009).

Overall, the experience of discrimination for the Traveller community is too multi-faceted to be easily addressed. Travellers face discrimination in all areas of life, social, economic, and political. The nature of this discrimination, being individual, institutional, and systemic, means that efforts to combat it must be multi-pronged. Traveller rights NGOs, and Pavee Point in particular, recognize that there must be concerted efforts to education the settled community about Traveller culture, have Irish Traveller ethnicity recognized by the state, and also work to address issues from within the Traveller community that reinforce stereotypes.

The Impact of the Lack of State Recognition of Traveller Ethnicity

Participants often expressed that while The Traveller community faces many issues and concerns in Ireland today, a necessary first step to achieving real progress would be for the Irish government of officially recognize Traveller ethnic identity. As illustrated in Figure 16 below, three key findings focused on ethnic recognition for the Travellers: (1) the context of Traveller ethnic status in Ireland, (2) ethnic recognition and its relationship to identity, and (3) participants' perspectives on the need for ethnic recognition as a crucial first step. This section addresses the research questions related to the unique needs of the Traveller community, the program characteristics of Pavee Point, and what participants see as the broader issues in the movement for Traveller rights.

The Impact of the Lack of State
Recognition of Traveller Ethnicity
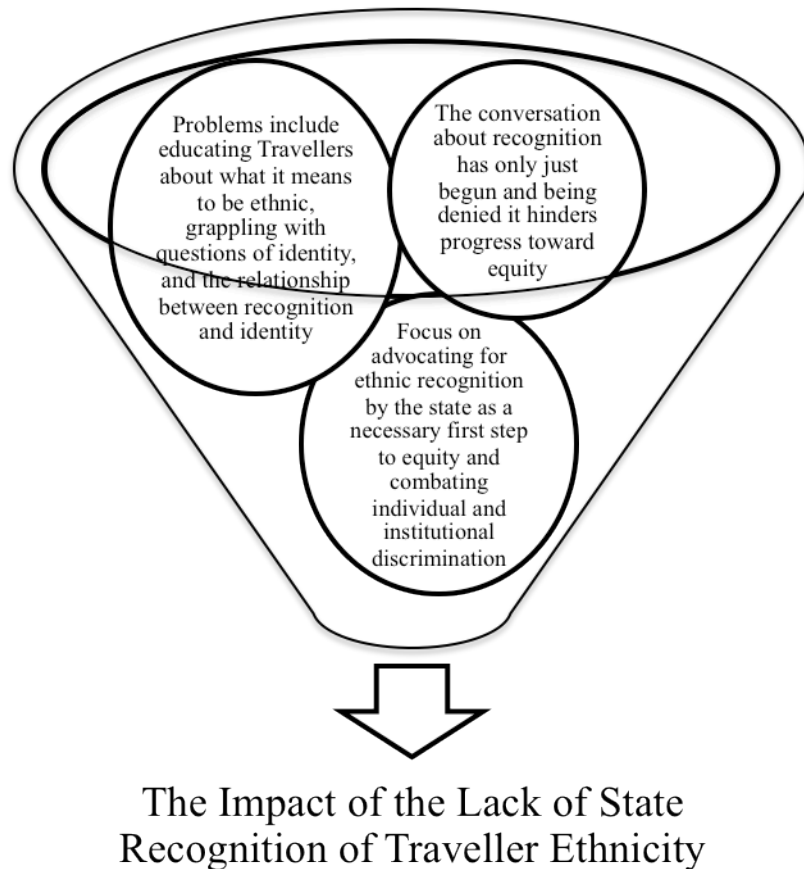
Figure 16. The impact of the lack of state recognition of Traveller ethnicity diagram.

The Context of Traveller Ethnic Status in Ireland

According to one participant, a senior staff member at Pavee Point, Pavee Point was the first

nongovernmental organization to promote ethnic recognition by the state as a fundamental need

and right of the Traveller community. Recognition and the firm belief that Traveller involvement

is essential to the longer-term sustainability of the movement were the founding principles upon

which Pavee Point was built (Sean, Interview June 1, 2012). Prior to 1985 and the introduction

of the human rights framework as the infrastructure for discussing the needs of the Traveller

community, the settled community relied on a social work approach to working with Travellers.

Under this framework, Travellers were viewed as a group of people who were societal dropouts

unable to help themselves. They were approached in a charitable context as a group that deserved

to be pitied rather than respected. Instead of working to provide the Traveller community with the skills and resources to support itself, governmental and non-government organizations attempted to forcibly settle and assimilate the group into mainstream society (Sean, Interview June 1, 2013; William, Interview June 6, 2012; Field notes, June 1, 2012).

Prior to 1985, there was no recognition or discussion of Travellers as a unique ethnic group. Instead, participants recalled a cultural genocide or "genocide without bloodshed" that was carried out against Travellers in the decades leading up to the 1980s (Sean, Interview June 1, 2012). As discussed in chapter two, policies regarding the Traveller community written and enacted by the Irish government from 1963-1983 were unabashedly assimilationist. The primary goal was to eliminate all undesirable artifacts of Traveller behavior, particularly nomadism, in order to make integrate the community more seamlessly into mainstream society (Sean, Interview June 1, 2012; Seth, Interview June 15, 2012). I found the use of the word "genocide" by two separate participants who had, to my knowledge, no personal connection to be particularly powerful. It is not a term that is or should be used lightly, which conveys the gravity of their feelings regarding the historic treatment of the Traveller community by the Irish government. As one participant, who was a teenager during the early 1980s, put it, "they were trying to take the Traveller out of the Traveller" and trying to destroy the sense of identity and community unique to Travellers (Sean, Interview June 1, 2012).

Within this context, the idea of Traveller rights as human rights crystallized. Recognition of ethnicity was presented as a question of ethics, of what is ethically and morally right (William, Interview June 6, 2012; Seth, Interview June 15, 2012). Participants expressed their belief that the Irish government had an ethical mandate to recognize Traveller ethnicity not solely because it is their human right, but also because they meet the requirements of ethnicity as outlined by the

European Union (EU) and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), as well as many other human rights bodies and academic communities (William, Interview June 6, 2012; Cain, Interview June 19, 2012; Minceirs Whiden, 2010). Academic literature confirms that it is important that the government recognizes the ethnic status of Travellers and then implements an infrastructure that protects Travellers' human rights (O'Toole, 2009). Power must be given to the necessary governing bodies to protect Traveller rights after so many years without recognition or protection (Sean, Interview June 8, 2012; Pavee Point Travellers Centre, 2002). Recognition was particularly important to one Pavee Point staff member in light of the fact that Irish law lacks a current legal definition of an ethnic group and clear governance of who has the ability to confer or withhold ethnic status (William, Interview June 6, 2012). In this way, the codification and protection of Traveller rights was presented not an issue for Travellers alone but rather an issue with which all Irish should contend.

Ethnic Recognition and its Relationship to Identity

Given most participants' heavy emphasis on the legal recognition of ethnicity by the state, it was interesting to note data that suggested that recognition was not a universal aim. One Pavee Point staff member reported that efforts toward recognition were not just about the legal implications but also about educating the Traveller community about what recognition would mean and why it is important to support the movement (William, Interview June 6, 2012). This idea about educating Travellers on ethnicity was supported by another Pavee Point staff member, who volunteered that while he believed recognition of ethnicity was important, he was not certain that he could articulate what it meant to be an ethnic group, although he thought he could identify a definition if one were provided to him (Alan, Interview June 11, 2012). Other participants reported that they were not sure that most Travellers would know what it meant to be an ethnic

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group. One participant, who was involved in youth education in the Traveller rights movement, speculated that upwards of 80-90% of Travellers would not understand the concept of ethnicity, much less advocate for ethnic recognition by the state. He attributed this lack of interest in recognition to a lack of education and questioned if NGOs working for Traveller rights were pushing legal recognition on a Traveler community that may not even desire it for themselves (Chris, Interview June 8, 2012).

One participant, in relation to his own understandings of identity, expressed concern that the NGOs push ethnicity and recognition to the forefront even when it is not necessarily of primary concern for individual Travellers. He shared that he did not want to be limited by his own or other people's assumptions about his identity stemming from legal recognition (Seth, Interview June 15, 2012). Even though they may not be able to completely articulate their own understanding of Traveller ethnic identity, many Travellers have strongly held concepts of group solidarity (Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, National Traveller Women's Forum, & Irish Traveller Movement, 2008). Some were concerned that by codifying Traveller ethnicity—memorializing a finite ethnic identity—they might be compromising their "Irishness" and labeling themselves as outsiders, which could lead to more discrimination (Alan, Interview June 11, 2012; Robert, Interview June 15, 2012). In an attempt to combat this fear, the Irish Traveller Movement informational pamphlet on Traveller ethnicity, titled *Traveller Ethnicity*, asserts that "being Irish is our nationality, being Traveller is our ethnicity" (p. 3).

As one participant quipped, "identity politics are bizarre" (Seth, Interview June 15, 2012). The level to which legal recognition by the state was intertwined with personal construction of identity was not something that I expected at the outset of this research. Many participants reported that they felt that the identity of Travellers was compromised by the settled

community's ignorance of the Traveller community's need for the stability that recognition would convey (Seth, Interview June 15, 2012). Recognition, in this view, would grant legitimacy to the Traveller community; it would convey to Travellers that they "are somebody" (Robert, Interview June 15, 2012). It would allow for the recognition of difference in a positive manner and potentially open the door for forgiveness for the wrongs that have been perpetrated against the Traveller community, although one participant reported that he felt that it might not be possible for the older generations of Travellers to forgive because of how long they had suffered at the hands of the settled community and the Irish government (Molly, Interview June 12, 2012). In addition, participants brought up that some believe the Traveller community should be issued a public apology for all that has been done to them. This proposal was analogized to the apology given to the Aboriginal community by the Australian government. This apology would not yield an immediate impact, but might set in motion the necessary changes to allow the Traveller community to participate in Irish society equally with the settled community (Robert, Interview June 15, 2012; Cain, Interview June 19, 2012). The goal of recognition, according to one participant, is for individual Travellers to be able to integrate to the extent that they desire without being absorbed into the fabric of mainstream society (Seth, Interview June 15, 2012).

Participant Perspectives About the Need for Ethnic Recognition as a Crucial First Step

Some participants questioned why the Irish government had been so reluctant to grant ethnic status to the Traveller community. Was it because government authorities are blind to the issues? Alternatively, perhaps because they are unconvinced or uneducated about the community? Or, a more sinister possibility, are they actively and willfully discriminating against Travellers? As one participant succinctly asked, "in this day and age, why is this still an issue?" (Seth, Interview June 15, 2012). The same participant reported that ethnic group status has "been

dangled for so many years" that failure to take this issue seriously calls into question the motives

of the government. In fact, when the 2011 Irish Traveller Movement Annual General Meeting

focused on ethnic recognition by the state, then President of Ireland Mary McAleese reportedly

dismissed recognition as "not a concern" for the government. Again, this response calls into

question the motives behind the lack of recognition, particularly when other countries, such as

the United Kingdom, already recognize Traveller ethnicity. In a welcome turn, the *Irish Times*

reported on 28 December 2012 that Sinn Féin TD Pádraig Mac Lochlainn, who is himself a

member of the Traveller community, would introduce the Traveller Ethnicity Recognition Bill to

the Dáil (Irish Parliament). While certainly not a guarantee that recognition will come to pass,

the bill would be a historic first step in real progress toward recognition. As of October 2013,

however, the bill had yet to be brought forward.

The impact that the lack of recognition has had, and will continue to have, on the

Traveller community was a common strand within the theme. Participants raised the concern that

if the government continued to fail to recognize Traveller rights then the settled community

could continue to ignore cultural issues, such as the complications that can arise from nomadism

or discrimination based on ethnicity. Lack of recognition also shows a lack of respect for the

Traveller community at the national level and a deliberate denial of the protections and

interventions from the supranational level of the EU (Aaron, William, Interview June 6, 2012;

Observation notes, June 11, 2012; O'Toole, 2009). Not giving recognition to Travellers also

complicates service provision and delivery because organizations are unable to accurately assess

Traveller needs and use of services in the fields of healthcare, education, and welfare (William,

Interview June 6, 2012; Stamp, 2011). If Traveller ethnicity were recognized, however, Traveller

needs would have to be "paramount in terms of public service provision…for example,

nomadism would have to be properly catered for in housing provision" (Stamp, 2011, p. 1).

Lastly, the failure to recognize Travellers as an ethnic minority "allows for misconceptions to remain about nomadism being a lifestyle choice and not a cultural right" (Irish Traveller Movement, n.d., p. 7). While recognition would not likely be a panacea for all issues within the Traveller community, it would provide a sense of legitimacy and authenticity that the community is currently being denied.

