CHAPTER TEN

Doing Gender History Visually

ÚNA NÍ BHROIMÉIL AND
DÓNAL O DONOGHUE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter critically engages with ways in which visual methodologies can be used in gender history research. We propose a radical reconceptualization of the place and purpose of the visual in this field. As Fintan Cullen observes, historians do not tend to analyze the visual in terms of its own discipline but rather misuse it as 'a silent resource … the uncommented use of art as illustration'.[1] Taking up Cullen's call to historians to 'confront the visual in a more considerate fashion and accept that it is as much part of the cultural mix of a period as contemporary diaries and other text-based sources',[2] we propose and model ways of engaging the visual in gender history research. Our aim here is to map out and articulate methodological approaches located in contemporary art practice and visual narrative that, we believe, provide powerful ways of making visible gender constructs in historical moments. We do this from two very different disciplinary and methodological backgrounds, with different understandings of the role, and indeed potential, of the visual in gender history. Following Ball, collectively we show how engaging in, with and through the visual requires a shift in emphasis, a new way of doing and engaging with scholarship, and how it extends the sites of dissemination already available for work undertaken in this field. As Ball claims, 'To be committed to the development of different ways of knowing through the development of different methodologies, and alternative writing strategies, necessitates the development of different research/scholarly practices.'[3]

In conceptualizing how we might engage the visual in gender history research we draw on our respective studies of the masculinizing practices and feminizing practices of two single-sex primary teacher training colleges in Ireland in the early twentieth century. For both our respective inquiries we sourced visual and textual data, individual, group and college photographs, college prospectuses, a college rule book and teaching practice reports. We sourced data that extended over a period between 1900 and 1938. For the purposes of clarity, we deal with each study on its own. This allows us to articulate and make visible the types of data and methods of analysis and representation that we undertook in our respective research studies.

UNCOVERING MASCULINIZING PRACTICES AND THE SOCIAL
CONSTRUCTION AND REGULATION OF MASCULINITIES IN A SINGLE-SEX
MALE TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE

This inquiry focused on the masculinizing practices in a male single-sex residential teacher training college in Ireland during the opening decades of the twentieth century. For the purpose of this study, masculinizing practices are conceptualized as all those social, discursive, material and institutional practices and performances that confront, challenge, form, shape and influence male subjectivities and masculine identities. In the study, particular attention was devoted to what happened in Practicing Schools,[4] when student-teachers practised teaching. During this period which occurred for a total of six weeks each year (in two three-week blocks) student-teachers taught large classes of boys in front of their college professors, namely the Professor of Method and his Assistant. Their performances were observed, written about and graded. The written accounts (which speak of how students taught, what they taught, and how in the process they projected, performed and negotiated their identities in this space) appear in handwritten and leather bound report books. When closely read, these reports provide significant insights into how male identities and masculine subjectivities were played out, performed, monitored and surveyed and recorded. As John Beynon claims 'recent critical studies address masculinity directly as a socio-historical cultural concept, [but] older texts deal with it indirectly, even obliquely, and can be profitably reread against the grain'.[5] Similarly, David Morgan discusses what a deconstructive reading of such texts, a reading which involves 'reading between the lines', a searching for themes that are not always clearly stated, a reading of

'absences as well as presences, to decode the text or to discover hidden or suppressed meaning',[6] might offer in coming to understand how identities are constructed, performed, negotiated and played-out. Following Beynon and Morgan, in this study the teaching practice reports were closely read, themes were identified and patterns mapped out which demonstrated the ways in which masculinities were constructed and regulated in, with and through narratives of teaching and teacher practice.

The outcomes of this analysis were first disseminated in academic publications.[7] These publications demonstrate how the management of the body during Teaching Practice was central to the acquisition of status and distinction as a man, and as a male teacher. Certain bodily forms and bodily performances were recognized as possessing value; some were valued more than others, and certain bodily forms and performances carried a greater exchange value when it came to the awarding of grades. Legitimate and deviant ways of managing and experiencing bodies were identified and articulated. They were further categorized as manly or unmanly, and manliness as manifested in bodily form and bodily performance was fundamental to the forms of masculinities promoted within this site. But, as Lawrence-Lightfoot argues 'academic documents – even those that focus on issues of broad public concern – are read by a small audience of people in the same disciplinary field, who often share similar conceptual frameworks and rhetoric'.[8]

How, then, might we construct and communicate histories of men teachers and teaching to a wider and more diverse audience if we believe that the primary purpose of research is to enlarge understanding and advance knowledge? How might we reconfigure the relationship between research texts and their readers/receivers with a view to extending the places and spaces where the outcomes of scholarly inquiries might be disseminated and debated? What practices and processes might we adopt to ensure that research in this field does more than merely inform? What role, if any, can the visual and the practice of art-making play in this process? How might doing and representing research, in, with and through art reconfigure the text we have come to know as the research text? These are some of the questions that I was interested in exploring and addressing when I searched for other ways of making visible that which I came to observe, understand and know from closely reading these teaching practice report books. My questions were grounded in a larger debate about the role and purposes of the arts in research. Within educational research and

indeed within the academy there is a growing awareness and recognition of how and what research practices based in the arts can disclose about educational settings and situations. For example, as early as 1993 Elliot Eisner, in his Presidential Address at the American Educational Research Association's annual conference, put forth a call for research that was evocative, and that examined the qualities of education rather than reported on testable facts or results. In a subsequent article he asked what could alternate forms of data representation offer for expanding knowledge and deepening understanding about the worlds that we wish to better comprehend. He answered his question claiming that 'alternate forms of data representation promise to increase the variety of questions that we can ask about the educational situations we study … we can expect new ways of seeing things, new settings for their display, and new problems to tackle … put another way, our capacity to wonder is stimulated by the possibilities the new forms of representation suggest'.[9]

However, as I have argued elsewhere, in the process of conceptualizing or doing research, researchers rarely look towards, or at the work of artists, their practices and processes of art-making and their methods of representing and giving visual form to concepts and ideas.[10] Rather, researchers look towards the practices, processes and understandings generated by other researchers, scholars and theoreticians in their field. I have argued that while art can be viewed as a product, it is also a process, a set of ideas, a way of knowing, an encounter with others, and therefore has the potential to inform and guide the design and dissemination of research.[11] Socially and politically engaged artists have always been concerned with drawing attention to social, cultural and political agendas and issues. The work and work practices of such artists attend to making the familiar strange and the strange familiar, as well as making visible that which is hidden but present.

