Introduction

In a timely discussion on Ireland and 'theory', the critic Claire Connolly suggested that there 'remains an almost reflex sense that, when “Ireland” is at issue, feminism is a tangential or subsidiary concern'.¹ The relationship between Irish Studies and Women's Studies has been described as tense,² arguably reflecting the fact that Irish Studies is uncomfortable with the idea that the majority of men in Ireland (albeit to varying degrees) enjoy a patriarchal dividend as men, in terms of 'honour, prestige or the right to command', including a 'material dividend'.³ In this perspective gender is seen as related to privilege – with such privilege deriving from male power at a structural level. The sociologist R. W. Connell argues that, although only a minority of men actively subordinate women, the majority are comfortable with such a dividend when it appears to be given to them 'by an external force, by nature or convention, or even by women themselves, rather than by an active social subordination going on here and now'.⁴ The most effective exercise of power of course is in situations where beliefs and practices are such that the exercise of power is seen as 'natural' and 'inevitable'.⁵ It is because men wish to be men, within a society where being a man involves privileging, that patriarchy is perpetuated. Thus, for Connell, male privileging is maintained, not simply by individual or group attempts to intimidate, oppress and exclude, but by women and men’s ‘realistic' expectations. Their acceptance of the status quo effectively perpetuates 'a structure where different groups are rewarded unequally'.⁶

Such patterns are not of course peculiar to Ireland: the United Nations noted that 'no society treats its women as well as its men',⁷ and indeed, Ireland's position in global gender gap indices gives little grounds for
For example, on an economic opportunity index which included type of work, maternity benefits, perceived discrimination and government-provided childcare, Ireland was ranked 51st out of 58 countries, its rank being broadly similar to Bangladesh (53rd) – and substantially lower than France (9th) or Thailand (39th). Thus, despite its rapid economic growth in the 1990s, to a large extent facilitated by a reserve labour force consisting of women, Ireland is still very much a society in transition from its patriarchal roots.

In this article, I look at change in Ireland on two levels: firstly, in terms of general changes in women’s participation in paid employment, and in terms of specific changes in what Savage has called positions of expertise and authority (focusing particularly on the university and the civil service respectively); secondly, I discuss cultural definitions of gender roles and constructions of the self, by drawing on European Values studies, as well as data on young people’s constructions of themselves. The approach adopted can be seen as a response to Finlayson’s exhortation to make use of ‘a kind of radical empiricism’ that seeks out the facts but at the same time goes beyond them.

**Women’s Participation in Paid Employment**

The changes in women’s participation in paid employment in Ireland have occurred at two levels: firstly, the sheer proportion of women, particularly those with children, who are in paid employment; and secondly, the proportion of women who are in positions of expertise and/or authority. The extent of the change in women’s participation in paid employment in Ireland can be illustrated by the fact that, in the thirty years between 1971 and 2001, the number of women in paid employment rose by 140 per cent, as compared to a rise of 27 per cent in the case of men. This increase has been overwhelmingly due to married women’s participation in paid employment. In the early 1970s, only 7 per cent of all married women were in the labour force, compared with roughly half of all married women in Ireland now. Indeed, by 2004, the highest labour force participation rate for women (76 per cent) was in the 25–34 years of age-group, precisely the group who are likely to be bearing and rearing children. At that time, just over half of mothers aged 20–44 whose youngest child was less than five years old were in paid employment. Overall, Irish women’s participation in paid employment now is marginally above the average for the twenty-five countries in the EU – whereas even in 1997 it was significantly below it. These dramatic changes in women’s employment have come about despite very low levels of childcare provision. Average full-day childcare costs in Ireland are 20 per cent of average earnings,
while the average for other EU countries is 8 per cent. Despite some limited attempts by the public and private sectors to facilitate the reconciliation of work and family through arrangements such as job-sharing and flexitime, individual families, and particularly women, have borne the brunt of the consequences of this dramatic increase in women's paid employment.