Barriers to Traveller Access and Success in Education

Education is vital to the advancement of the Traveller community as well as the Traveller rights movement. On national surveys and census reports, questions about literacy are self-reported; therefore, it is likely that the actual literacy rates of the Traveller community are even lower than the estimated 50 percent (Nathan, Interview June 4, 2012). Many participants believe that the literacy rates within the community are unacceptably low and that the primary goal of Traveller rights organizations should be to radically promote and prioritize education (Sean, Interview June 1, 2012; Chris, Interview June 8, 2012). The current generation of Traveller youth is the "key generation in terms of education" and could prove to be a turning point for the Traveller community as a whole (Aaron, Interview June 6, 2012). As is illustrated in Figure 17 below, there are three key findings focused on education for Travellers: (1) the context of Traveller education in Ireland, (2) the intersectionality of discrimination in education, and (3) participant perspectives on the need for improved education for the Traveller community. This section addresses the research questions related to the unique needs of the Traveller community, the program characteristics of Pavee Point, and what participants see as the broader issues in the movement for Traveller rights.
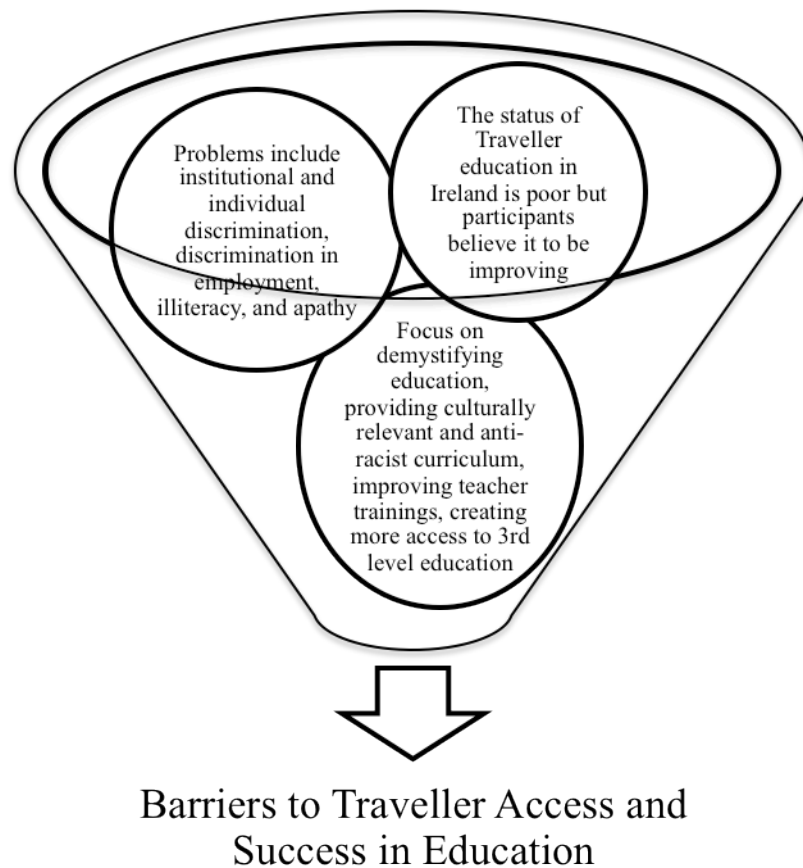
Figure 17. Barriers to Traveller access and success in education theme.

The Context of Traveller Education in Ireland

Traditionally, Travellers have not had a high level of engagement in mainstream

education. At the Irish Traveller Movement Annual General meeting in 2007, one participant

recalled that to the best of her knowledge, there were only 114 Travellers participating in any

level of formal education in 1966. She went on to estimate that there were 5,900 in 2007 (Irish

Traveller Movement & Galway Traveller Movement, p. 15). In the 1980s, Traveller children

often left formal schooling by the age of 11 or 12 in order to either enter the workforce (boys) or

help care for children and other domestic duties at home (girls) (Sean, Interview June 1, 2012;

Aaron, Interview June 6, 2012). However, more Travellers than ever are completing primary

school and going on to get their Leaving Certificate (Aaron, Interview June 6, 2012). In their

Pavee Parents Primary Concerns: Tips for Trainers, Pavee Point (n.d.) asserts that school attendance can still be quite low for some Traveller children due to poor accommodation, poor health, or parental negligence.

Working with parents and helping them to see the benefits of mainstream schooling is the key to keeping children engaged and present in schools (Aaron, Interview June 6, 2012; Irish Traveller Movement, 2007; Kenny & McNeela, 2005). School leaving is a vicious cycle to break, however, as Traveller parents have had negative experiences in schools, often resulting in their children dropping out of school. Moreover, Traveller children's negative experiences are often poorly handled by the school, which leads to students' desire to drop out, continuing the cycle of educational deprivation (Seth, Interview June 15, 2012; Donahue, M., McVeigh, R., & Ward, M., n.d.).

Despite this history, participants reported that they felt that educational outcomes are starting to improve because the older generations are beginning to see the value of education and are encouraging their grandchildren to continue in mainstream schooling. In addition, younger Traveller parents are more likely to see education as important, although the change is slow (Beth, Interview June 13, 2012; Observation notes, June 11, 2012; Irish Traveller Movement & Galway Traveller Movement, 2007). Some parents fear that sending their children to mainstream schools might erode their Traveller cultural identity, expose them to negative influences such as drugs, or produce financial burdens resulting from the cost of books and uniforms. Traveller children additionally fear prejudice and bullying, isolation, and peer pressure (Department of Education and Science, 2002). Despite these fears, it is essential that the Traveller community learn to value education, according to one Traveller activist (Seth, Interview June 15, 2012).

The Intersectionality of Discrimination in Education

As part of my semi-structured interview protocol, I asked several Traveller participants to

talk about their experiences in education. Their responses are provided below.

Interview/Observation	In response to a request to talk about their personal experiences in education:
Aaron, Interview June 6, 2012	- Attended a Traveller only preschool - Attended mainstream school for primary but was pulled for separate instruction in English and Math subjects, not because he was struggling but because of his ethnicity - Only Traveller in a class of 30 pupils - Bullied, called names (teacher did nothing to address it) - Treated different by the teacher because of his ethnicity - Isolated, called "knacker", was told that he smelled by his peers - Not permitted to attend secondary school because of fear on the part of his parents for how he would be treated - Attended a Senior Traveller Training Centre (STTC) with a vocational focus but left because it was not what he was interested in - STTC very gender segregated, reinforced gender stereotypes by offering gender specific classes - Went back as a mature students to get a certificate in community development so that he could work for Pavee Point
Sean, Interview June 8, 2012	- Attended a Traveller only preschool - Lived on a Traveller halting site so had no interaction with settled children until he attended the mainstream primary school – keenly aware that he was different from settled children - School had approximately 300 settled children and only 2 Traveller children - Most of his peers attended segregated Traveller schools in the 1980s – saw his Traveller peers leaving primary school with no literacy or vocational skills, but rather were encouraged in non-academic activities, such as sport - Was present in the classroom but never felt included, "felt different because you were different" - Spent from 9:00-3:00 in the settled world and spent the rest of his life in the Traveller world - No sense of connection between worlds, no settled friends
Alan, Interview June 11, 2012	- Attended a mainstream school for primary school - Other Travellers that he knew in secondary school were talking about dropping out so he "followed the trend" because he did not want to be the only Traveller left in school (he would feel

	like an "eejit")
	- His mother wanted him to remain in school but his father told him that he could drop out if he wanted (his father only had 4 years of formal schooling)
	- Went back later and completed Leaving Certificates in English and Math
	- Would likely not have gone back at all but he was coming on staff at Pavee Point and they asked him to go back, for which he was thankful
	- His younger brother (13 years old) wanted to drop out but he would not let him
	- Did not experience discrimination from teachers but he did from his peers (name calling), but he was not bothered by it (saw it as a hallmark of childhood)
	- Was called a "knacker" but felt that it is a term that can be used to substitute for "scumbag" and is not necessarily a Traveller-specific ethnic slur, but still considers it the most offensive term to call a Traveller
Beth, Interview June 13, 2012	- Family was nomadic during her childhood
	- Never attended formal schooling, was never given the chance
	- The only education she received was informal, religious education (learning prayers) for her first communion
	- Helped with childcare and domestic chores instead of going to school (typical of that time)
	- Insisted that her children attend school long enough to become literate, "enough to read the forms" (presumably medical, governmental, and other official forms)
Robert, Interview June 15, 2012	- Went to mainstream schools
	- Left at age 16 to go to work
	- Experienced some name calling but did not report it to the teachers
	- Teachers encouraged him to stay in school
	- Took a youth worker course so that he could work for Pavee Point
	- Some teachers were good but some did not care
	- Some teachers were not interested in paying attention to him because they thought that the settled kids had a future whereas he did not because he was a Traveller
	- Had a teacher ask him, "what's the point in education for you when you have no future?"
Seth, Interview June 15, 2012	- Unusual because both his parents and grandparents are literate
	- His mother left education early
	- His father left education early but went back to university in his 40s
	- Was brought up with the idea that you need to "climb higher" than the generation before you

	- Diagnosed as dyslexic when he was in secondary school - Was given a tutor when he was in secondary school because of his ethnicity, even though he did not ask for one, nor did he formerly declare his ethnicity to the school - When confronted, the headmaster said that he "meant no offense" but it was clearly a case of positive discrimination and was "very damaging" to his academic self-esteem - Remember there only being six lines about Travellers in the Irish history book, superficial information about being tinsmith and nomadic - Believes that Traveller culture deserves to be respected and remembered - At university, he was "found out" as a Traveller and his friends were "shocked" because of how far he had made it through the education system - Felt like he was often considered the "add-on" friends because "you're diverse if you have a Traveller friend" - Recalls tertiary education as being less overtly hostile than primary and secondary schooling

Figure 18. Individual responses to a question about experiences in education.

It is clear that while all of the participants had slightly different experiences in education, all participants who attended mainstream schools were subject to discrimination. Some experienced bullying and name-calling by both peers and teachers, which should be particularly concerning. According to a study conducted by Pavee Point, over 60% of Travellers who attended mainstream schooling experienced discrimination in schools (Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, n.d.). There are multiple ways for Travellers to experience discrimination in the education system. At the macro or policy level, they are seeing the closing of Senior Traveller Training Centers and the shutting down of the Traveller Visiting Teacher Service, both of which are Traveller-specific programs (Aaron, Interview June 6, 2012; Sean, Interview June 8, 2012; Stamp, 2011). At the institutional level, they face discrimination from enrollment policies that require that one or more of the child's parents previously attended the school in order for the child to enroll. This is particularly punitive to the traditionally nomadic Travellers, who historically lack involvement with mainstream education (Sean, Interview June 8, 2012). Schools

are also facing increasing class sizes and increasing student/teacher ratios, which make it difficult to supply all students with additional needs, not just Traveller children, with the necessary support (Sean, Interview June 8, 2012; Irish Traveller Movement, 2009; Stamp, 2011). At the individual level, participants reported having been in classrooms where Traveller children are not challenged, where they are not held to high expectations, and where the quality of teaching is below what the typical settled child receives (Sean, Interview June 1, 2012; Alan, Interview June 11, 2012). Traveller students and parents are also facing apathetic administrations that fail to address issues of harassment and discrimination, through either inaction or outright denial (Sean, Interview June 8, 2012). While not all schools, administrators, teachers, and peers engage in discriminatory behavior, participants reported discrimination as being very common.

The connection between education and employment is clear. Young Travellers need to see examples of Travellers succeeding in formal schooling in order to obtain gainful employment upon graduation. It is difficult for Travellers to see the positive outcomes of remaining in mainstream education when so many experience discrimination in trying to obtain employment (William, Interview June 6, 2012; Irish Traveller Movement, n.d.; Minceirs Whiden, 2010). In the current economic climate, settled Irish people are completing tertiary education and still having difficulty finding employment, so one participant speculated that it must be even more difficult for Travellers to be able to find gainful employment (Alan, Interview June 11, 2012). Because of this lack of incentive, there is little impetus for Travellers to remain in education beyond the primary level (Molly, Interview June 12, 2012). In the words of one older Traveller woman, "what good is it getting a leaving cert when you know you can't get a job?" (Beth, Interview June 13, 2012).

Participant Perspectives on the Need for Improved Education for the Traveller

Community

One of the goals of nongovernmental organizations working for Traveller rights is to work to demystify the education system for Travellers and advocate for the benefits of education among Traveller youth (William, Interview June 6, 2012). To this end, Pavee Point is launching an Education Program, which had previously been cut due to loss of government funding. This program will be staffed with one coordinator and two Traveller workers who will engage in field-based advocacy (Aaron, Interview June 6, 2012). One participant, a Pavee Point staff member in the youth program, believed that Pavee Point should connect directly with schools, meet with teachers, intervene in individual cases of harassment and discrimination, and perhaps even lead an after-school program for help with homework and literacy skills (Robert, Interview June 15, 2012). One of the reasons that education is so critical to the future of the movement is that Travellers need to be able to identify and critique the movement, not just be swept up in it, according to one Traveller activist (Chris, Interview June 8, 2012). Not to mention that the more education that Travellers receive, the more political power they can exercise, the more representation they can have within the government, and the more they can work towards improving the rights and conditions of Travellers in Ireland (Robert, Interview June 15, 2012).

One participant, a Traveller man with young children, reported several critical needs in the field of education:

- No teacher training colleges address how to work with Traveller children.

- Traveller culture is not recognized within the schools or the books/curriculum.

- Traveller students are not encouraged to stay on through the Leaving Certificate and then continue on to tertiary education.

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- Parents and teachers need to help Traveller children see the importance of education.

- Traveller students should be provided with needs-based support, not identity-based support, which occurs when Traveller children are targeted for educational intervention based on their ethnic identity and not their academic performance. (Aaron, Interview June 6, 2012)

These needs were echoed by other participants, particularly the need to engender within the Traveller community the desire to succeed in education (Sean, Interview June 8, 2012), the need for Travellers to have access to and attend tertiary education (Sean, Interview June 8, 2012; Chris, Interview June 8, 2012; Irish Traveller Movement, 2004), and the need for increased cultural awareness and visibility within the teaching force, curriculum, and texts (Observation notes, June 11, 2012; Department of Education and Science, 2002; Minceirs Whiden, 2010; Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, 2008).