In order to illustrate my point, I could draw on the work and work practices of many contemporary artists, but one artist whose work is particularly useful in this regard is Paul Seawright. Much of Seawright's work engages with the Troubles in Northern Ireland. In a series in which he photographed the unsentimental interiors of police stations and security installations there is an effort to draw attention to and make visible one of the many by-products of the Troubles, by-products that we do not tend to think about, because they are not visible. These are by-products that we do not always recognize because we do not see them; by-products that we do not acknowledge, because

we do not know about them. In this work he documents and draws attention to these exaggerated environments which were common-place throughout Northern Ireland during the Troubles. These were the spaces where policemen and soldiers spent their working lives. In recording these environments Seawright shows that they were brutal and brutalizing spaces that were never seen by many civilians. This work deals with issues and themes of exclusion, imprisonment and surveillance. His work functions as metaphors for deep-seated philosophical polarization in Irish political culture during this time, as does the work of Tracey Moffat which engages with issues of race, sexuality, identity and family. In a recent show in the Guggenheim New York, called *Family Pictures*, Moffat presented a series of work titled *Scarred for Life,* showing children or adolescents, both aboriginal and white, in suburban settings. Each piece records and speaks to a different trauma inflicted by parents or older siblings. Printed as photo-lithographs in muted colours on cream paper and accompanied by short neutral but descriptive captions, Moffat uses actors to stage these documentary photographs. Jennifer Blessing argues that this "series of deliberately ambiguous and open ended mini-narratives ... evokes the fragmented nature of memory and, as implied in the title, the way which injuries from our childhood years remain with us throughout our adult lives'.[12]

It is true to say that artists have always been in pursuit of giving visual forms to ideas. As noted above, their work is both product and process and has the potential to offer new and different ways of thinking about how we inquire, conduct and represent research finding and build understanding and meaning making. In this present inquiry on masculinizing practices in teacher training, practices and processes of contemporary art offered ways to represent that which I witnessed over and over again in these teaching practice texts – the presentation of particular models of masculinity, the legitimating of certain ways of being and acting like a man, as well as the instability of the masculinities that were constructed, classified, resisted, naturalized and embodied through repeated and stylized acts of performance, pre/formances and post/formances. It provided a way of presenting the many narratives that were happening simultaneously, and to represent the tensions and contradictions in and across these narratives of being and acting in 'manly' ways.

Drawing on the data and textual findings, and cognizant of the potential contribution for understanding that art-making and art products offer, I created an installation comprising four projection

screens one positioned on each of the four walls in a blacked out gallery space, and opposite one another and surrounding the viewer (see Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4). Projected onto these four 6ft by 8ft screens are images of college and school interiors, photographs taken from the archive and altered in small ways in order to direct attention to certain parts of the image and direct attention away from other parts. These images come and go. They alternate and change so that at any one time the viewer may be surrounded by the same image, projected on all four screens. Equally, at any given time the viewer may be confronted with four different images. Using slide projectors, I project onto these images extracts taken from the Teaching Practice Reports or the College Rule book; extracts that construct story, and go in some way to shape these men; words, descriptors, phrases that articulate, legitimate or make deviant particular ways of managing and experiencing one's teacher body. The extracts come and go, always being replaced by another. Words, descriptors, phrases such as 'a nervous and fidgety individual, very earnest but a trifle peculiar, strikes one as being old womanish. Suffers from scruples in relation to points of little importance.' While the installation addresses and extends findings, themes and patterns that emerged in the textual analysis, it offers an additional set of reading and interpretative possibilities. It provides for a range of narratives to be presented simultaneously and contiguously: narratives that speak of the concerted effort of college authorities to construct teaching bodies, form particular types of men, impart Catholic teaching (especially with regard to the body), and disavow homosexual practice among other things. It allows for narratives that describe how the college engaged in a body-building project while men practised teaching. Narratives that encouraged and direct men to act and speak in particular ways: 'Took some time to get this young man to speak and act in a manly fashion'.

Drawing on the close and critical reading of these report books and college photographs which incorporated aspects and techniques of image-based analysis,[13] video ethnography,[14] and photo-elicitation,[15] the installation presents a different narrative structure from that which we are very familiar with in research insofar as it breaks the pattern of a linear narrative, and formulates discontinuous, partial stories. It offers a way to rethink research texts and the relationship between them and their readers. Installed in a gallery, it also speaks to a different audience in a place vastly different from scholarly conferences or publications. It offers opportunities for making visible in visual and three-dimensional form tensions in representation and construction.

It brings together images and text in an effort to offer space for interpretation and meaning-making. However, the installation does not simply present images and text, separately, simultaneously and contiguously. Rather the installation is about relationships and conversations between these two active meaning-makers: image and text; the subject and the object; the viewer and the viewed; the student teacher and the professor of method. This installation speaks *of* and *to* ways of seeing. It is about acts of perception, objectification, subjectivity, signification, construction, and meaning-making through looking. While the viewer is being presented with ways in which others saw, pictured and constructed these men teachers and their environs, the installation too requires the viewer (the participant) to engage in processes of identification, objectification and signification, remembering through looking while simultaneously being distanced by the ethnographic aspect of these images and projections.