Traditionally, although women's educational levels were higher than men's in Ireland, the existence of the 'marriage bar' and related social and cultural attitudes affected women's participation in paid employment in the professions, associate professions and management. Because of the increasingly service-oriented nature of the Irish economy, there have been substantial increases in the size of these categories. Thus, even over the past five years, the size of the professional category has increased by 33 per cent, with more than half of that increase involving women. Similarly, the size of the associate professional and technical category has increased by 28 per cent, with more than three-fifths of that increase involving women. The size of the executive and managerial category has increased by considerably less over the five-year period (roughly 8 per cent), although almost 80 per cent of that increase has consisted of women. Thus, roughly half of those in positions of 'expertise' (that is, professions and associate professions and technical occupations) are women, but, despite this, just fewer than three out of ten of those in positions of 'authority' (that is, managerial and administrative positions) are women. This kind of imbalance between expertise and authority, however, is not unique to Ireland.

Even though there are now almost 300,000 women in these positions in Ireland, comprising almost two-fifths of all women in paid employment, they are rarely at the top of such structures. A large survey of managers and professionals showed that only at the lowest level was there a roughly equal proportion of men and women. As one moved up the hierarchy, women disappeared, constituting less than one in ten of those at chief executive level—a pattern not peculiar to Ireland. Such women are arguably in positions of cultural tension. On the one hand, they have symbolic capital—'the esteem, recognition, belief, credit, confidence of others' from participating at this level in the occupational arena; yet, on the other hand, by virtue of their gender, they find themselves less valued than their male counterparts. We will now look in more detail at the position of women in one professional and one managerial area, the university and the civil service respectively.

University

Considerable concern has been expressed by the State and the media about the feminization of education at primary level. However, there is no

corresponding concern about the continued masculinization of universi-
ties, especially at the higher levels. Indeed, it is not seen at all, since the
equation of masculinity with authority continues to be seen as ‘natural’
and ‘inevitable’. Even today only just less than two-fifths of faculty in uni-
versities are women. This does mark an increase – particularly over the past
ten years (see Table 1 below). Portugal and Finland are in a similar posi-
tion to Ireland, with women constituting a similar proportion of faculty in
these countries. Such patterns cannot be explained by the level of eco-
nomic development, by the proportion of women in the labour force, or
by their educational levels.

### TABLE 1
Comparisons over time in the proportion of women faculty (full-time) in
the universities in Ireland

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Lecturer</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Lecturer</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Lecturer/</td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>20%</td>
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*HEA 1987; ** HEA 1987; *** Smyth 1996; ****HEA 2005

A very different picture emerges when we look at the proportion of
women who are at the top of the educational hierarchy in universities. In
Ireland the proportion of women in what are broadly synonymous with full
professorial university posts is roughly half what it is in the EU, the United
States and Australia (13–14 per cent, as compared with 7 per cent in Ire-
land). The proportion of women at professorial level in Ireland is roughly
one-third that in Finland, Portugal or Latvia. Perhaps even more revealingly,
the proportion of women at full professorial level in Ireland has changed
little over the past thirty years: rising from 5 per cent of such professors in
1975/6 to 7 per cent in 2002/3. Furthermore, in Ireland the differential
between men and women’s chances of promotion was one of the largest in
Europe, with Irish men having almost six times as much chance of getting
to this level than Irish women.

An increased proportion of women faculty in the universities, particular-
ly at the higher levels, will help ensure that the production of knowledge is
not the monopoly of (middle-class) men, that knowledge is not defined in a way which privileges their perspective and, hence, that a whole realm of experiences and representations is not marginalized. Since girls are now more likely than boys to attend university at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, the under-representation of women, especially in senior faculty positions, raises issues related to cultural imperialism, indeed to colonialism. Young women are deprived of a range of female role models, and, as American work has shown, such same-sex models are important in facilitating female students' career orientation, confidence and success.

In summary then, Irish universities remain hierarchically male-dominated institutions with an increasingly female student population. These are the institutions that are involved in the creation and validation of particular kinds of knowledge. To anticipate that such structures would prioritize gender, problematize the patriarchal dividend, or facilitate the development of gendered constructions seems unrealistic, given Connell's observation that:

A gender order where men dominate women cannot avoid constituting men as an interest group concerned with defence and women as an interest group concerned with change. This is a structural fact, independent of whether men as individuals love or hate women or believe in equality or abjection.

Civil Service

Although it can be argued that policy direction is determined by the political leadership, the civil service is seen as particularly important, not least because it is an instrument for gender mainstreaming, that is, ‘incorporating a gender equality perspective into mainstream policies as these are developed, implemented and evaluated’. It is required to do this by the European Commission in the case of all policies and programmes funded through the National Development Plan. Potentially, it constitutes a driving force for a supportive focus on gender and its implications in the transformation of Irish society.