Another participant, a young Traveller who completed a university level education, felt that the most important needs of the Traveller community in the field of education included the following:

- Education must be academic, personal, and intercultural.

- Teaching from a single position or point of view is hostile to other viewpoints, and teaching needs to be more inclusive.

- A co-educational approach between the Traveller community and the settled community is needed, wherein the Traveller community works in concert with the settled community to identify and address the educational needs of Traveller children.

- Authentic opportunities are needed to bring Traveller and settled youth together to work towards combating stereotypes.

- Education can serve as a site to expose both communities to each other but still maintain individual cultural integrity. (Seth, Interview June 15, 2012)

It is particularly important to consider a multicultural, anti-racist approach to education in Ireland (Murray & O'Doherty, 2001) because "curricula are not neutral, and how settled people are taught about Travellers is a significant factor in the reproduction of prejudice" (Kenny & McNeela, 2005, p. 55). Some suggestions for creating an inclusive curriculum from the *Guideline on Traveller Education in Primary Schools* (2006) are to ensure that Traveller culture is acknowledged and celebrated by all pupils, display posters and artwork that highlight school diversity, ensure that textbooks and materials are free of bias and reflect Traveller culture, use active teaching methodologies, implement curricula that are culturally-relevant and child-centered, desegregate classrooms, and foster principles of justice, equality, and freedom of expression (p. 38).

One way that the Irish Traveller Movement has attempted to address the need for inclusive, anti-racist education in Ireland was the creation of the Yellow Flag Programme (YFP). The YFP is a school-wide program designed to bring the tenets of interculturalism, equality, and diversity into the daily school experience of Irish schoolchildren. While the program was designed and launched by the ITM, it was designed to benefit all children, not only children from the Traveller community. The program is a cooperative one that requires the participation of students, staff, administration, parents, and the wider community. The program has eight steps:

- Intercultural and anti-racism training for staff and administration.

- Engaging with the wider community.

- Establishing a diversity committee.

- Conducting a review of school life and policy to assess for intercultural inclusiveness.

- Formulating an action plan to increase diversity and equality in the school.

- Establishing a scheme for monitoring and evaluating the plan, as well as disseminating information about the plan.

- Working with the curriculum to ensure diverse representations of cultures.

- Producing of a diversity code and anti-racist policies for the school.

When a school successfully completes the program, it is awarded a Yellow Flag to recognize its achievement. This gives the school the right to use the YFP symbol in publications and official correspondence. In addition, the physical yellow flag can be flown at the school as a public symbol of the school's dedication to the principles of inclusiveness and equality (Irish Traveller Movement, 2013).

Discrimination and the Lack of Culturally Relevant Healthcare for Travellers

Participants often expressed concerns about the health and status of the Traveller community. As is illustrated in Figure 19 below, there are three key findings focused on health care for the Travellers (1) the context of health and healthcare for Travellers in Ireland, (2) the problems of practice and the particular healthcare issues faced by Travellers, and (3) participants' perspectives on the needed changes to meet Traveller healthcare needs. This section addresses the research questions related to the unique needs of the Traveller community, the program characteristics of Pavee Point, and what participants see as the broader issues in the movement for Traveller rights.
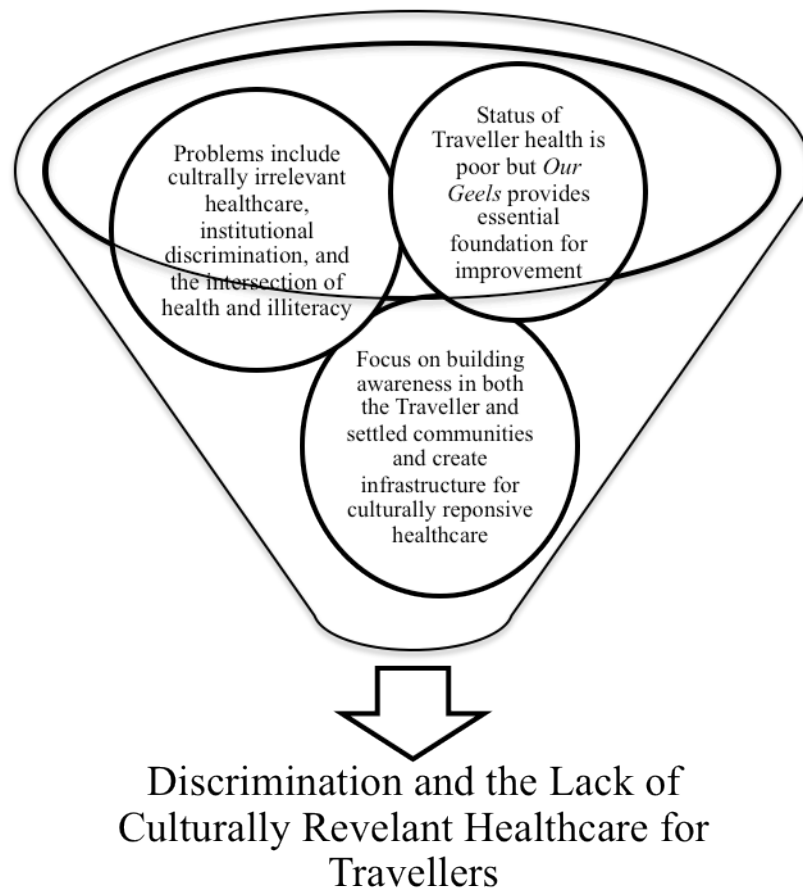
Figure 19. Discrimination and the lack of culturally responsive healthcare for Travellers diagram.

The Context of Traveller Health and Healthcare in Ireland

The explanation behind the poor health of the Traveller community is multifaceted. Traveller cultural beliefs about health and illness, the discrimination Travellers face when attempting to access healthcare, and the wide variance in types and sanitation of housing work to create an environment where Traveller health outcomes are generally below that of the settled community. For example, Traveller men have a life expectancy 15.1 years less than settled men and Traveller women live, on average, 11.5 years less then settled women (Abdalla et al., 2010). In addition, according to the Department of Education and Science (2002, p.10):

- Travellers' life expectancy is still at levels experienced by the settled population in the 1940s

- Travellers have more than double the average rate of still births

- Infant mortality rates are three times higher than the national rate

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the social determinates of health are comprised of the "circumstances in which people are born, grow up, live, work, and age, as well as the systems put in place to deal with illness. These circumstances are in turn shaped by a wider set of forces: economic, social policies, and politics" (World Health Organization, 2013, para 1). In the case of the Irish Travellers, the social determinates are identified as education, poverty, discrimination, level of employment, accommodation, lifestyle, and access to/utilization of healthcare services. *Our Geels*: *All Ireland Traveller Health Study*, which means "our community/lives" in Cant, the indigenous Traveller language (Pavee Point, n.d.c), was the first study if its kind to collect data under the framework of the social determinates model, as opposed to only collecting decontextualized health data. Unlike previous studies, which were conducted by the settled population and only in the Republic of Ireland, over 400 trained Travellers in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland collected data for *Our Geels*.

Published in 2010, *Our Geels* is the most comprehensive picture of Traveller Health to date and yielded some startling insights into Traveller health, such as a substantially higher death rate than the settled population, a higher morbidity rate for diseases such as high blood pressure, institutional barriers to access, and the interconnectedness of health with its social determinates (Nathan, Interview June 4, 2012; Observation notes, June 11, 2012; Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, 2012). *Our Geels* was the first opportunity for all Travellers to have input about their health and wellbeing, according to an informational pamphlet created by Pavee Point titled *Our Geels: For, With and By Travellers* (n.d.c.). One participant, a female health worker at Pavee Point, noted that there should have been an outcry about the poor status of Traveller health after

the publication of *Our Geels,* but there was, in his opinion, nothing, which further illustrates the lack of concern on the part of the settled community (Molly, Interview June 12, 2012). Although the results were released in 2010, it is still too recent to see many tangible benefits in Traveller health, but participants were hopeful that this study would be able to guide policy-making decisions and improve the health of the Traveller community in the long run (Nathan, Interview June 4, 2012; Cain, Interview June 19, 2012).

The Problems of Practice: Discrimination in Health Practices for Travellers

Much like all other areas of Traveller life, Traveller health is greatly affected by the discrimination that Travellers face. According to Pavee Point Travellers' Centre (2002):

> The issues around health are inextricably linked to issues regarding appropriate accommodation provision for Travellers, and further, to the social and economic exclusion of this community within contemporary Irish society. The context of Travellers' lives includes the stress generated by living in a hostile society where discrimination is a constant reality, and this is compounded by frequently enforced changes to their way of life. These factors negatively affect their access to, and experience of, health services. (p. 6)

In fact, one participant, a senior staff member at Pavee Point, pointed to discrimination as the single biggest issue in Traveller health, citing the fact that 60-67% of Travellers have self-reported that they have been discriminated against in healthcare (Nathan, Interview June 4, 2012). Discrimination is occurring at all levels: individual, institutional, and macro policy levels. At the individual levels, Travellers are turned away from general practitioner's offices, or GPs, because the doctors "don't like" them (Nathan, Interview June 4, 2012). They worry the presence of Travellers will drive away settled patients, so they claim to be full and unable to take on new

patients. This bleeds over into the institutional level because Travellers do have recourse in these circumstances. If they have written refusal from three GPs in a single area, they can go to the local health authority, which will compel a doctor to see them. Many Travellers, however, are either unaware of the policy or are too embarrassed to ask for a rejection in writing. Furthermore, in some of the smaller communities, there may not be three GPs and there is no provision in the policy for such cases. Lastly, even if they are aware of the policy and choose to take action, many are skeptical of the quality of care they can expect from a doctor who has already expressed that he or she does not want to treat them (Nathan, Interview June 4, 2012). At the macro level, Pavee Point and other organizations are working to get substantive changes made to health policy that will reflect a more culturally relevant approach, which is discussed in more detail below (Aaron, Interview June 6, 2012).

In addition to issues of discrimination within the health field, there are the concerns about the effect that broad-level discrimination has on Traveller health. As one participant, a young Traveller man, reported, "hiding affects you an awful lot" (Molly, Interview June 12, 2012). Mental health complications that arise from the internalization of stereotypes are a serious concern for the Traveller community. One tactic that some Travellers use is to deny and avoid their own identity, which can lead to depression, addiction, or even suicide in extreme cases. Others might actively and willfully give in to the stereotype, which can lead to greater discrimination and engaging in self-harming behaviors (Seth, Interview June 15, 2012). For LGBT Travellers, there exists a sense of double discrimination, as a result of which they can experience rejection both from the settled community and from their own community. Men in particular have been shown to engage in risky behaviors, such as seeking out partners in unsafe areas and engaging in unsafe sexual practices. During the launch of a project report on LGBT

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Traveller health, presenters reported that in some cases, the guilt that these Traveller men feel from the above activities can lead to alcohol addiction or violent outbursts (Observation, notes, June 18, 2012). Ultimately, "discrimination and stereotyping can lead to negative self-image being internalised. It is recognized that this outcome, sometimes referred to as 'internalised oppression' (Mason, 1990), leads to ill health, higher levels of substance abuse and other forms of self-harming behavior" (Stamp, 2011, p. 14), many of which can be observed in the Traveller community in Ireland.

When considering the question of education and health, responses tended to fall into one of two categories: either how education affects access to healthcare or how organizations provide informal health education to address needs within the Traveller community. For the former, one participant believed that there was a positive direct relationship between education and health; the more educated the person, the better the health outcomes. This was related to the idea of the social determinates model that greater education would also likely lead to better employment opportunities, more money, and greater access to healthcare (Alan, Interview June 11, 2012). For many Travellers, going to the doctor or the hospital is an exercise in humiliation because of the low levels of literacy in the community. Participants reported that they would avoid such places because they knew that they would not be able to fill out the requisite forms and they did not want anyone to recognize their insufficient literacy skills (Alan, Interview June 11, 2012; Observation 5, June 18, 2012).

Participant Perspectives About the Need for Culturally Relevant Healthcare

In order to help combat the avoidance of healthcare providers, the Clondalkin Traveller Development Group has, in conjunction with Pavee Point, the Irish Traveller Movement, and the Irish government, developed and distributed healthcare pamphlets that feature simple sentence

structures and pictures to aid those with low literacy levels (*Learn about depression*; *Help your child speak clearly, hear clearly*; *Primary healthcare for Travellers project*, n.d.). A health services directory for the Finglas and Blanchardstown areas, where many Traveller families live, states specifically that "we tried to make it as clear as possible for Travellers that could not read by putting on the symbols. We hope it will be very useful in the future" (Pavee Point Travellers' Centre & Health Services Executive, n.d., para 1). These pamphlets are one example of the tools that Traveller organizations are using to bridge the gap between Traveller health needs and settled health services.

Because Travellers are not officially recognized by the Irish government as an ethnic minority group, the provision of culturally relevant or appropriate services for Travellers is rare (Minceirs Whiden, 2010; O'Toole, 2009). Pavee Point advocates strongly for the development of such services, as the needs of the Traveller community can be quite different from those of the settled community. This advocacy is done through a two-pronged approach of both providing support to local organizations working to improve Traveller health and campaigning at the national level for policy reform (Aaron, Interview June 2, 2012). They also produce a number of pamphlets, working guides, and other informational texts to educate Travellers about available services and to educate service providers in the settle community on strategies for meeting the needs of their Traveller clientele. I was able to collect documents on a variety of topics related to culturally appropriate healthcare, including Traveller community counseling services, the Traveller Drugs initiative, services for victims of domestic violence, suicide prevention, sexual health, mental health, and men's health initiatives (see Appendix F). At the core, these organizations believe that "dignity, respect and nondiscrimination need to be a part of the approach to Travellers in healthcare" (Irish Traveller Movement, 2001, p. 1).