Similar to the published paper, the installation (*Safe Distance*) is a record of recursive, reflexive and reflective analyses and reanalyses. Images have been selected and choices made. These photographs are in themselves a product of selection. These are selected sights, selected places from an infinite number of other sights of other spaces. Images


BOOKS NOT CONNECTED WITH CLASS BUSINESS ARE
NOT TO BE READ IN THE STUDY HALL
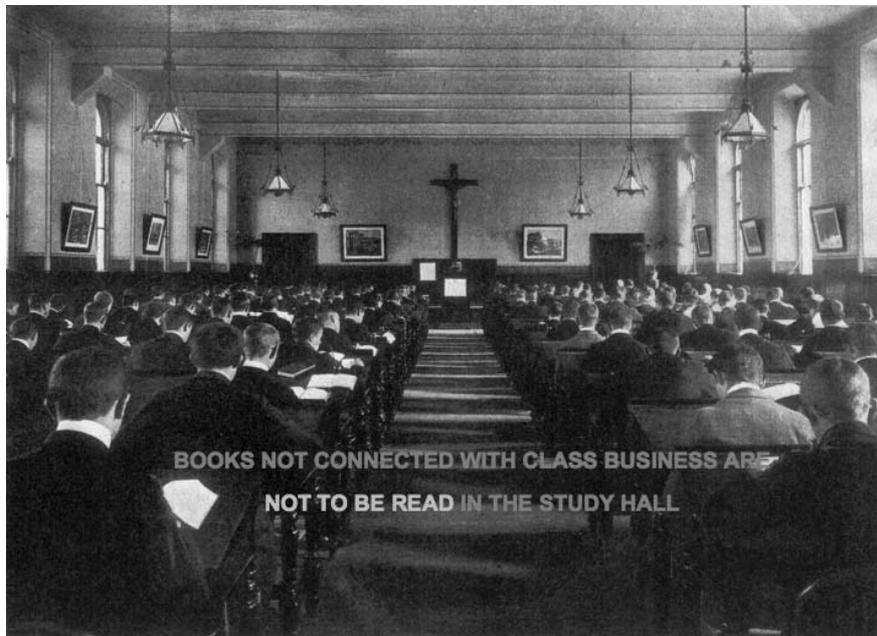
Figure 1. *Safe Distance,* 2006, Dónal O Donoghue. Installation with text.

Figure 2. *Safe Distance,* 2006, Dónal O Donoghue. Installation with text.
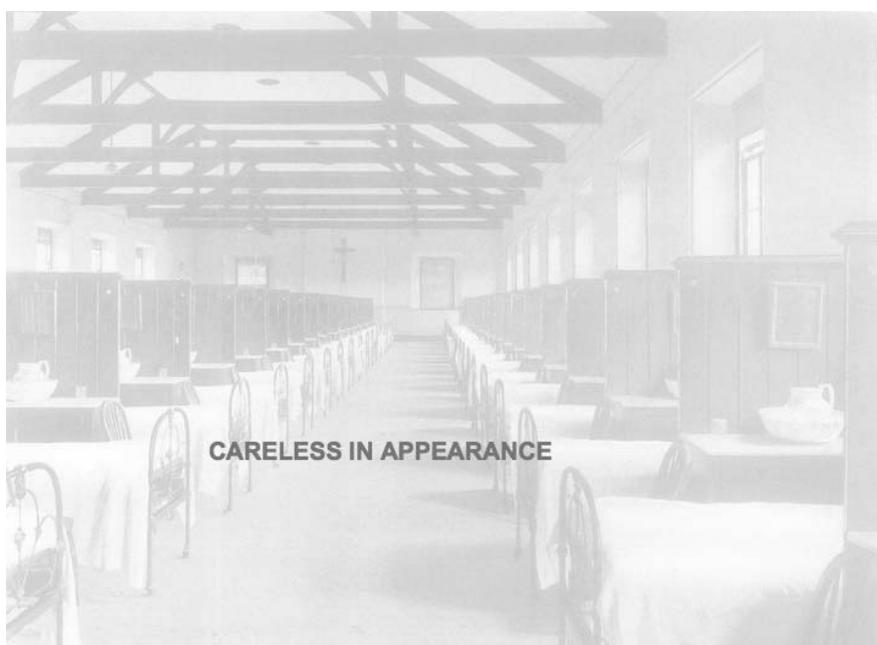
Figure 3. *Safe Distance,* 2006, Dónal O Donoghue. Installation with text.

of men standing, looking, walking, thinking, feeling, acting, wondering, performing. Images of the spaces and places where these men were formed and form; places and spaces that constitute masculinities and are constituted by particular understandings of masculinities. I focus on positions and positioning, points of connection and points of departure, lines that demarcate and lines that reunite, shapes that lead and mislead, points of entry and exit, boundaries. I attend to surfaces, textures, forms, light, shadows, presences and absences, colours, details. I include some and discard others; I crop; I trim; I position; I join; I create; I make patterns (visual and textual); I add text; I take text away; I position text in images, sometimes beside an image, other times under, over, above or below an image. And I do this to make visible the masculinization practices and processes in practice classrooms.