Over the past fifteen years, but particularly in the past six, there have been very substantial changes in the gender profile of the lower-middle level of the hierarchy (that is, the proportion of women at assistant principal and administrative officer level). Women now constitute between a third and a half of those at such levels (see Table 2 below). These patterns are all the more striking, since the proportion of women at these levels had not increased at all in the 1987–1995 period. Gender issues were prioritized at these levels of the civil service by the Co-ordinating Group of Secretaries in 1997, and were reflected in departmental and civil service-wide gender
targets at the Assistant Principal level in the Strategic Management Initiative, which had the support of the civil service unions. Furthermore, specific measures such as term-time working, job-sharing and flexitime, which help individual women to reconcile work and family responsibilities, are more common in the Irish civil service than in the private sector.30

### TABLE 2
Percentage of Women at each Grade in the Civil Service over time 1987, 1995, 1997 and 2003

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Secretary</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Secretary</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Officer</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Officer</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Executive Officer</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Officer</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Officer</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical Officer</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical Assistant</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>


The continued dominance of men at senior levels in the civil service has been seen as an important factor in inhibiting the implementation of gender mainstreaming; McGauran noted that male ‘champions’ of gender equality did occasionally exist, but that, ‘collectively, men seem to be better than women at defending their interests, particularly in relation to employment’.31 The top echelons of the civil service remain overwhelmingly male, with 88-90 per cent of those at general secretary and assistant secretary level still being men. Humphreys et al. expressed concern about the unsatisfactory nature of promotion mechanisms, and affirmative action was recommended ‘if women are not to be discouraged in their promotion prospects by the double burden of work and caring and the gender stereotyped attitudes of management’.32 However, no such mechanisms seem to have been put in place to tackle the reliance on seniority or the promotional implications of differentially valued ‘male’/‘female’ areas of work; nor have any targets been identified at these levels. The civil service is not of course unique: similar – and in some cases more male-dominated – trends exist in the private sector; studies show that between 3 per cent and 10 per cent of managing directors/chief executives are women.33 With action plans and diversity targets,
the civil service in the UK has increased the proportion of women in the most senior positions. Such comparisons, however, need to be treated with caution, as they may reflect relative levels of pay and conditions inside and outside the civil service.

Overall then in Ireland, although the proportion of women at the lower-middle level of the civil service has dramatically increased in the past six years, the most senior positions (at general secretary and assistant secretary level) are still overwhelmingly held by men. This is particularly important, since it has had an impact not only on policies within the civil service, but more broadly on the failure to include a gender perspective in all mainstream policies, including those relating to the funding of research in the higher education sector, estimated at €422 million in 2003 and a projected €765 million in 2010. Thus, for example, there seems to be little awareness that policies focusing research funding on areas such as information technology and biotechnology, which are of little or no interest to the high educational achievers who are girls, are inherently problematic.

Changing Gender Roles and Other Attitudes

Claire Connolly suggests that 'the sense that subjectivity is both scripted by and constitutive of ideology finds many echoes in Irish culture'. It can thus be argued that Irish women's constructions of the self have been located within an overall context of gender roles that stress service, self-sacrifice and subordination. In contrast, Breda Gray's work suggests that this is changing when she observes that 'the category “Irish women” ... produced a martyred relationship to the self which they [the women in her study] identify with their mothers and refuse for themselves'. In this section, drawing on data derived from various sources, the extent and kinds of changes that are occurring at a cultural level will be explored. This section will first look at changes in gender roles, particularly insofar as they relate to women's participation in paid employment; secondly, it will more specifically examine the extent to which cultural value is still seen as attached to women's activities within the domestic arena, while considering perceptions that women are discriminated against in the paid employment area; thirdly, it will weigh evidence as to whether a relational dimension continues to be important in women's construction of themselves; and finally, it will look at the extent to which gender is perceived as being irrelevant — an attitude which is at odds with the previous attitudes.