While working to address policy changes in healthcare, Pavee Point also engaged in community development and education related to health matters. Pavee Point has a group of female healthcare workers who span four generations. These women work primarily in the Finglas and Blanchardstown area, where they serve over 20 Traveller families and 310 or more Travellers. They disseminate information, develop community healthcare skills, highlight important issues in health and welfare, work closely with individuals to address health gaps, provide in-service training at hospitals and other healthcare organizations, and promote healthy behaviors such as getting cancer and breast health screenings (Alan, Interview June 11, 2012; Observation 3, June 11, 2012; Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, 2012). They have seen some substantial benefits to this program, including an increase in the number or women engaging in routine health screenings (a higher rate even than the settled community) and more women seeking out post-natal care (Nathan, Interview June 4, 2012; Beth, Interview June 13, 2012). In addition, Pavee Point takes a community development approach to men's health by organizing fitness programs and conducting bimonthly meetings where they discuss healthy eating, heart health, and combating cultural traditions that encourage men to ignore health concerns under the guise of being strong (Alan, Interview June 11, 2012; Donegal Travellers Project, 2010). They also provide youth programs to engage Traveller youth in thinking about what mental health means and how to find resources when needed. Youth programs are particularly important as the suicide rate for Travellers aged 15-24 is seven times higher than it is for the settled population (Robert, Interview June 15, 2012).

The Importance of Pride in Traveller Culture to the Traveller Community

Despite their conversations about racism, discrimination, and the myriad issues that they routinely face, all of the participants who identified as Travellers spoke of their cultural pride and

their desire to exhibit their pride in the settled community. As is illustrated in Figure 20 below,

three key findings focused on the pride of the Traveller community: (1) the context of what it

means to be a Traveller in Ireland today, (2) (mis)communications: settled stereotypes of the

Traveller culture and community, and (3) participants' perspectives on the enduring pride of the

Traveller community. This section addresses the research questions related to the unique needs

of the Traveller community, the program characteristics of Pavee Point, and what participants

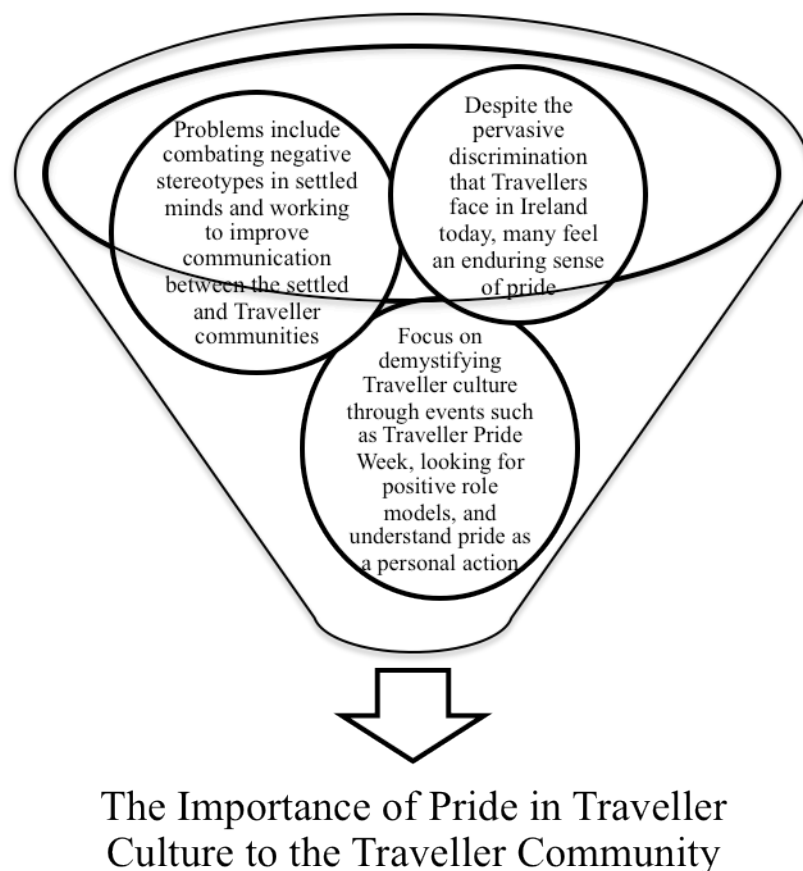see as the broader issues in the movement for Traveller rights.

Figure 20. The importance of pride in Traveller culture to the Traveller community
diagram.

The Context of What it Means to be a Traveller in Ireland Today

As part of my interview protocol (see Appendix D), I asked participants to articulate what

it meant to be an Irish Traveller from their own perspectives. At the outset of this research, I was

uncertain how many of my participants would self-identify as members of the Traveller

community, but in the end, nine of the eleven did so. I believed that asking participants to talk

about their conceptions of Traveller identity would help me better understand their experiences

and perspectives on the unique needs of the community. I have included a comprehensive chart

below that includes all the responses provided for this question in individual interviews and

focus groups (Figure 16). Some commonalities within responses worth noting include the stated

importance of the extended family unit, the centrality of the tradition of nomadism, and the sense

of pride in group difference. Some responses are further supported through other data types, such

as the importance of religion (Pavee Point, *Providing effective health services to Travellers*), the

changing practices with regard to marriage (Kenny & McNeela, 2005; Pavee Point, *Breaking the*

silence), the emphasis on the extended family structure (Pavee Point, *Providing effective health*

services to Travellers), and the centrality of nomadism (Field notes, May 25, 2012).

Interview/Observation	"Can you describe what it means to be an Irish Traveller, from your perspective?"
Sean, Interview June 8, 2012	- "Sense of belonging": Knowing and taking comfort in a sense of uniqueness, community, language, heritage, knowing that your group has made it through many upheavals (assimilation attempts) - Resilient, survivors - "Belonging, Peoplehood, Solidarity" - Support structure in the extended family (one that is inherently different than that of the settled community) - Family = survival, family is the "be all, end all", it is everything, central to existence - Family support allows you to cope with oppression and persecution from outside the community
Alan, Interview June 11, 2012	- Dichotomous because you are en ethnic group but you have no recognition - Different from settled people, although they can look the same - Different life: Travellers can live in caravans but they can also live in houses, it depends on the individual - Speak a different language (cant) which is not used as often by the younger generation but is still frequently used by the older generation; youth will know a few words

	- Married young, perhaps 17-18, traditionally but that has been changing
Observation 3, June 11, 2012 (Focus Group)	- Pride in being different, even if they are treated negatively - Distinct culture with long-held traditions - More religious than the settled Irish - Extended family is very important - Nomadic identity is intertwined with Traveller identity, even if they no longer travel - Proud of their culture/identity even if they are forced to hide it due to outside circumstances - Belief that it is important to care for the older generations
Observation 4, June 11, 2012 (Focus Group)	- Belief that it is important that they maintain their own lifestyle, their own culture - Ethnicity is something to be proud of, not something that should be hidden - Does not matter if you are actively mobile or not, "born a Traveller, always a Traveller" - In the "olden days" you traveled and camped by the roadside in a covered wagon drawn by horses - In these modern days, they want to travel but are not allowed to - Travel = freedom - Discriminated against in the workplace - Have to hide your culture to get a job, which can cause feelings of shame - Culture: they used to be tinsmiths by trade but then when "everything turned to plastic" they lost that - Women would make paper flowers and sell them door-to-door at Christmas time - Used to make their own clothes
Robert, Interview June 15, 2012	- Acknowledgement of difference but with a sense of pride, not embarrassed about what makes Travellers different - Would not ever hide his identity - Culture and traditions: language (cant), respect for the elderly (old and young coming together to mix and share stories, oral history tradition), wedding/funeral traditions, young marriage - "Don't have to travel to be a Traveller"
Seth, Interview June 15, 2012	- Prefers the term "Pavee" because "Traveller" is fixated on the idea of nomadism and while they are descended from nomadic people, they are not necessarily currently nomadic, which is a crucial difference - Particular procedures and customs for weddings and funerals - Identity is both external and internal - Duality of being both Pavee and Irish - Identity is a political action - Acknowledgement that both Travellers and the wider settled

	community see Travellers as different, which is good
Cain, Interview June 19, 2012	- "You know you're different" - "If my stomach is full and my children are fed, then money is no issue to me"

Figure 21. Participant responses to questions about Traveller identity.

(Mis)communication: Settled Stereotypes of the Traveller Culture and Community

In talking about Travellers' pride in their culture and cultural identification, the issue of stereotypes, particularly in the media, was brought up often. Participants felt that there was a "critical need" to combat negative stereotypes in the media as Travellers were often portrayed as parasitic societal dropouts, failed settled people, or intellectually inferior (Aaron, Interview June 6, 2012; Chris, Interview June 8, 2012). Participants felt that Travellers were misrepresented in the media and that discrimination was evident in the way that Travellers were covered, often being assumed to be in the wrong in any situation. Participants reported that negative events, such as feuds or violence, were covered regularly, but other, more positive events received little mention. In particular, when a person from the Traveller community did commit a crime, their ethnicity was highlighted by news and media coverage (Molly, Interview June 12, 2012; Robert, Interview June 15, 2012; Seth, Interview June 15, 2012; Cain, Interview June 19, 2012). One participant believed that news outlets did not want to cover positive stories about Travellers because that would counteract stereotypes and would go against the worldviews of their audiences (Interview 19, June 15, 2012). I am not certain if this is the case, but when I purchased two newspapers, *The Irish Times* and *The Irish Independent*, on the day of the launch of the Traveller Pride Week (TPW), I did not see a single mention of the event (*Irish Independent*, 2012; *The Irish Times*, 2012). A staff member at Pavee Point told me that they had chosen to move TPW from December to June in the hopes that they would get more media coverage and publicity for the events, which did not seem to occur (William, Interview June 6, 2012).

In addition to concerns about the way that Travellers were portrayed in the news media, four participants specifically mentioned the Channel 4 program *My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding*. Reactions to this program from my participants were unanimous; they all indicted that it was shameful, exploitative, and damaging to the Traveller community. According to the participants, it perpetuated false constructs of Traveller identity and misled the settled community into believing that all Travellers live as those portrayed on the program (Sean, Interview June 1, 2012; Robert, Interview June 15, 2012; Seth, Interview June 15, 2012; Cain, Interview June 19, 2012). One participant reported that Channel 4 was subsidizing the purchase of the outlandish dresses and the expensive weddings in order to increase the drama and "watchability" of the program (Robert, Interview June 15, 2012). These types of programs, portrayed as true-to-life documentaries, are very harmful and work to reinforce existing societal misconceptions.

Part of the mission of the Information Program at Pavee Point is to liaise with the settled community and to work to rectify misconceptions about Travellers in the public sphere (Alan, Interview June 11, 2012). The program accomplishes this goal through cooperating with news outlets and providing press releases on relevant issues. They also facilitate communication between Pavee Point, the Traveller community, and the settled community by having open forums for discussion. Furthermore, they maintain the Pavee Point website, email listserv, and social media sites. Lastly, they coordinate and run information sessions that are designed for the general public and those who have contact with the Traveller community in the course of their work. These sessions are typically offered monthly at Pavee Point and by request at other locations. These presentations are scripted, but there are multiple versions that can be geared toward the level of awareness and interest of the particular group (William, Interview June 6, 2012). While the Irish Traveller Movement does maintain a website and presence on social

media sites, they do not currently offer a program of this variety (Irish Traveller Movement, 2012).

Participant Perspectives on the Enduring Pride of the Traveller Community

Traveller Pride Week is a collaborative series of events organized to celebrate publically Traveller culture and the contributions that Travellers make within their own community and Irish society as a whole. According to the Traveller Pride Week website (2013), the objectives of Traveller Pride Week are the following:

- To develop Traveller pride in their Irish identity and cultural background

- To develop awareness and promote an understanding of the position of Travellers in Irish society

- To highlight Travellers' contributions to Irish society

- To promote Traveller participation in public life and policy development

- To act as a focus for the unveiling of policy and practice within the community

Traveller Pride week is an interagency effort between Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, the Irish Traveller Movement, the National Traveller Women's Forum, Minceirs Whiden, Involve, and National Traveller Money Advice and Budgeting Service. Traveller Pride week is, perhaps, the biggest and most public expression of Traveller culture. I was able to attend and observe the launch of Traveller Pride Week, which occurred at the Mansion House in Dublin on 18 June 2012.

Figure 22. The exterior of the Mansion House in Dublin, Ireland.

Figure 23. The interior of the Mansion House arranged for TPW launch.

Approximately 45 people, many of whom I recognized from the Pavee Point offices, attended the

event. Leading the launch were the Lord Mayor of Dublin, the Director of the Pavee Point

Travellers' Centre, and the Assistant Director of the Irish Traveller Movement. Each spoke at

length about the beauty of Traveller culture, the importance of maintaining and celebrating it, as

well as the importance of being proud of Traveller heritage even in the face of discrimination. To

close the event, the Director of Pavee Point encouraged those in attendance to not compromise or

hide their identity, to work towards more inclusion and diversity in the Traveller rights

movement, and to "have pride in how far you have come, have faith in how far you can go"

(Observation notes, June 18, 2012).