This installation provides a place and a means for 'learning to perceive differently': I view this work as text, as a tangle of texts, as a text that is being written, rewritten, read and reread, a text that integrates knowing, doing and making. It attends to absences, to the things that are not said, and it makes visible the many things that are said but in ways that are revealing. It, too, is a text to be interrogated. This installation tells the story of projection and construction. The very act of projection (using a slide projector, I project these words, descriptors and phrases, images in their own right, onto images) speaks of an identity that is constructed out of, and through projection. This is not an embodied identity. It is one generated from projections – carefully selected and collated projections. Are these projected identities, projected constructions, projected imaginings and classifications? Does this work speak of disembodied identities, identities that are constructed outside and beyond the person or identities that others construct? Is this work about the possibilities of living different identities or of living a particular identity that generates another? Is the viewer drawn into this piece of work and becomes part of the work? Is s/he positioned in the work, not outside, or looking in from the outside, but right in the middle of the work? Does s/he move from viewer to participant? *Safe Distance* requires the viewer to be a participant, to view and make connections, to place himself/herself in the work, in the centre, physically emplaced and indeed embodied. It is by looking and seeing that the viewer's relation to the piece is established. The piece is about opening spaces for understanding, for questing and questioning, looking and re-looking. The kind of reading and understanding that might be secured from this art work is influenced in great part by

Figure 4. *Safe Distance,* 2006, Dónal O Donoghue. Installation with text.

the means through which I have selected to make and present *Safe Distance*. The meaning of the work is thus constituted by and in the form, medium and mode of representation.

The installation offers opportunities for telling and retelling. It speaks simultaneously to acts of construction, reconstruction and co-construction. It is participative and requires participation. It requires the engaged participation of the viewer to search for a story, to seek it out, and co-create it from the images and text projections. The work is never complete in itself. Rather it offers spaces for response, for the construction of meaning and understanding, for connection, disconnection and reconnection.

The changing images, the changing text, the unpredictability of what will happen next, what the juxtapositions will be and how text and image will appear, connect, disconnect, speak to, and of the instability of identity. It too makes visible how identities are constructed, classified, resisted, naturalized and embodied through repeated and stylized acts of performance, pre/formances and post/formances. The Professor of Method's comments are inscribed in the bodies and performance of these men. In the installation they become part of the images, sometimes appearing right across and in front of the image

(on the skin of the image), and other times they are written in the image (in the body of the image). The only constant is that they are constantly shifting and changing and unsettling our perceptions, our knowing.

The representation of the data in this manner requires active engagement, continuous movement in and through the artwork both conceptually and physically. As James Olthuis observes, being in the presence of creative works necessitates that all participants (the producers, receivers, meaning-makers) are always in the process of 'becoming'.[16] In creating and showing this installation there was a desire to create spaces to linger in, liminal spaces, spaces to encounter.

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Historians, as Sean Farrell Moran observes, find nontextual evidence 'uncertain' as they are 'committed to the study of written documentary evidence from which they construct narratives'.[17] Photographs nonetheless are of particular interest to the historian. They are evidence of actuality; that, as Barthes suggests, '*the thing has been there*'.[18] They offer up visual connections with the past and bring an absence into the present. They produce, as Rousmaniere, Lawn and Grosvenor have stated, a '"trace" of human activity which can be deciphered'.[19] As signifiers of hard truth, however, they are unreliable. They can perpetuate stereotypes. They can sentimentalize and romanticize. They can reinforce mythologies that define and compartmentalize people. They can present 'a type, a popular perception … locked in time'.[20] But using photographs as a primary source allows for what Kracaeur calls the redemption of physical reality.[21] The images provide petrified, concrete collections for the historian to order and to clarify possible patterns of intelligibility. Wigoder compares the archive of photographs to an orphanage 'lying in hundreds of boxes and waiting to be sorted. In this jumble of homeless images, one can suddenly find a new order that enables reality to be examined critically'.[22] It is in the finding of this new order that the historian can make sense of the archive.

While the photographic image, Szarkowski suggests, survives the subject and becomes the remembered reality,[23] the images themselves are but fragments of the past. Severed from the broader context of the era the images are merely snapshots of a particular space in time

devoid of memories or of knowledge and representing only the appearance of the subject. The historian can, however, use the photographic archive to unlock memories and illuminate particular eras. Evoking Proust's 'memoire involontaire'[24] and Kracaeur's historical subjectivity, the historian can construct the broader context of the past to suggest memories and stories by piecing together the images with other fragments of the past.[25] In this way despite the materiality of images as objects of history, these two-dimensional, cultural artefacts 'at' which we look, it is possible to regard the photographs as a portal through which we can enter and look 'around' – 'to step inside the image… [to] disrupt a traditional narrative of history' and to create, as Rousmaniere states, a 'disjuncture' and one which 'allows [for] the creation of new meaning'.[26]

The interrogation of the photographic archive is therefore not just about seeing the past but about constructing a complex and multi-layered narrative. It requires an engagement with Benjamin's notion of photography's 'optical unconscious' in order to release meanings that were not always apparent at the moment of capture or encapsulation.[27] These meanings and perceptions can be attended to and emphasized by the manner of their representation – through montage and what Rousmaniere calls the 'jumbling together [of] images from different sites and histories'; through the juxtaposition of text with image as in Carrie May Weems' Hampton Project; or in the juxtaposition of past with present such as Victor Burgin's Minnesota Abstract 1989.[28]

In this work I utilize techniques of montage, overlayering and juxtaposition. I scrutinize and deconstruct a series of photographs of women who were training to be primary school teachers in a Catholic single-sex training college in Ireland between the years 1902–30. Created as semi-public documents, these images stand as a record of the presence of these women and of their environment and emplacement. I have overlaid the college photographs with text from the teaching practice reports and with comments made by supervisors who observed the students' practice of teaching in the practicing schools. Excerpts from articles on The Lady Teacher's Own page in the *Irish School Weekly* which was published by the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO), as well as excepts from the Mary Immaculate College annuals written by the students themselves, are juxtaposed with the images. These methods allow for the creation of new and composite images which highlight and amplify the cultural context and milieu in which these women were socialized and

Figure 5. *Class*. Image with text.

through which they operated. By juxtaposing the text with the image I hope to restore an individuality and vitality to the frozen images of groups of women teachers and to elude the objectification of the camera.[29] By creating a series of multilayered, composite images I create a kind of visual palimpsest – where images and text are superimposed onto each other, presenting interwoven historical narratives. This palimpsest belies the notion of the one coherent narrative and suggests that there is not one narrative but many. This in turn leads away from the notion of these women teachers as stereotypes locked into a static and unchanging version of the past.