Firstly, when drawing on European Values data it is clear that positive attitudes to women's participation in paid employment increased amongst both men and women between 1990 and 2000 (see Table 3 below). In 2000
roughly three-quarters of the men and women in the Irish part of the European Values study saw a job as 'the best way for a woman to be an independent person'; and roughly four-fifths endorsed the view that 'husband and wife should contribute to household income'. The complexity of these attitudes was illustrated by the fact that, at that time, more than a third still agreed that 'A job is all right but what women really want is a home and children'. Furthermore, roughly a third also felt that 'a pre-school child suffers if mother works outside the home'. The implicit assumption that it is mothers who are the most important people in their children's lives was challenged when the majority of both agreed that fathers were 'as well suited to look after their children as mothers' (an indicator that was not included in the earlier study).\textsuperscript{39}

\section*{TABLE 3}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{lccc}
\hline
 & Women & Men & Total \\
\hline
A job is the best way for a woman to be an independent person (% agree) & 72\% (59\%) & 75\% (62\%) & 74\% (61\%) \\
Husband and wife should contribute to household income (% agree) & 83\% (73\%) & 79\% (68\%) & 81\% (71\%) \\
A job is all right but what women really want is a home and children (% agree) & 35\% (55\%) & 39\% (62\%) & 37\% (59\%) \\
A pre-school child suffers if mother works outside the home (% agree) & 32\% (46\%) & 39\% (60\%) & 36\% (53\%) \\
Fathers are as well suited to looking after their children as mothers (% agree) & 82\% (n/a) & 73\% (n/a) & 78\% (n/a) \\
Being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay (% agree) & 62\% (71\%) & 57\% (73\%) & 60\% (72\%) \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Support for Gender Roles by Gender in 2000* (and 1990**)}
\end{table}


Secondly, there was a strong suggestion in the European Values data that cultural value was still seen as attached to women's activities in the domestic arena. Thus, even in 2000, and despite women's high levels of participation in paid employment, roughly three-fifths of both men and women agreed that 'Being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay'. (These trends can be expected to vary by age and participation in paid employment.\textsuperscript{40}) Since a focus on culinary expertise has never been a part of Irish culture, it seems plausible to suggest that such trends may reflect a yearning after women's
traditional levels of authority in the domestic area and their role in maintaining personal relationships there; or the difficulty of being promoted in the paid employment setting and/or of combining paid work and family responsibilities in a societal context that is deeply unhelpful.

The accounts of young people aged between 18 and 30 arguably help make sense of the high value attached to ‘being a housewife’ in the European Values study. They suggested that the gendered patterns of housework and childcare were seen as reflecting women’s greater competence and responsibility. Thus, the idea of role reversal (with the man being responsible for the home and family) was greeted with incredulity: ‘He’d have them [children] killed. He’d be bankrupt. He wouldn’t be able to [cope].’ In anticipating the perceived difficulty of combining paid work and family responsibilities, these young women, the majority of whom were not parents, advocated deferring having children, juggling these responsibilities and (reflecting their perception of the value of work in the home) some kind of payment by the State for such work, whether or not the woman was married. The Irish State currently provides such payments only to lone mothers on condition that they are not co-habiting (effectively replacing a male breadwinner in these situations). Amongst the young men there was ambivalence about such payments even to lone mothers—such attitudes reflecting their conception of breadwinning as a key element in men’s role in the family.

The perceived cultural value of women’s activities in the domestic area is possibly not unrelated to the perceived discriminatory attitudes to women in the paid employment area. Amongst those aged between 18 and 30, both men and women suggested that women had to be more qualified and to work harder than men in Ireland to get promoted. Most of the young men did not see men as more competent than women but ‘that’s just the way things are’. Although at one level the young men accepted that the system was unfair to women, at another level they felt no responsibility to change it and in certain contexts did not see it as an issue at all:

I think most women are [able to do anything] . . . But men are still looked at as more dominant, even though they are not . . . the men are looked for in the management positions . . . You just have to look at top executives of any company . . . and they are all men. So I presume there must be some disadvantage for women. But I wouldn’t see it.