As part of the Traveller Pride Week launch, a traditional Traveller caravan and campsite

were erected on the lawn in front of the Mansion House. It was clear from the public nature of

the caravan's placement that this was done to attract attention to the event and to provide an

opportunity for educating the public. The photographs below were taken at the site.

Figure 24. Life-size replica of the traditional Traveller caravan

Figure 25. Replica of a traditional Traveller campsite.

In conversations with participants about pride and self-esteem in the Traveller community, the need for positive roles models was mentioned frequently. Discrimination and oppression by settled Irish society has taken its toll on the Traveller community. One participant, a middle-aged Traveller man, believed that some Travellers had internalized such oppression and felt shame about their ethnic identity, asserting that promoting positive role models from within the community was essential to repairing this psychological damage (Sean, Interview June 1, 2012; Observation notes, June 18, 2012). This sentiment is echoed by Pavee Point Travellers' Centre in their 2002 document *Traveller proofing: Within an equity framework* when they assert that "Travellers' experience of racism can lead to a feeling of being a social outcast, having low self-esteem, having lack of pride in one's ethnic identity coupled with anxiety about losing one's identity and experiencing feelings of inferiority" (p. 7).

Several participants called for a variety of role models in many areas, including sports, education, employment, and politics. While having public Traveller figures, such as John Joe Nevin who boxed for Ireland in the 2012 Olympics, is important, participants also believed that it was essential to have more pedestrian role models as well. For example, a young Traveller man was graduating from the Royal College of Surgeons on 6 June 2012; this was mentioned several times as being equally important as, if not more important than, having sports role models. (Sean, Interview June 1, 2012; Aaron, Interview June 6, 2012, Robert, Interview June 15, 2012; Observation notes, June 18, 2012). *The Voice of the Traveller*, a magazine produced by and for the Traveller community, had several profiles of individuals who were accomplishing tasks such as getting a Leaving Certificate, going to university, or being employed in the healthcare field, which demonstrates a similar belief in the need for positive role models within the community (Power & Greene, 2012).

While most participants spoke of feeling pride in their Traveller culture and expression, there were some instances and examples of Travellers choosing not to exercise their identity in a public forum. One participant believed that some Travellers "crave to blend in" and hid their identity in all facets of their life, even changing their accent or their last name (Seth, Interview June 15, 2012). During my observation of a focus group session at Pavee Point, four of the attendees reported that they knew someone who had deliberately hidden their identity in order to acquire or maintain employment (Observation notes, June 11, 2012). This could be attributed more to discrimination in the workplace than a sense of shame of their identity, but the outcome, unfortunately, remains the same. In addition, while some believed that shame is the biggest enemy of the Traveller community (Observation notes, June 18, 2012), one participant believed that a lack of announcing one's heritage did not necessarily equate to being ashamed. From his perspective, pride was an emotion and an action that could be acted out in different ways by different individuals. In this participant's view, proclaiming one's identity out loud did not mean that one was necessarily proud, and *not* proclaiming did not mean that one was necessarily ashamed (Seth, Interview June 15, 2012). During the data collection process it became increasingly clear to me that concepts of identity are very complex. I believe that assumptions regarding a person's pride or shame in their expressions of identity should be avoided as assertions about identity require one person to make judgments and assumptions about another's internal motivations about which he or she can have no firsthand knowledge.

Conscientization of the Travellers: Helping the Traveller Community to See, Understand, and Act for Human Rights

Participants often expressed concerns about the health and status of the Traveller community. As is illustrated in Figure 26 below, three key findings focused on health care for the

Travellers: (1) the difficulty of defining one's experiences as a member of the Traveller community in Ireland, (2) the lack of political understanding and action in the Traveller community, and (3) participants' perspectives on the need for activism and radicalization of the youth. This section addresses the research questions related to the unique needs of the Traveller community, the program characteristics of Pavee Point, and what participants see as the broader issues in the movement for Traveller rights.
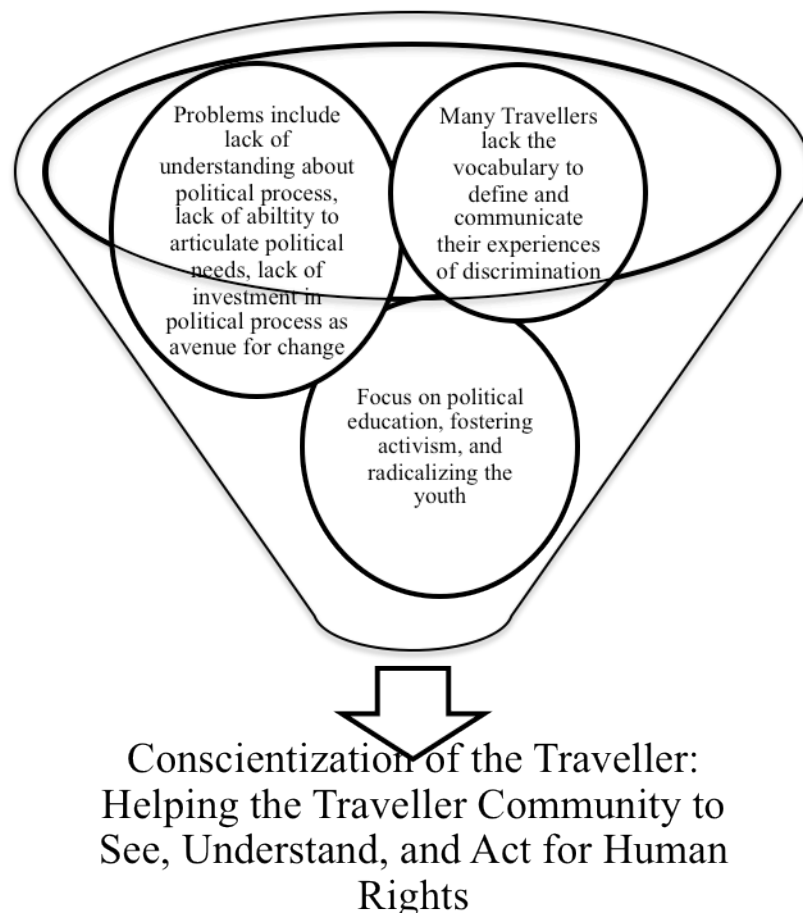

Figure 26. Conscientization of the Traveller: Helping the Traveller community to see, understand, and act for human rights diagram.

Defining One's Experiences in the Traveller Community

The first Pavee Point program in 1985 was designed with the goals of increasing conscientization and promoting advocacy and self-determination by giving Travellers the

vocabulary to understand their everyday life experiences. A senior member of the Pavee Point staff who was himself a participant in this program reported that he remembered a day when the leader of the program asked the group, approximately 20 young men, to give her an example of a time that they were discriminated against. The boys said nothing. She then asked them if they knew what the word discrimination meant. They did not. When prompted, however, they could all recount numerous stories about a time that they had been denied entry into a cinema, followed around a shop, or assaulted in a pub because of their Traveller ethnicity. They had the experience of discrimination but they did not have the vocabulary to understand it as systematic oppression (Sean, Interview June 1, 2012). It was not until the formation of Pavee Point that Travellers in general began to find their voice in understanding their experiences. Prior to the organization's formation, the Traveller community had not been exposed to the vocabulary needed to recognize and address exploitation in how they were portrayed by the media or in academia (Field notes, May 25, 2012). Part of Pavee Point's mission is to educate Travellers so that they can find their voice, articulate and understand the social pressures that they face, and work to remedy them (William, Interview June 6, 2012; Cain, Interview June 19, 2012) because "for too long Travellers have been unaware of the theories that have been constructed around them…This enables us to put into words and to have concepts which explain our experiences and what has been happening to us" (Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, 2005, p. 68).

The Lack of Political Understanding and Action in the Traveller Community

"Travellers are underrepresented in all areas of life, but nowhere is this more visible than in the political institutions of the State" (Minceirs Whiden, 2010, p. 14). Some participants talked about politicization, the process of becoming politically aware and active, of the Traveller community as a necessary part of the promotion of Traveller human rights. Particularly, those

participants spoke about catalysts or events that served as focal points for politicization. One end

of the spectrum would be highlighting daily forms of discrimination that, over time, could

increase an individual's awareness. Examples might include being refused entry into shops or

pubs, being refused treatment at a general practitioner's office, being discriminated against or

bullied in school, or being called offensive names (Sean, Interview June 8, 2012). On the other

end of the spectrum are big, public events that bring about politicization. One example is the case

of John Ward, a Traveller man who was killed by Padraig Nally, a settled man, in 2005. Ward

had trespassed onto Nally's property; when Nally, the property owner, discovered Ward, he shot

and then beat him. When Nally stopped to reload his shotgun, Ward attempted to flee and was

subsequently shot in the back. There was an outcry from the Traveller community and Traveller

rights activists because although Ward had been killed, the official inquest into the matter was

delayed and, they felt, poorly handled. Nally was eventually convicted, but his sentence was later

overturned on appeal. Some Traveller activists believed that the ethnicity of the victim played a

significant role in the outcome of the trial (Sean, Interview June 8, 2012; Seth, Interview June

15, 2012; RTÉ News, 2005). One participant drew a parallel between the cultural backlash and

politicization that the Traveller community experienced in the wake of the John Ward case and

the American political climate surrounding the case of Trayvon Martin, who was killed in 2012.

Participant Perspectives on the Need for Activism and Radicalization of the Youth

Directly related to the politicization of the Traveller community is the fostering of

activism to address the issues brought to attention through greater awareness. Along with

politicizing the Traveller community, Pavee Point works to help establish other Traveller rights

organizations that can work to address inequities around Ireland and, in turn, inspire Travellers to

become more politically and socially active (Aaron, William, Interview June 6, 2012; Sean,

Interview June 8, 2012). Travellers, in the opinion of one participant, needed to be able to recognize social and political trends and determine what issues might impact them or their community. Subsequently, they need to have the skills and desire to engage politically and address the issues (William, Interview June 6, 2012). Activism, however, is about more than just exerting political force. It is also about the long-term sustainability and growth of the movement. In 2004, a group of Travellers got together to create Minceirs Whiden, a Traveller-only forum to provide another outlet for activism for Travellers in Ireland. In the group's promotional literature (Minceirs Whiden, 2010, p.5), the group states its objectives as seeking to:

- Unite Travellers

- Address divisions among Travellers

- Promote collective voice and a political platform for Travellers

- Promote Traveller culture and ethnicity and our role in Irish society

- Work together in solidarity with nomadic and excluded groups, both nationally and internationally

- Work in the spirit of cooperation and solidarity with Traveller organisations in pursuit of our objectives, while retaining our independence and autonomy

- Seek recognition and consultative status with the State carrying out the work as set by the Assembly

It is important to Travellers' rights activists that Travellers learn to question the status quo. One participant described the "seismic shift" in which Travellers want to see other Travellers engaging in activism, not just relying on the good will of the settled community (Aaron, Interview June 6, 2012).

A broader question exists in the Traveller community, however, about what constitutes activism. According to one participant, there is confusion in the Traveller community about what activism means. Some Travellers seem bounded by traditional conceptualizations of activism. Pavee Point, on the other hand, encourages a nonhierarchical, inclusive understanding of activism that includes multiple expressions, such as the contributions of singers, artists, poets, songwriters, athletes, and playwrights (Sean, Interview June 8, 2012). Another participant, who is himself a young activist for Traveller rights, began a blog to chronicle Traveller culture, customs, crafts, stories, and language (Shelta). He began the blog because he had not seen anything like it on the Internet, not even on the websites for Pavee Point or the Irish Traveller Movement. In his particular situation, his culture blog is an expression of activism and support for the Traveller community (Seth, Interview June 15, 2012). Another media example would be the documentary *Blood of the Travellers,* which focused on using DNA and genetic mapping to trace the ethnogenisis of the Traveler community and prove their indigenous status (Power & Greene, 2012). Modern technology, such as the Internet and mobile phones, has provided a platform for liberation and activism to which prior generations did not have access. It allows for the free expression of activism or for anonymous exercise of political will (Seth, Interview June 15, 2012).

While it is important to work to involve all Travellers in the movement for Traveller rights, the movement has placed particular emphasis on the radicalization and recruitment of Traveller youth. In order to effect meaningful change, youth must develop a desire to seek out systematic change. The Traveller youth have to be empowered, not only for improvement of their own lives but also for the long-term sustainability of the movement (Interview I, June 1, 2012; Aaron, Interview June 6, 2012; Sean, Interview June 8, 2012). One participant estimated

that each nongovernmental organization working for Traveller rights should have at least two to three young Travellers to ensure the continuation of the movement (Aaron, Interview June 6, 2012). Given the historical lack of Traveller leadership within the movement, I would venture to say that it would be important to recruit youth, improve education, and facilitate activism at an even higher rate.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

In this case study of the Irish Traveller community, I learned that there are many serious issues facing the Traveller community in Ireland today and that these issues are often interconnected and complex. In addition, nongovernmental organizations focusing on Traveller rights are working at many levels—individual, institutional, national, and international—in order to address issues and inequities in Traveller life and to advocate for the recognition of Traveller ethnicity by the government of the Republic of Ireland. Chapter Four focused on the findings and themes that emerged from analysis of the collected data. In this chapter, I discuss the implications of my findings, offer reflections on the role of the researcher, elucidate delimitations of the study, and put forth ideas about directions for future research.