The central image and representation of women in these images is primarily one of refinement. It requires, as Penny Tinkler has pointed out in her study of the representation of women smokers, attention to the finer details of appearance and is a key signifier of feminine respectability.[30] This is particularly evident in the clothing of the body which is in itself an identifier of social class. Clothing is also, as Burman and Turbin have pointed out, 'one of the most consistently gendered aspects of material and visual culture'.[31] The clothed and fashioned body is at once a marker of taste and class and a signifier of personal identity, although clothing can be used to regulate and discipline bodies and act as a

Figure 6. *Calling 1*. Photo section.

Figure 7. *Calling 2*. Photo section.

marker of social inclusion and exclusion.[32] A 'tone' pervades these image and text pieces and an ambience of quality is created. We are aware of flowers and of lace in these photographs, of the importance of the presentation of the body to convey status and respectability. This sense of status is evident also in the prominent display of books as symbols of these women's occupation. The use of an occupational tool is a common element in early photographic portraits, according to Marsha Peters, and signifies a 'consciousness, pride and occupational identification'.[33] Interestingly, they are only used in the early photographs when the teaching profession was in transition from being a predominantly male profession to becoming a predominantly female profession between 1900 and 1910.

Whether the women themselves chose to portray themselves as teaching professionals or whether it was a photographic norm is unclear. John Berger claims that the normalizing gaze is male: '*men act and women appear.* Men look at women and women watch themselves being looked at … and the surveyor of woman in herself is male'.[34] This could be taken to mean that these women were fashioned and shaped but were passive in this formation and would appear to lend credence to the concept of women as receivers of the dominant social and cultural setting and location. Women were placed in their sphere. And yet photography allows for and facilitates a construction or a performance by these women. Barthes remarks on the ability of the referent in the photograph to construct and to fashion the product: 'in front of the lens I am at the same time: the one I think I am, the one I want others to think I am, the one the photographer thinks I am'.[35] Because the photograph can be seen not only by others but also by oneself it suggests as Laikwan Pang claims 'a will to power in terms of presenting one's body and identity according to one's wishes'.[36] What the women themselves chose to wear indicates their own sense of position in society: recognition in themselves of their sense of status and standing both to themselves and to the wider community. What is certain is that they were conscious of their appearance in these photographs. In the College Annuals the taking of the photographs is listed prominently in the college diaries and remarked upon by the students:

> October 5th – we assume an optimistic expression of countenance – to have our photographs taken!
> October 27th – Mirrors practically inaccessible. Reason – Photographs after dinner.[37]

Figure 8. *Veneer 1*. Image with text.

Figure 9. *Veneer 2*. Image with text.

While the teaching practice reports rarely comment on the women's clothing and appearance (other than to occasionally state that the student was 'presentable') focusing instead on the women's manner, voice or stance, the images suggest a conscious deliberation and calculation on the part of the women themselves to appear in certain ways consistent with a bourgeois identity.

And yet this image overlaid with text (Figure 9) is suggestive of veneer, of a finish which marks and stamps and reinforces the identity of the group and makes of them a cohesive and interrelated body of women. Middle-class women did not necessarily form the body of entrants into the college. While the social backgrounds of the women in these reports are unclear, the majority in the period studied were aged 20 and had some experience either as pupil-teachers or as monitresses in the schools. There were some older women aged 25 and 29 who had been Junior Assistant Mistresses before commencing their course of training. The fact that they were mature females with experience suggests that these women belonged, for the most part, to the lower middle class, which was expanding in turn of the century Ireland, and also that they were the daughters of small and middling farmers in rural areas. The college was therefore cultivating an air of gentility about these students that would be commensurate with their status as trained lady teachers when they re-entered the world of work. The photographic process and resulting images echo this 'becoming' as Benjamin asserts: 'The procedure itself caused the models to live, not out of the instant, but *into* it; during the long exposure they grew as it were into the image.'[38]

While the production of a feminine appearance was a testament to social standing and taste, the female teacher always had to remember her place and to be wary of immodesty in appearance. In the following image there appears to be a creeping rigidity of manner, of dress, a hardening of attitudes and an insularity which borders on intolerance in the images which reflect the era of the Modest Dress and Deportment Crusade.[39] The cheerful faces belie the unyielding atmosphere of this era as the students sought not only to behave as role models for the children in their charge and to induct them into the ways of the Crusade, but to actively disapprove of all manner of 'modern' dress fashion or of anything that might reflect poorly on their image as pure, demure, upstanding and feminine. In the first issue of the *Mary Immaculate Training College Annual* in 1927 an article entitled 'Wanted – A New Woman' set out the reasons for and rules of the MDDC. It stated that while a return to 'ridiculous'