Such attitudes were not peculiar to Ireland, although they were particularly strong here. Indeed Bjerrum Nielsen showed that, whether societies purported to endorse gender equality or complementarity, a positive valuation of womanhood did not exist nor a positive male role vis-à-vis women.
Thirdly, there was a suggestion that women’s constructions of themselves remained strongly relational. Drawing on texts written by 10–12 year-olds and 14–17 year-olds in a school context, and reflecting a ‘weak cultural feminist tradition’, gender was seen as a repressed but crucially important framework in the construction of young people’s sense of self. Building on a traditional cultural validation of relational strength, it is evident that girls reflexively constructed their identity in terms of relational discourses. For these young women such discourses mainly revolved around same-sex best friends with whom relationships were intimate and long-standing. In addition, and arguably reflecting an enhanced sense of their categorical identity as women, they also described side-by-side activity-based categorical friendships (the only type of friendships the boys mentioned, if they mentioned any). Furthermore, girls aged between 14 and 17 were also more likely to refer to family in general, and extended family in particular, arguably reflecting their greater relational orientation. In contrast to the importance of the relational dimension for girls, boys constructed their idea of themselves hierarchically: this was reflected in accounts of attempts to establish hierarchical dominance competitively through football, physically through fighting, and/or through their presentation of themselves as authoritative interpreters of a wide range of economic, political and social phenomena.

The relational dimension was also evident in girls’ subject choices at university level. In a context where roughly one in two of those who do the Leaving Certificate go on to higher education, the areas where women constitute at least three-quarters of the students were in the broadly person-oriented ‘caring’ areas, such as education, medical science and social science. In contrast, the area where men constitute a clear majority (that is, more than three-quarters) is technology.

Fourthly, despite these trends, the educational institutions and the State frequently depict society as gender neutral. Perhaps not surprisingly then, when the 18–30 year-olds were asked if they saw gender as making any difference to their future lives, overwhelmingly they said that it would not do so. Similarly, the 10–12-year-olds and the 14–17 year-olds did not think of themselves as boys/girls and suggested that consumer society was eroding gender differences in specific areas (with references to part-time jobs, clothes and consumption of alcohol not being gender differentiated). In addition, there seemed to be a rhetorical degendering of occupational choices, which in fact concealed a valuing of male career choices. Thus, women formed the majority of the students choosing to study stereotypically male areas such as law, science, and commerce at university.

It seems plausible to conclude that gender roles and constructions of the self are confused and complex in Ireland today. The Irish element of the
European Values study suggested that paid work was increasingly seen as desirable for women. In this context a residual attachment to being a housewife emerged — arguably because it potentially avoided the difficulties of combining paid work with family responsibilities, and offered greater possibilities than paid employment as regards authority and the facilitation of relationships in the domestic area. These attitudes might not be unrelated to the fact that women were seen by these young men and women as less likely to be promoted in the paid employment arena because of discriminatory attitudes to them as women. Young women's constructions of themselves continued to revolve around relationships and caring, while young men's revolved around technology and hierarchy. Finally, there were some indications of the adoption by girls of what purported to be gender-neutral patterns, but for the most part these seemed to be traditionally male ones, with gender in certain contexts being presented as having no relevance to their lives. Nevertheless, gender seemed overall to be a repressed but crucially important framework in their constructions of themselves and their lives.

Summary and Conclusions

Ireland, in some ways, is changing rapidly. The extent of that change is most vividly illustrated by the increase in women's participation in the labour force in general, and their occupancy of positions of expertise and/or authority in particular (that is, in the professions, associate professions and technical occupations; and in managerial and administrative occupations respectively). Furthermore, not only has the number of these positions grown, but also, even over the last five years, women's access to such positions has dramatically increased. Almost two-fifths of the women in paid employment in 2004 were in these positions. These general patterns are reflected, for example, in the universities, where just under two-fifths of faculty are now women, and in the civil service, where women constitute between one-third and a half of those at administrative officer and assistant principal level. However, a rather different picture emerges when one looks at the proportion of women at the top of these structures. The proportion of women at professorial level (at 7 per cent) in Ireland is little different to what it was thirty years ago when the marriage bar had just been lifted. Similarly, men continue to dominate the top of the civil service, where only 12 per cent of those at general secretary level are women.

Gender roles, particularly in relation to women's participation in paid employment, have also changed. Nevertheless, a residual attachment to being a housewife persisted in the European Values study, possibly owing to the difficulty of combining paid work with family responsibilities and/or
because being a housewife offered the possibility of greater authority than paid employment as a result of perceived attitudes to women's promotion. There was some evidence of a denial of the relevance of gender to young people's future lives — arguably reflecting an institutional rejection of the importance of gender — one which often concealed an implicit positive valuation of male patterns. The young women, however, in their subject choices and their constructions of the self, continued to valorize female relatedness.