Implications of Findings and Universal Issues

After the analysis and write-up of the thematic findings, several universal issues became clear. These issues and their implications span the data and serve as points of coalescence and understanding. These issues fall under five broad categories: primacy of ethnic recognition, need for Traveller involvement in decision-making, challenging internal community taboos, unity/disunity in the movement, and additional implications and issues.

Primacy of Ethnic Recognition

As established in Chapter Four, recognition of Traveller ethnicity by the state was a primary issue for my participants. While most viewed recognition as unequivocally necessary, they did not consider it to be a panacea for all Traveller concerns. Rather, recognition would be the first step to providing the backbone of legal infrastructure on which to make substantial and lasting improvements to the Traveller condition (William, Interview June 6, 2012). The political

ramifications are clear. Granting Travellers official recognition as an ethnic group would give the Traveller community access to the legal rights and protections from which they are currently barred, such as culturally appropriate housing and healthcare, as well as access to and equality in education and employment. Whereas now the Irish government can choose to offer such accommodations, post-recognition these accommodations would be guaranteed (Holland, 2012; Pavee Point, 2008).

The quest for Irish Traveller rights has not occurred in a vacuum. Travellers are politicized by global events and serve as politicizing agents for other groups around the world. One participant, a member of the senior administration for Pavee Point, recalled his youth when he first began to understand human rights as both a personal and a global phenomenon. He told of how he participated in protests against the apartheid regime in South Africa in the 1980s and how those events began his process of conscientization. This process was later aided and abetted by the initial program offerings at Pavee Point. Even now, he believes that "it's a global movement that we're a part of and we cannot forget that" (Sean, Interview June 8, 2012). A part of understanding the movement for Irish Traveller rights, then, is understanding it as a piece of the global movement for indigenous rights and something Travellers themselves see as worth fighting for on a grand scale.

Need for Traveller Involvement in Decision-Making

Another consistent thread woven through the thematic findings was the need for Traveller-led solutions to problems and issues surrounding the Traveller community. As addressed in Chapter Four, the Traveller rights movement was heavily guided by the work of settled advocates, and government policy has been created and executed with little to no input from the Traveller community. The fact that all organizations for Travellers were run by the

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settled population until 1983 is symptomatic of this lack of Traveller involvement. Pavee Point was founded on the belief that Travellers must work in partnership with the settled community but that Travellers themselves must be centrally and inextricably involved if there is to be any lasting change in the conditions of the community (Sean, Interview June 1, 2012). Although some participants expressed concerns about Traveller involvement at higher levels of leadership within organizations working for Traveller rights (Robert, Interview June 15, 2012), a senior staff member at Pavee Point acknowledged that the recruitment and participation of Travellers is critical (Sean, Interview June 8, 2012). One important mechanism was the informal recruitment of young Travellers through the youth programs at Pavee Point. These programs attempted to engage young Travellers in the movement by providing them a socially acceptable outlet for associating with their peers and a forum to discuss issues, air grievances, and understand the discrimination that they face on a daily basis (Aaron, Interview June 6, 2012; Sean, Interview June 8, 2012).

The lack of Traveller input into government policy and the historical practice of tokenism were serious concerns for many participants. This lack of input has ramifications for all areas of Traveller life, including health, education, accommodation, and employment. As one participant noted, there are approximately 36,000 Travellers in Ireland who are being impacted by policy into which they have had no meaningful input; according to one participant, it is not as if no Travellers are well equipped to participate (William, Interview June 6, 2012). In 1963, the Commission on Itinerancy had zero Traveller members and came out with policy recommendations that were blatantly and unapologetically assimilationist and reductionist. By 1983, the Travelling People Review Body still featured assimilationist language but had two members of the Traveller community among its ranks. Although these two members were

present, they had little input into the actual proceedings of the committee and were an obvious case of tokenism. By 1995, the Task Force on the Travelling Community had substantial Traveller representation, and it solicited members and input from the three largest NGOs working for Traveller rights: Pavee Point Travellers' Center, Irish Traveller Movement, and the National Traveller Women's Forum. While the overtly assimilationist language had been eliminated, even with Traveller input the overall report was laden with assimilationist subtext (William, Interview June 6, 2012).

In order for the movement for Traveller rights to be successful and to see real improvement in the conditions for Travellers in Ireland today, Travellers must be integrally involved. NGOs must work to develop Traveller youth to maintain forward momentum. Engendering activism in the youth culture is critical not only for the movement but also for the long-term health and well-being of the Traveller community. NGOs must also work towards capacity building within the wider community. Although there are strong Traveller advocates working for change at the national level, individual Travellers must be empowered to advocate for change in their own lives through political, social, and economic action.

Challenging Internal Community Taboos

One of the most interesting threads of continuity was the conversation about taboos in the Traveller community and the need for them to be addressed for the long-term health of the community (Minceirs Whiden, 2010). During one of my observations of Traveller Pride Week, a speaker emphasized the need to recognize and foster diversity and heterogeneity within the Traveller rights movement (Observation notes, June 18, 2012). At Pavee Point, they believe that it is important to work to address not only the needs of the Traveller community within wider Irish society but also needs within the community itself. It is part of their responsibility to show

leadership in the community, even when the community does not react favorably to their intervention (Sean, Interview June 1, 2012; Lucey, 2012). In the past, Pavee Point has received criticism for their publicly challenging internal community taboos. One participant described their style as "straight shooting" in the sense that they seek to be honest and forthcoming with the settled community and media when individual Travellers are engaging in activities or behaviors that they see as harmful to the internal community. Pavee Point treads a fine line, however, in attempting to avoid "victimization of the victim" and further discrimination against a group that is already heavily discriminated against by the mainstream population (William, Interview June 6, 2012).

Multiple times, participants raised the issue of taboo subjects, so much so that I found it ironic how often I was engaged in discussion about topics that are not supposed to be discussed. Taboo subjects included domestic violence against women, feuding, drugs, gender inequalities, disabilities, and sexual orientation (Sean, Interview June 1, 2012; Aaron, Interview June 6, 2013; Alan, Interview June 11, 2012). Concern over drugs was mentioned least often (only four instances), but was consistently brought up in relation to shame and escapism in Pavee Point literature (*Cocaine: Information for Travellers; Traveller specific drugs initiative*). Feuding was also mentioned several times but generally in relation to the need for mediation programs, as discussed in Chapter Four. The two issues, however, that seemed most important and most pervasive were gender inequalities and sexual orientation.

Traveller culture is traditionally patriarchal and gender roles have been rigidly defined (Hayes, 2006), and Traveller women are one of the most marginalized groups in Irish society (Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, n.d.d.). These gendered roles have created a system of unequal power relations, which has exposed women to dual forms of discrimination within the patriarchal

norms of their own community and the racism and discrimination inflicted by the settled

population (Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, n.d.b.). Under this social framework, men have more

freedom than women in their life choices; as one Traveller man described, "their path is set"

(Observation notes, June 18, 2012). Gender equity and equality of opportunity are about more

than moving away from traditional roles; Traveller women need equity in healthcare, education

opportunities, and employment. One participant speculated that part of the attachment to

traditional views on gender might be that Travellers are "latching onto any traditions possible" as

a mechanism for regaining the self-worth and identity that is called into question by settled

society (Seth, Interview June 15, 2012). Some participants had seen a change in the culture,

loosening the traditional concepts of gender. One participant, an older Traveller woman, believed

that young Traveller women were standing up for themselves, that they were more independent,

and that the young Traveller men were becoming more involved in domestic responsibilities that

had been traditionally relegated to women, such as cleaning the house or picking children up

from school (Beth, Interview June 13, 2012). In this way, Traveller women are participating in

social and economic affairs on more equal footing with men, even going so far as to become

involved with the movement for Traveller rights (Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, n.d.f.). I saw

evidence of this myself when I was invited to observe two focus group sessions composed

entirely of Traveller women who worked as community healthcare workers for Pavee Point

(Observation Notes, June 11, 2012).

The other concern that was brought up time and again as a serious concern was the

situation for Travellers who identify on the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT)

spectrum. Sexuality and sexual orientation are "touchy subjects" and can lead to "pain, loss and

sometimes rejection by family members" as well as affecting health and access to health services

(Clondalkin Travellers Development Group, 2012, p. 8). I observed the launch of the LGBT Traveller Health Research study, where a very moving speaker, John, self-identified as a gay Traveller man. John spoke at length about the nature of the taboo and how the Traveller community is very unaccepting of LGBT Travellers. He spoke about the sense of shame he felt as a youth, about his fear of being discovered, and of how, despite all that, he would not wish to change himself because his Traveller ethnicity and his homosexuality have made him the man that he is today. He spoke of his homosexuality as a form of liberation, freeing him from the gendered roles and expectations to which he would have been subject (Observation Notes, June 18, 2012). The results of the LGBT Health study report that LGBT Traveller youth are frightened by homophobia and the violence it often provokes within the Traveller community and the wider settled community. LGBT Travellers are a "double minority" and there are serious concerns about their mental health, the increased risk of self-harming behaviors, and the increased risk for suicide attributable to the internalization of homophobia (Observation Notes, June 18, 2012; Clondalkin Travellers Development Group; Minceirs Whiden, 2010). They "experience tensions and struggle in gaining acceptance within their own community, within social groups and within community and voluntary organizations" (Minceirs Whiden, 2010, p. 9). A suicide prevention pamphlet handed out at the launch gave the staggering figure that four out of every six Travellers who died by suicide were under the age of 30, which, while not specific to LGBT Travellers, prompts one to wonder what percentage of these can be linked to discrimination based on sexual orientation (Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, n.d.i.). One particularly impactful moment happened when the researchers presented their participants' responses to the prompt "I am…" which encapsulated the experience of some LGBT Travellers and are provided in the figure below (Observation Notes, June 18, 2012).

> "I am…"
> - Silent shame
> - Afraid
> - Calls others queer
> - Hides
> - Laughed at
> - Torn arms
> - Sick
> - Married in lie
> - God-cursed
> - Cried last night
> - Stood on a bridge and thought about
> - Whose rosary didn't answer
> - Struggles in life
> - Hates himself

Figure 24. LGBT Health Research study participant answers to the prompt "I am…"

These responses reflected feelings of shame, rejection, and fear that were discussed at the study launch. In the end, it is important that the needs and experiences of LGBT Travellers be understood as different from those of other Travellers and that services be structured to better reflect these needs. More research into the experiences of LGBT Travellers is clearly needed for this purpose (Observation notes, June 18, 2012). This research and data is applicable outside of the Traveller community as well and can inform understandings of LGBT people in other indigenous communities.

Unity/Disunity in the Movement

Finally, the level of discontinuity within the movement was an unexpected finding. In seven of the twelve total interviews, I posed a question asking whether the participant felt that there was a cohesive Irish Traveller Rights Movement. Many participants expressed their understanding of that question as comparing the Traveller Rights Movement to the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. Under that framework, only three participants felt that there was

a cohesive movement. One of the more unexpected negative responses came from a participant who held a senior position within the Pavee Point NGO (Sean, Interview June 8, 2012).

Of those participants who did believe that there was unity within the movement, most pointed to interagency cooperation as evidence of unity. Cooperatively planned events such as Traveller Pride Week or the Traveller-only forum Minceirs Whiden were given as illustrations of unity, as they were composed of Traveller activists from many nongovernmental organizations that advocate for Traveller rights (Aaron, Interview June 6, 2012; William, Interview June 6, 2012). One participant reported that there was "undoubtedly" a cohesive movement, which he attributed to the intergenerational cooperation within the community (Seth, Interview June 15, 2012).

The idea that there might be a lack of cohesion in the movement has important implications for the future of Traveller rights in Ireland. Currently most major NGOs working for Traveller rights have as their primary goal the recognition of Traveller ethnicity by the state. For activists, there are questions about what the future of the movement will be once that particular goal has been reached. If the movement lacks cohesion, it may splinter and different groups within the community could advocate for opposing ideals. Some participants, however, saw a future where, in the vacuum of post-recognition Ireland, NGOs that work for Traveller rights could consolidate and develop new missions and objectives that begin to make real, identifiable progress in improving the situation of the Traveller community. This consolidation would concentrate funds into a single entity and allow for the new organization to exert more influence on the government. This scenario is not necessarily likely, as this would require those who are currently in power within the organizations to relinquish that power and disturb the existing status quo (William, Interview June 6, 2012; Robert, Interview June 15, 2012). Even

without total cohesion, many participants related that when major issues arose, the most influential NGOs for Traveller rights could and did stand together in a united front (William, Interview June 6, 2012; Alan, Interview June 11, 2012).

Some participants attributed a lack of unity within the movement to a lack of regular communication between organizations (Chris, Interview June 8, 2012; Seth, Interview June 15, 2012). Even though organizations currently lack cohesion, the participants believe that they are headed in a unified direction. Some of the smaller grassroots organizations are less political and are more concerned about addressing the physical needs of the community. Through prolonged cooperation with the larger, more political organizations, they are gaining an understanding of the human rights framework and the necessity for legal recognition by the state (Sean, Interview June 8, 2012; Chris, Interview June 8, 2012).