The Eadge is in the form of a star, as a reminder of the fact that the profession of a teacher comes next in sacredness to that of Priests and Religious, and implies a special vocation from God.
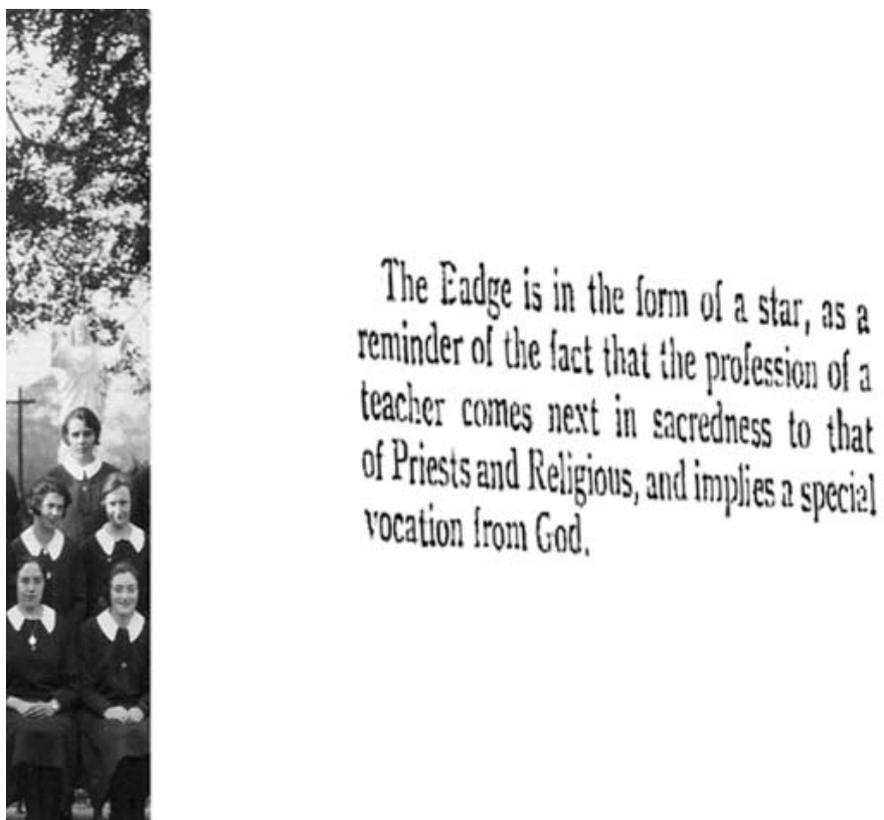
Figure 10. *Chain of Command*. Image with text.

Victorian fashions was out of the question, describing them as inconvenient and unhygienic, 'modern' fashions were 'mannish' and 'indecent'. What was required, according to the students, was a 'Crusade in the interests of womanly modesty' which 'while aiming at stamping out what is mannish and immodest, not only allows but encourages girls to dress tastefully and becomingly and thereby win the admiration and respect of all'.[40] The propriety and seemliness of a woman's behaviour was also evident in her deportment. Cigarette smoking was 'mannish', 'opposed to womanly delicacy' and 'harmful to health' and while it was acknowledged by the Crusaders as a hard habit to break once acquired, no teacher should ever smoke in public.[41] Neither should she adopt immodest poses, talk loudly or laugh boisterously in public, utter coarse or irreverent exclamations, drink alcohol at dances or entertainments, attend improper cinema shows, plays or all

night dances, or partake in immodest or suggestive dances or sea-bathing.[42] Thus the public teacher persona was one of refinement and poise, of composure and self control, a woman whose person and character could not be questioned as it was so clearly and obviously beyond reproach. This was critical in the case of their religious beliefs. Wearing and displaying the symbols of their Catholicism, particularly the Child of Mary medals, the essence of religious fervour is evident in Figure 10. Peters suggests that the very action of taking a portrait legitimized the group's existence and made the occasion of its gathering an official memory.[43] Here, the sense of group cohesiveness is strengthened and fused with religious overtones and meaning. In this image the students position themselves clearly – on the side of light as opposed to darkness, on the side of order as opposed to anarchy, at the feet of God – as women, as women teachers, as Catholic women teachers.

When we look at the photographs of these women we see group after group of well turned out ladies. Our impression of these women is always as an assemblage, as a unit and this can cause us to classify, categorize and bracket them together as a unified and integrated whole. This cohesion and unity of organization is petrified by the camera, fixed as a monument. The safety of group cohesion is punctured by Figures 11 and 12.

These images remind us of Benjamin's 'tiny spark of accident, the here and now' and are as visceral as Barthes' 'punctum' – the small unintended detail that is powerful enough to disrupt from within and that imbues every photograph and every archive with 'suggestive absences and lurking presences'.[44] The bonds of intimacy between women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were always more overt than those between men[45] and it is unclear from either the photographs or from a close reading of the textual documents whether this intimacy involved same-sex relationships such as those outlined by Edwards in the English context or by Blount in the American.[46] There are many references in the Annuals to the notion of the students as a family. In fact, one of the reasons given for the institution of the Annual in the first instance was 'with a view to keeping this big family in touch with one another and with their college'.[47] There is only one reference in the Annuals during this period to the possibility of particular friendships and they were represented as antithetical to the ideal of the family-spirit:

> Arrived in college, my heart rebelled at first against the small
> rules and regulations; but I was not long there before I saw that

Figure 11. *Student body 1*. Photo section.

Figure 12. *Student body 2*. Photo section.

these were all part of the wonderful organisation, and that each, no matter how petty, was necessary for the well-being and happiness of the students as a body, and tended to promote that family spirit amongst them which is so characteristic of the college, where cliques and private parties are looked upon as bad form.[48]

It is the photograph, however, that encapsulates that space between representation and reality and allows the viewer an access to the past by releasing that which might have gone unnoticed. Taken together, the transformed image and text the image so as to open up possibilities of seeing in an altered manner. What can the photograph tell us about these women that would have lain hidden or concealed? Does the text contradict the photograph? What, therefore, is the reality of these women's lives? Far from grouping these women teachers together, the juxtaposition of text and image suggests the possibility of exploding the silences that surround the intimacy of women's lives and control of the body. The women captured in these frozen images are imbued with an individualism which is contrary to the unthinking incorporation of them as an assembly or a crowd. The depiction of a stable body of women is disrupted and we need to look again at what we think we know.