The male-dominated universities and civil service seem unable or unwilling to grasp the implications of gendered patterns — not only as regards combining paid work and family responsibilities, but also insofar as such gendered patterns impact on the strategic planning of the economy. Both of these institutions (and the OECD) have prioritized research into information technology and biotechnology and are investing very substantial amounts of public money in these areas. They have failed to recognize that girls, who have the highest levels of educational participation and success, are not interested in such programmes: the calibre of the (predominantly male) students who are interested in these areas is thus a major long-term but unrecognized constraint. For high-achieving young women, the areas which offer some hope of making sense of their gendered constructions of the self in the occupational area are those areas which involve human well-being, such as medicine, therapies, social sciences. Such choices are subverting this national educational and economic project, and they are not even perceived by the male-dominated power hierarchies of the civil service, the universities and other established and decision-making institutions.

Notes and References

6 R.W. Connell, Masculinities, p. 82.
7 UN Human Development Report (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 75. A similar conclusion was reached by Lopez-Claros and Zahidi, op. cit.

O'CONNOR, 'Still Changing Places', Irish Review 35 (2007) 75
8 Lopez-Claros and Zahidi, op. cit.
13 Anne Coughlan, Women in Management in Business (Dublin: Irish Business and Employers' Confederation [IBEC], 2002).
17 The marriage bar obliged women to retire on marriage from a variety of jobs, including the Civil Service, second level teaching and other related professions. See Pat O'Connor, Emerging Voices.
19 Anne Coughlan, op. cit.
22 The overall percentage of women in such academic positions across the EU in 2000 was 31.3%; 'She Figures', Women and Science: Statistics and Indicators, http://www.cordis.lu/improving/women/home.htm (Luxembourg: European Commission, 2003).
23 ETAN [European Technology Assessment Network], http://www.cordis.lu/ Table 2.1 (Luxembourg: European Commission, 2003).
24 Ailbhe Smyth, op. cit., and HEA, 'Gender by Level in Ireland'.
25 'She Figures', op. cit.
26 Almost three-quarters of eighteen-year-old girls are in full-time education, as compared with just over half of the boys of the same age. Just under three-fifths of the undergraduates and more than half of the postgraduates are women. Such patterns reflect the fact that admission to universities is competitive and girls are out-performing boys in State examinations. This pattern has existed since the 1980s, although it has only recently become part of the public consciousness. See Pat Clancy, College Entry in Focus: A Fourth National Survey of Access to Higher Education (Dublin: HEA, 2001).
28 R. W. Connell, Masculinities, p. 82.


30 See Philip J. O’Connell and Helen Russell, op. cit.; B. Fynes et al., op. cit. For the limitations of such arrangements as an instrument for transforming the work setting, see for example Sue Lewis, ‘Family Friendly Employment Policies: A Route to Changing Organisational Culture – or Playing About at the Margins?’, *Gender, Work and Organisation*, 4:1 (1997), 13–23.

31 Anne Marie McGauran, op. cit., p. 84.

32 P. Humphreys, E. Drew and C. Murphy, *Gender Equality in the Civil Service* (Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, 1999), pp. 190–1.

33 NWCI [National Women’s Council of Ireland], *Irish Politics – Jobs for the Boys? Recommendations on Increasing the Number of Women in Decision Making* (National Women’s Council of Ireland, 2002); Anne Coughlan, op. cit.


36 Claire Connolly, op. cit., p. 305.


40 Chris Whelan and Tony Fahey, op. cit.


42 Pat O’Connor et al., ‘Young People’s Awareness of Gendered Realities’, p. 98.

43 In the context of deferring having children it is worth noting that the age at which women give birth to their first child inside marriage has steadily risen in Ireland since 1975 and is now at almost 31 years (Central Statistics Office Ireland, 2004).

44 Pat O’Connor et al., ‘Young People’s Awareness of Gendered Realities’, p. 105.


48 Pat Clancy, *College Entry in Focus*.
49 Pat O'Connor et al., 'Young People’s Awareness of Gendered Realities'.
50 Pat O’Connor et al., ‘Relational Discourses’.
51 Pat Clancy, *College Entry in Focus*.
52 OECD, *Review of Higher Education in Ireland*.
53 John Sheehan, 'Review of National Policies for Education'.