One participant in particular, a Traveller man who had been involved in the struggle for Traveller rights since the 1980s, had very firm opinions on the lack of unity in the movement, which he attributed to faults within nongovernmental organizations working toward Traveller rights. In his view, the real progress of the movement had been highlighting the conditions and life of the Traveller community, even though there has not been substantive change in those conditions. He believed that the NGOs are held hostage by the government and by funding, and that they are unwilling to radicalize to the extent necessary out of fear of losing their funding. He asserted that the movement had been deliberately stymied internally by these organizations in order to protect their own status quos and agendas. He even went so far as to accuse these organizations of perpetuating the same wrong on the Traveler community as the state because they have hindered militants and halted the Traveller push for self-determination (Chris, Interview June 8, 2012). While this perspective was unique to this participant, others did report

that they felt that Pavee Point was quite controversial because of the fact that they received the bulk of their funding from the government and the fact that they were "always calling for more time, more debate" instead of standing firm (Seth, Interview June 15, 2012; Personal communication, June 18, 2012). The three participants who expressed these opinions were not direct employees of Pavee Point and therefore had more freedom to express dissenting opinions when compared with other participants.

Additional Implications and Issues

Funding of Pavee Point and other Traveller rights NGOs was an additional issue that arose but was not attributable to any particular theme. Funding was consistently brought up in the sense of a deficit, in reference to a loss of funds. Participants commented on programs that had been cut recently and programs that had only just been reinstated due to fluctuations in funding. Funding is clearly a major cause for concern for Pavee Point. In fact, the recession has left Travellers doubly impacted by cuts in funding because they are not only losing Traveller-specific services but also general public services and government assistance (William, Interview June 6, 2012; Sean, Interview June 8, 2012; Robert, Interview June 15, 2012). One participant reported that they received approximately 80-85% of their funding for the Youth Program from the government and that, due to budget cuts, he was required to take two cuts in wages in order for the program to remain viable (Robert, Interview June 15, 2012). The issue of funding highlights the interconnectedness of the nongovernmental organizations and government funding. While Pavee Point has, in the past, been able and willing to critique the Irish government for its wrongdoings related to the Traveller community, is there a point that the organization becomes financially beholden to the government? Are they hindered in their ability to seek equal human rights because of the threat of budget cuts? These are important questions to

consider when evaluating the implications of the findings of this study because government funding choices could influence the scope and depth of NGO programs.

One last additional issue is that of communication between Pavee Point and the wider Traveller community. It appears that much of the communication occurring between Pavee Point and the Traveller community is informal in nature. Many of the participants who identify as members of the Traveller community still live in neighborhoods or areas populated primarily by Travellers. In this scenario, they are able to go out into the Traveller community and have conversations about the needs of the community and what Pavee Point can be doing to meet those needs. In addition, Pavee Point also occasionally holds open meetings where members of the Traveller community can come and express their opinions. Notification of these meetings, however, takes place mostly by word of mouth and other informal means of communication. Lastly, Pavee Point uses data collected in large-scale assessments, such as *Our Geels*, to inform programmatic offerings (Sean, Interview June 1, 2012; Alan, Interview June 11, 2012; Robert, Interview June 15, 2012). This form of informal communication, while potentially authentic, does seem to be lacking in rigor and completeness. How, in this instance, are the issues and concerns of Travellers outside the greater Dublin area factored into the decision making process? Communication is a serious concern and has ramifications and implications for the progress and inclusiveness of the Traveller rights movement.

Reflection on the Role of the Researcher

When I began this study, I approached it with the clear understanding that I was an outsider attempting to understand a phenomenon from the perspectives of my participants, who were insiders. I took pains in the design, execution, and analysis of my study to address this particular issue, as outlined in Chapter Three. What I did not anticipate, however, was the

reaction of some of my participants to my outsider status. With one exception, none of my participants seemed overly concerned about my status. In fact, many of them sought to engage me in conversation about America, whether they had never been to the United States and were curious about it or they had traveled to the United States and wanted to discuss their experiences. They would also inquire about my time in Ireland, how I found the Irish people, and what plans I had for holiday while I was there. This seemed, along with the ritual of tea, to be a mechanism for establishing rapport and facilitating conversation.

There were two notable exceptions to this pattern. One participant, a middle-aged Traveller man who had been active in the Traveller rights movement since the early 1980s, questioned the right of non-Traveller academics to come into the community and conduct research. He felt, perhaps rightly, that there was a history of outsiders coming into the community for academic gain but who did not affect any real, substantial change within the community itself (Chris, Interview June 8, 2012). While I did not sense any personal or direct hostility, it was obvious that he was very passionate about the perceived exploitation of his culture for the selfish gain of academics (Field Notes, June 8, 2012). The conversation prompted me to think more deeply about my role as a researcher.

The other notable exception occurred at the opposite end of the spectrum. During our interview, one participant, a young male Traveller, praised my outsider status. He used the term "double outsider" to describe me because not only was I not a member of the Traveller community, but I was also not Irish. He felt as though this was beneficial because had I grown up in Ireland, I would have been exposed to the social prejudice against and stigmatization of the Travellers at an early age. I would then have been contending with internal prejudices inherent to my upbringing. Instead, from his perspective, I was able to see issues more clearly, because I

was not coming to the research with a set of stereotypes living inside my mind (Seth, Interview June 15, 2012). While I am uncertain to what extent this was true, I do believe it has merit. For example, there seems to be a level of anti-Traveller prejudice that is socially acceptable in the settled community. One day, as I was walking through the campus of Trinity College, I was stopped by a young man who was promoting the Dublin Shakespeare Festival. Hearing my accent, he asked me where I was from and what had brought me to Ireland. I explained, briefly, that I was American and that I was there conducting research with the Traveller community. His response was to say, "Oh! You mean the knackers!" This startled me, as he used an extremely offensive word to describe Travellers without a hint of hesitation. This remains vivid in my mind as an example of the ubiquity of anti-Traveller sentiment in Ireland (Field Notes, June 9, 2012).

Delimitations of the Study

As with any qualitative study, this study had certain delimitations. As addressed in Chapter Three, I had initially hoped to conduct interviews both with participants connected to the Pavee Point Travellers' Centre and with others connected to the Irish Traveller Movement. While initial contact had been positive with both organizations, ultimately the Irish Traveller Movement was unwilling to participate after a change in leadership. As such, the potential pool of participants was reduced. In addition, the diversity of perspectives was also potentially compromised. While I was able to interview participants who were not directly employed by Pavee Point, restoring a measure of diversity, I believe that the quality of the data would have been further enhanced by the inclusion of more perspectives.

By that same token, I began to wonder during data collection if bias of the participants was a concern. One of the primary stated missions of Pavee Point is the recognition of Traveller ethnicity by the state. The need for ethnic recognition was a recurring theme in interviews,

observations, and document data; however, these instances represented a possible lack of data disagreeing with the stated institutional values and possibly reflected participants' interest in presenting a united front with respect to Traveller rights. This particular limitation would likely not have been alleviated with the inclusion of participants from the Irish Traveller Movement, as recognition of ethnic status is also a primary goal of that organization.

Lastly, time spent in the field was also a limitation of this study. I was able to spend four weeks in the field, during which time I was able to conduct interviews and observations at regular intervals. There were, however, events and activities that I would have liked to observe had I had time and resources enough to remain in the field for a longer period of time. One potential option to mitigate this limitation would be to travel back to Ireland for return engagements or extension of the research in the future.

Directions for Future Research

There are several possibilities for additional research in this area. For reasons detailed in Chapter Three, I conducted my research in cooperation with the Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, which is a national-level NGO with influence at all levels, from the individual to the international. One potential direction for future research would be to explore regional and local NGOs working to support the Traveller community. These organizations are smaller and often take a more practical approach to improving conditions for Travellers, working more closely with families or individuals, as opposed to focusing on national-level policy. Similarly, another valuable study would be to explore the experiences of Travellers in other countries and contexts by working with NGOs outside of Ireland. Particularly, there are Traveller populations in England, Scotland, and the United States, data from which could be used in comparison with data collected in this study. Staying within the bounds of the current case study, I am interested

in conducting further research to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs and offerings at Pavee Point. I was able to collect data about what programs are being offered, but the only evaluative data were anecdotal in nature. This kind of information could be valuable to the organization in making programmatic decisions.

Being a former middle and high school teacher, I am also interested in further exploring to what extent the Traveller community is accessing and succeeding in education in Ireland. The current literature suggests that Travellers are not performing as well as their settled peers in education. In order to investigate this phenomenon, I would be interested in conducting ethnographic research in one or more schools with substantial Traveller populations.

Finally, I am interested in exploring further the concept of intersectionality, or "double-minority," as applied to LGBT members of the Traveller community. Having attended the launch of the findings report of the Clondalkin Traveller Development Group's LGBT Traveller Health research study, a study that is the first of its kind, I believe that there is a clear mandate for more research and understanding of the experiences of LGBT Travellers. While my study attempted to elucidate the experiences of Travellers more generally, more research is needed into the specific types of discrimination that LGBT Travellers face not only in the broader settled community but also within the Traveller community.

Concluding Thoughts

I first learned of the existence of the Irish Travellers from a book I chose as part of an assignment in graduate school. Consequently, I possessed only academic knowledge about Traveller and Traveller culture prior to my study. I was the ultimate outsider. What I have learned over the course of this study is that the Travellers are a people who face discrimination and marginalization on a daily basis but who are still intensely proud to be unique in the Irish

context as the only indigenous minority in Ireland. I have taken away a greater appreciation for

the human rights of all peoples and a more keen understanding of what it means to be deprived

of them. It is my hope that this study contributes to the narrative of human rights issues and helps

to continue the conversation around equality in Ireland today.

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APPENDIX A

Research Matrix

Research Questions	Rationale	Data Sources	Methods of Analysis
What are the contemporary features of Irish government policy that affect that Traveller community in Ireland?	Provides macro-level context in which to situate the findings	Policy documents Scholarly literature Press releases	Informal content analysis Thematic coding
What are the unique needs of the Traveller community in Ireland?	Addresses the social, health, economic, and educational context of the Travellers in Ireland	Interviews Selected transcription Fieldnotes Observations Policy documents Law Centre reports Photos	Thematic coding Memoing Analysis of field/observation notes Informal content analysis (documents)

What are the general features and program characteristics of the Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs)?
  a) Pavee Point Travellers' Centre
  b) Irish Traveller Movement Law Centre
	Providing a basic understanding of the organizational structure and function of the nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)	Interviews
		Program website
		Program educational and other materials
		Fieldnotes
		Selected transcription
		Photos
			Thematic coding
			Memoing
			Analysis of field/observation notes
			Informal content analysis (documents)

What do the selected participants see as the broader issues in the Irish Traveller rights movement? a) How are the selected NGOs working to address those issues?	Eliciting an *emic* perspective for thorough understanding of the political and social context of the Travellers in Ireland through both the lens of Travellers and NGO personnel	Interviews Selected transcription Program website Fieldnotes Observations Policy documents NGO Events and activities	Thematic coding Memoing Analysis of field/observation notes Informal content analysis (documents)

Theoretical Framework
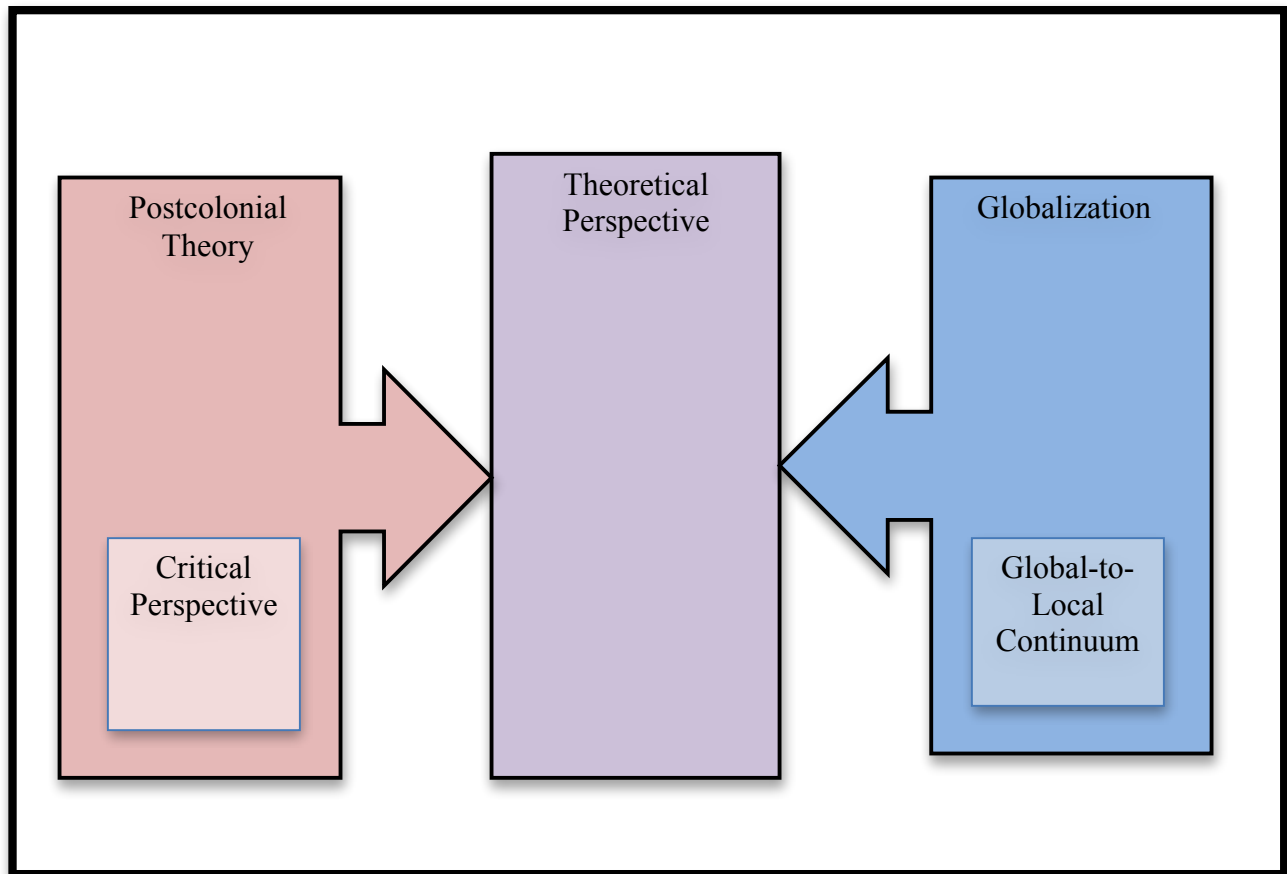
Key Informant Protocol

Interview Protocol 1
[To be used with key informant, prior to conducting participant interviews]

Introduction

        Hello, my name is Kelly McFaden and I am working on my dissertation in Social Foundations of Education at the University of Georgia, a case study examining Traveller life as a marginalized ethnic group in Ireland today. I am meeting with you today to ask you some questions about Irish Travellers and the Pavee Point Travellers Centre. Your participation in this interview is voluntary and I would like to remind you that you may stop the interview at any time for any reason, or may refuse to answer any individual questions. Please feel free to interrupt me if you have any questions or concerns, or need me to clarify anything that I ask. With your permission, I will be taking some notes during our conversation but any personal information will be kept confidential and a number/letter code will be assigned.