What we see from these composite images then is evidence of the socialization of women into ideas of femininity as defined by values such as refinement, modesty and grace. Viewed in their reciprocity these images and texts indicate a way of being, of a regime for the women who inhabited that space in time and in actuality. We are also made aware of the boundaries of that 'normative regime' the challenging of which does not always manifest itself in resistance but in fact as participatory agency so that conceptions of femininity are continually being reworked in practice.

CONCLUSION

Both of these studies consider the training colleges as key sites of gender regulation and construction. Both present a narrative of how historical subjects functioned within systems of power. But using visual methodologies and art practice has a powerful provocative effect on the data. The essential role of the visual is to create a nexus between the fragmented realities of the past, to re/collect events and objects and to look *into* the world of the past rather than look *at* it. Using the visual as a primary source compels the viewer to participate in this looking and questing, to actively engage with what went before and

to be present in that time. In this way the images we see whether as installation or as photographs are not just historical objects confined to a sepia-coloured past but repositories of memory which can open up new ways of interpreting reality and cause us to re-examine and re-evaluate our conceptions and notions of an era and of the forces and dynamics which were at work therein.

It is not the visual archive itself however that allows this exposure of an era. The manner of presentation or, in this case, *re/*presentation of both visual and textual data obliges us to attend to what we see and think we know and to open up possibilities for contesting and complicating those 'truths'. It enables us, as Jolicoeur suggests, to trouble the archive 'by collecting, disassembling and recollecting, in different ways, what was once immobilized for preservation' and by questioning 'the authorized epistemologies by the act of remembering'.[49] There is a subjectivity in this representation, an ordering which draws attention to key issues and themes of gender construction. This new order allows for the exploration of that which may have gone unnoticed and gives to the viewer an altered perspective. In making visible the multiple experiences of the lives of these men and women we eschew nostalgia and memorialization. Rather we open up a new territory for investigation, to look again at the construction of gender roles and their shifting meanings through time.

NOTES

1. F. Cullen, 'Art History: Using the Visual', in L.M. Geary and Margaret Kelleher (eds), *Nineteenth-Century Ireland – A Guide to Recent Research* (Dublin: University College, Dublin Press, 2005), p.160.
2. Ibid., p.161.
3. M. Ball, *Looking in: The Art of Viewing* (Amsterdam: G + B Arts International imprint, 2001), p.24.
4. Apart from being located on the college campus and providing a space for student teachers to practice teaching, Practicing Schools were similar in most respects to national schools in Ireland at the time.
5. J. Beynon, *Masculinities and Culture* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2002), p.144.
6. D.H.G. Morgan, *Discovering Men* (London: Routledge, 1992), p.50 as cited by Beynon.
7. See D. O Donoghue, '"Speak and act in a manly fashion": The Role of the Body in the Construction of Men and Masculinity in Primary Teacher Education in Ireland', in A. Cleary (ed.), *Masculinities, Irish Journal of Sociology: special issue*, Masculinities, 14, 2 (2005), pp.231–52; and D. O Donoghue, 'Teaching Bodies who Teach: Men's Bodies and the Reconstruction of Male Teacher Identity in Ireland', in S. Springgay and D. Freedman (eds), *Curriculum and the Cultural Body* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), pp.91–113.
8. S. Lawrence-Lightfoot, 'A View of the Whole: Origins and Purposes', in S. Lawrence-Lightfoot and J. Hoffmann Davis, *The Art and Science of Portraiture* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1997), pp.1–16.
9. E.W. Eisner, 'The Promise and Perils of Alternative Forms of Data Representation', *Educational Researcher*, 26, 6 (1997), p.8.
10. D. O Donoghue, '"That stayed with me until I was an adult": Making Visible the