Participant Information
- Code:
- Gender:
- Category (circle all that apply): T, NT, PP/S, F/PP/S, PP/V, SR
- If employee, job capacity at Pavee Point:
- Number of years involved with Pavee Point:
- Currently involved (circle): yes/no

Questions
1. Can you describe for me the history of Pavee Point? When it was started, why, etc.?
2. What were some of the original goals of Pavee Point?
3. What were some of the original programs that were established?
4. Have your goals and programs evolved over time?
5. What are the current goals of Pavee Point?
6. What programs are you currently running?
7. What, if any, programs do you think are needed but not being offered?
8. What types of events, if any, does Pavee Point organize?
9. How many people are served? From where? What types of people (M/F, Children, Families, Specific need groups)?
10. How do you solicit input from the Traveller community?
11. What do you see as the most important needs of the Travellers?
12. Do you consider there to be an Irish Traveller Rights Movement?
13. What do you see as the future for Traveller rights in Ireland? Challenges?
14. What do you see as the main challenges that Pavee Point faces? Will face?
15. What current government policies are affecting the Traveller community in Ireland?

Follow-up
- [Ask any additional questions that have arisen out of informant responses]
- Do you have any additional information that you would like to share with me at this time?

Participant Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol 2

[To be used with all interview participants]

Introduction
Hello, my name is Kelly McFaden and I am working on my dissertation in Social Foundations of Education at the University of Georgia, a case study examining Traveller life as a marginalized ethnic group in Ireland today. I am meeting with you today to ask you some questions about Irish Travellers and the Pavee Point Travellers Centre. Your participation in this interview is voluntary and I would like to remind you that you may stop the interview at any time for any reason, or may refuse to answer any individual questions. Please feel free to interrupt me if you have any questions or concerns, or need me to clarify anything that I ask. With your permission, I will be taking some notes during our conversation but any personal information will be kept confidential and a number/letter code will be assigned.
(Question codes: **PP/S** – Pavee Point Staff, **F/PP/S** – Former PP/S, **PP/V** – PP Volunteer, **PP/SR** – PP Service Recipients)

Participant Information
- Code:
- Gender:
- Category (circle all that apply): T, NT, PP/S, F/PP/S, PP/V, PP/SR
- If employee, job capacity at Pavee Point:
- Number of years involved with Pavee Point:
- Currently involved (circle): yes/no

Irish Travellers
1. Can you describe what it means to be an Irish Traveller, from your perspective? (All)
2. What do you see as the most important issues for Travellers in Ireland today? (If necessary, will prompt the participant with words such as health, education, ethnicity, accommodation, etc.) (All)
3. Do you consider there to be an Irish Traveller Rights Movement? (All)
4. Do you think that there has been any change in relations between the Traveller and settled communities in recent years? If so, why? (All)
5. What do you see as the most central issues in Traveller rights currently? Why? Is anything being done to address these issues, that you are aware of? (All)

Background Information
1. What is your role at Pavee Point? (PP/S, F/PP/S, PP/V)
2. What are the goals and mission of Pavee Point, as you see them? (PP/S, F/PP/S, PP/V)
3. What are some of the events and activities that you participate in at Pavee Point? (All)

Pavee Point
1. What programs are you aware of at Pavee Point? Can you describe them? (If necessary, prompt the participant with program names) (PP/SR)
2. Are there any programs that you wish were offered but are currently not? (PP/SR)
3. To the extent of your knowledge, how does Pavee Point decide what programs to offer? (PP/SR)

Follow-up
- [Ask any additional questions that have arisen out of informant responses]
- Do you have any additional information that you would like to share with me at this time?

APPENDIX E

Observation Protocol

Background
1. What is the title of the event?
2. What is the stated purpose of the event?
3. When is it taking place? Where?
4. How was information about the event disseminated?

Setting
1. Where is the event being conducted?
2. Is it inviting?
3. How can the site be accessed?
4. How is the site organized?
5. Are there materials available? (pamphlets, etc.)
6. Describe the details and sketch the setting:

Visitors
1. How many people are involved in the activity or program?
2. How many NGO staff/volunteers are present?
3. How many non-NGO staff/volunteers are present?
4. Are there children?
5. What does the age distribution look like?
6. How are people organized? If not, why not?

Interactions
1. How is the NGO staff interacting with event attendees?
2. What kinds of discussions are going on?
3. Are people asking questions?
   a. How often?
   b. What questions?
   c. To staff or other attendees?

Responses and Attitudes
1. Do people appear to be having a good time?
2. Do attendees seem engaged? Bored? Uninterested?
3. Do attendees seem eager to leave?
4. If there are materials available, do people seem interested in them?
5. Do staff members seem to be engaged?
6. How to staff members appear at the beginning of the event? At the end?

Additional Information
1. Be sure to note descriptive information, direct quotations, my feelings and reactions, initial insights, methodological notes, etc.

Documents Collected during Data Collection

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3	Clondalkin Travellers Development Group. (2012). *LGBT Traveller health research: Eastern region Traveller health network.* Clondalkin: C.T.D.G.
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6	Tallaght Traveller Community Development Project. (n.d.). *Contraception Options* [Pamphlet]. Dublin: T.T.C.D.P.
7	Clondalkin Travellers Development Group. (n.d.). *Primary healthcare for Travellers project: Violence against women* [Pamphlet]. Clondalkin: C.T.D.G.
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9	Clondalkin Travellers Development Group. (n.d.). *Learn about depression: Help yourself or a friend* [Pamphlet]. Clondalkin: C.T.D.G.
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20	Power, M. & Greene, L. (2012, February). *Voice of the Traveller: Issue 83.*
21	Pavee Point Travellers' Centre & Irish Human Rights Commission. (2008). *Travellers cultural rights: The right to respect for Traveller culture and way of*

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22	Pavee Point Travellers' Centre & Health Services Executive. (n.d.). *Directory of services for Travellers in the Finglas and Blanchardstown area* [Booklet]. Dublin: Pavee Point.
23	Cork Traveller Visibility Group. (n.d.). *Traveller culture awareness training: Traveller led professional training service* [Pamphlet]. Cork: C.T.V.G.
24	Pavee Point Travellers' Centre. (n.d.). *Traveller specific drugs initiative: Information leaflet* [Pamphlet]. Dublin: Pavee Point.
25	Blanchardstown Traveller Development Group. (n.d.). *Travellers drug awareness* [Pamphlet]. Dublin: B.T.D.G.
26	National Safety Council. (n.d.). *Fire safety for Travellers* [Pamphlet]. Dublin: N.S.C.
27	Money Advice and Budgeting Service. (n.d.). *Who or What is MABS?* [Pamphlet]. Dublin: MABS.
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38	Pavee Point Travellers' Center. (n.d.). *Providing effective health services to Travellers: A guide* [Pamphlet]. Dublin: Pavee Point.
39	*The Irish Times*. (2012, June 18).
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APPENDIX G

Sample Thematic Memo

Theme: Discrimination

Examples:
Travellers have historically not had much respect for artificial political boundaries, which can create trouble then moving between ROI and NI and needing to access services (Int 2, 4 June)

Habitual residency condition means that some Traveller who cross into NI, if they stay gone for two long, will no longer be considered habitual residents of ROI, thus they will be ineligible for necessary social services (such as healthcare and social welfare payments) (int 4, 6 June) (doc 37, p.8) (doc 17, p. 12)

Participant reports a lack of genuine interest from the settled community about improving the condition of the Travellers (Int 2, 4 June)

Sense of benign paternalism – "we know what's good for you" attitude (Int 2, 4 June)

High-level Officials Groups supposed to advise the government on Travellers issues but there are no Travellers on the committee (Int 2, 4 June) National Traveller Monitoring and Advising Committee is the high-level group with no Traveller members (Int 3, 6 June)

Sense of victim blaming because "it's their fault for living that [nomadic] lifestyle" (Int 2, 4 June)

In the 1980s: Travellers seen as "failed settled people" "dropouts" "misfits" (Int 1, 4 June)

Conscious of Travellers portrayed in the media as "failed settled people" "parasitic" "dropouts" and "intellectually inferior" (int 6, 8 June)

Biggest PP program need is mediation, both between Travellers and the settled community and between Travellers themselves - they used to have a program (started in 1999) but it was cut due to lack of funding (Int 1, 1 June)

Biggest need is for a mediation program (was groundbreaking when it was first introduced) between Travellers/Travellers, Travellers/Garda, and Travellers/Local Authorities (Int 3, 6 June)

Biggest need is mediation to handle feuds between Traveller families – would have said education but they have that program now (int 7, 11 June)

Mediation is the biggest need, losing that program was a "big loss" because the "progress that we have made is great but we need more funding" (int 10, 15 June)

Discussion of the word "knacker" – settled person tried to convince him that it wasn't actually about Travellers, that they were using it as a non-specific pejorative but it's still offensive and damaging and how can it not be? – equated to using the word "gay" in American culture (int 11, 15 June)

Blaming the community for the actions of individuals (int 11, 15 June)

Homogeneity of the other – people see you as "not unique" because you're a Traveller (which is a primarily negative designation) but sometimes you're seen as unique, as in the exception to the norm of the stereotype (int 11, 15 June)

 Idea that you should be allowed to make mistakes without it having to reflect negatively on your entire culture group – errors are magnified because you are a Travellers – his whole life is politicized because he is a Traveler and would sometime just like "a day off" (int 11, 15 June)

When he was new to Dublin, he was in a store when the shopkeeper told him to "mind his bag" because there was a knacker in the store and "they do that" (steal) and that she "looked shifty" – "shifty" = Traveller = criminal (int 11, 15 June)

Being a Traveller = having a social disability (int 11, 15 June)

Heavy discrimination in Ireland, most discriminated against group, analogous to situation for African American pre-Civil Rights Movement (PC, 18 June) Most discriminated against group (int 12, 19 June)

Anti-nomadic sentiment (int 12, 19June)

"Nomadism entails a way of looking at the world, a different way of perceiving things, a different attitude to accommodation, to work and to life in general" (doc 2, p. 7)

"Traveller women are one of the most marginalised groups in Irish society" (doc 33, para 1)

Travellers often labeled as "work shy" but discrimination is the biggest barrier to employment (doc 31) 2006, only 14% of Travellers over 15 were considered "at work" (doc 37, p. 4)

"26 % of those who had reported discrimination in the previous two years said that it had a serious or very serious effect on their life" (doc 17, pg. 13)

"Lack of education and employment are symptoms of marginalization and discrimination" (doc 17, p. 16)

Anti-nomadism bias: difficulty opening accounts at banks or credit unions because of a lack of a long-term address or utility bills (doc 17, p. 21-24)

Responses of victims to racism:
- internalizing the values of the dominant system
- isolating themselves within their own enclaves
- retreating into internal authoritarianism
- self-limitation
- adopting stereotypical behavior expected by the prejudices majority
- 'escaping' to pursue individual acceptance and success (doc 18, p. 59)

"Our experience of low social status and exclusion which prevents us from participating as equals in society – is mostly due to the widespread hostility of settled people toward us. This hostility is based on prejudice which in turn gives rise to discrimination and affects Travellers in all aspects of their lives" (doc 16, p. 7)

Non-Examples:
Younger participant who sees a reduction in discrimination, says it's "not too bad" at his age, plays football with settled lads, have a chat and hang out with them – sees some Travellers and settled people getting married, which was unusual – sport seems to be a facilitator because you're part of the team and they don't pay attention to your differences (int 7, 11 June)

Old generation might way that it was better in the old days (int 6, 8 June, int 7, 11 June)

Discrimination differs based on age (int 7, 11 June)

Despite the fact that one participants said that young Travellers are more integrated with the settled community (int 1, 1 June), the youth groups that they run is a Traveller only group because the lads said that they would be more comfortable with it that way (int 10, 15 June)

One participant reported that NGO youth programs are very insular and that labels within the group are very intense allowing for little freedom of personal identity (jnt 11, 15 June)

Disagreement about whether or not there has been any change in relations between the Traveller and settled communities ("still no changes" "good bit of change" (ob 3, 11 June)

See less discrimination in sports-areas (int 8, 12 June)