Experiences of Men who Teach', in R.L. Irwin, C. Leggo, K. Grauer, P. Gouzouasis and S. Springgay (eds), *Being with A/r/tography* (Rotterdam: Sense Publishing, 2007), pp.109–24.
11. Ibid.
12. J. Blessing, *Family Pictures* (New York: Guggenheim, 2005), p.100.
13. See C. Burnett, *Jeff Wall* (London: Tate Publishing, 2005); I. Heywood and B. Sandywell, *Interpreting Visual Culture: Explorations in the Hermeneutics of the Visual* (London: Routledge, 1999); L. Sanders-Bustle, *Image, Inquiry, and Transformative Practice: Engaging Learners in Creative and Critical Inquiry through Visual Representation* (New York: Peter Lang, 2003); G. Sullivan, *Art Practice as Research: Inquiry in the Visual Arts* (London: Sage, 2005); J. Wagner, 'Visible Materials, Visualised Theory and Images of Social Research', *Visual Studies*, 21, 1 (2006), pp.55–69.
14. See M. Müller, *The Memo Book: Films, Videos, and Installations by Matthias Müller* (Toronto, Ontario: YYZ Books, 2005); S. Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography: Images, Media and Representation in Research* (London and Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2001).
15. See J. Collier and M. Collier, *Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method* (Revised and expanded edition) (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986); D. Harper, 'On the Authority of the Image: Visual Methods at the Crossroads', in N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (eds), *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994), pp.130–49; Jon Prosser and D. Schwartz, 'Photographs within the Sociological Research Process', in J. Prosser (ed.), *Image Based Research: A Sourcebook for Qualitative Researchers* (London: Falmer, 1998); D. O Donoghue, '"James always hangs out here": Making Space for Place in Studying Masculinities in Schools', *Visual Studies*, 22, 1 Special Issue, *The Visible Curriculum* (2007) , pp.62–73.
16. J.H. Olthuis, 'Otherwise than Violence: Toward a Hermeneutics of Connection', in L. Zuidervaart and H. Luttifkhuizen (eds), *The Arts, Community and Cultural Democracy* (New York: St Martin's Press, 2000), pp.137–64.
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18. R. Barthes, *Camera Lucida – Reflections on Photography* (London: Hill and Wang 1982), p.76.
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20. See B.T. Menlove, 'The Outside Looking in: Photographs of Native Americans', *Points West Online*, Summer 2000, http://www.bbhc.org/pointswestPWArticle.cfm?ArticleID =75,accessed 13/03/06.
21. S. Kracauer, *Theory of Film* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p.300, quoted in D.N. Rodowick, 'The Last Things before the Last: Kracauer and History', *New German Critique*, 41, Special Issue on the Critiques of the Enlightenment (Spring–Summer 1987), pp.109–39.
22. M. Wigoder, 'History begins at Home – Photography and Memory in the Writings of Siefried Kracauer and Roland Barthes', *History and Memory*, 13, 1 (2001), pp.19–59, p.29.
23. Quoted in M. Peters and B. Mergen, 'Doing the Rest: the Uses of Photographs in American Studies', *American Quarterly*, 29, 3 (1977), pp.280–303.
24. A concept explored in Marcel's Proust's novel, *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu* in which memories of the past are evoked unconsciously in the person by sights or smells, for example.
25. See Rodowick, 'The Last Things before the Last', p.123.
26. K. Rousmaniere, 'Questioning the Visual in the History of Education', *History of Education*, 30, 2 (2001), pp.109–16.
27. Ibid. See also W. Benjamin, 'A Short History of Photography', in A. Trachtenberg (ed.), *Classical Essays in Photography* (New Haven, CT: Leetes Island Books, 1980), p.203.
28. Rousmaniere, 'Questioning the Visual in the History of Education', pp.109–16; V. Patterson, *Carrie May Weems, The Hampton Project* (Massachusetts: Aperture in association with Williams College Museum of Art, Williamstown, 2000); L. Taylor (ed.), *Visualizing Theory, Selected Essays from VAR, 1990–1994* (New York and London:

Routledge, 1994), Foreword, p.xviii.

29. See J. Leonard, 'Not Losing her Memory: Stories in Photographs, Words and Collage', *Modern Fiction Studies*, 40, 3 (1994), pp.657–85.
30. P. Tinkler, 'Refinement and Respectable Consumption: the Acceptable Face of Women's Smoking in Britain, 1918–1970', *Gender and History*, 15, 2 (August 2003), pp.342–60.
31. B. Burman and C. Turbin, 'Introduction: Material Strategies Engendered', *Gender and History*, 14, 3 (November 2002), pp.371–81.
32. See I. Dussel, 'When Appearances are not Deceptive: A Comparative History of School Uniforms in Argentina and the United States (19th–20th centuries)', *Paedagogica Historica*, 41, 1–2 (2005), pp.179–95; N. Enstad, 'Fashioning Political Identities: Cultural Studies and the Historical Construction of Political Subjects', *American Quarterly*, 50, 4 (1998), pp.745–82.
33. Peters and Mergen, 'Doing the Rest: the Uses of Photographs in American Studies', p.297.
34. J. Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: Viking Press, 1972), pp.46–7.
35. Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p.13.
36. L. Pang, 'Photography, Performance, and the making of Female Images in Modern China', *Journal of Women's History*, 17, 4 (2005), pp.56–85, p.66.
37. *Mary Immaculate Training College Annual*, Vol.1, 1927, p.43; Vol.3, 1929, p.56.
38. Benjamin, 'A Short History of Photography', p.204.
39. In 1927 the students in Mary Immaculate College Limerick founded the Mary Immaculate College Modest Dress and Deportment Crusade (MDDC) which urged Catholic women, especially teachers and their girl pupils, to eschew 'modern, mannish fashions', to dress tastefully and modestly and to emulate the Virgin Mary.
40. *Mary Immaculate Training College Annual*, Vol.1, 1927, pp.35–6.
41. *Mary Immaculate Training College Annual,* Vol.2, 1928, p.17.
42. *Mary Immaculate Training College Annual,* Vol.2, 1928, pp.17–18.
43. Peters and Mergen, 'Doing the Rest: the Uses of Photographs in American Studies', p.295.
44. Benjamin, 'A Short History of Photography', p.202; Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p.42: 'occasionally a "detail" attracts me. I feel that its mere presence changes my reading, that I am looking at a new photograph, marked in my eyes with a higher value. This "detail" is the punctum'; D. McCance, 'Introduction', *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature*, 37, 4 (2004), pp.v–xii.
45. See C. Smith Rosenberg, 'The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth-Century America', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 1, 1 (1975), pp.1–29; L. Moore, '"Something more tender still than friendship": Romantic Friendship in Early Nineteenth-Century England', *Feminist Studies*, 18, 3 (Autumn 1992), pp.499–520. See also M. McGarry, 'Female Worlds', *Journal of Women's History*, 12, 3 (2000), pp.9–12 for an interesting reference to *marianismo* and female relationships.
46. See E. Edwards, *Women in Teacher Training Colleges, 1900–1960 : A Culture of Femininity* (London: Routledge, 2001); J. Blount, 'From Exemplar to Deviant: Same-Sex Relationships among Women Superintendents, 1909–1976', *Educational Studies* 35, 2 (2004), pp.103–22.
47. *Mary Immaculate Training College Annual*, Foreword, Vol.1, 1927.
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49. J. Perrault and P. Levin, 'The Camera made me do it: Female Identity and Troubling Archives', *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature*, 37, 4 (2004), pp.127-47.