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PLACE, MEANING AND SOCIALITY: EXPLORING FULLNESS IN THE THEMED RETAIL ENVIRONMENT

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ABSTRACT

This paper describes an investigation of themed retail environments that provides a more complete understanding of how of retail environments or servicescapes "build relationships with customers" (Hollenbeck, Peters and Zinkhan 2008, p. 334). The research is the result of a three-year ethnographic study of five small Irish pubs. In my analysis I adapt Daniel Miller's (2008) concept of "Fullness," which refers to an experience of place as meaningful and social. In more Full places we see how interpersonal relationships can abound and I show how different retailers are more and less successful at facilitating this sociality and at building relationships. For this I draw on Manuel DeLanda's (2006) notion of the assemblage to show that the Fullness we see in retail settings can be conceptualized and understood as emerging from an assemblage of material and nonmaterial components, each unique and dynamic over time, and all not necessarily present in one setting at the same time. Among the contributing components to Fullness, I identify three particularly potent mutually reinforcing ones: 1) material elements of the space, channelling and shaping interactions to provide elements of a mise-en-scene that facilitate sociality, 2) an assemblage of a core group of consumers in a retail space who themselves construct a narrative that holds that their ties to one another are forged and re-affirmed by the retail space in which they interact, 3) lead marketers who draw on personal resources and invoke marketplace myths. I also show how a variability of components can lead to variability in the forms of emergent Fullness. Finally, in detailing ways in which retail environments can be understood as assemblages of material and nonmaterial elements – dynamic entities that can be stabilized by some

elements, destabilized by others – I identify implications for areas of retail and marketing management.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

"My favourite public-house, the *Moon Under Water*, is only two minutes from a bus stop, but it is on a side-street, and drunks and rowdies never seem to find their way there, even on Saturday nights. Its clientele, though fairly large, consists mostly of "regulars" who occupy the same chair every evening and go there for conversation as much as for the beer. If you are asked why you favour a particular public-house, it would seem natural to put the beer first, but the thing that most appeals to me about the *Moon Under Water* is what people call its "atmosphere."

To begin with, its whole architecture and fittings are uncompromisingly Victorian. It has no glass-topped tables or other modern miseries, and, on the other hand, no sham roof-beams, ingle-nooks or plastic panels masquerading as oak. The grained woodwork, the ornamental mirrors behind the bar, the cast-iron fireplaces, the florid ceiling stained dark yellow by tobacco-smoke, the stuffed bull's head over the mantelpiece —everything has the solid, comfortable ugliness of the nineteenth century.

In winter there is generally a good fire burning in at least two of the bars, and the Victorian lay-out of the place gives one plenty of elbow-room. There are a public bar, a saloon bar, a ladies' bar, a bottle-and-jug for those who are too bashful to buy their supper beer publicly, and, upstairs, a dining-room …

In the *Moon Under Water* it is always quiet enough to talk. The house possesses neither a radio nor a piano, and even on Christmas Eve and such occasions the singing that happens is of a decorous kind. The barmaids know most of their customers by name, and take a personal interest in everyone. They are all middle-aged women —two of them have their hair dyed in quite surprising shades—and they call everyone "dear," irrespective of age or sex …

I doubt whether as many as 10 per cent of London pubs serve draught stout, but the *Moon Under Water* is one of them. It is a soft, creamy sort of stout, and it goes better in a pewter pot. They are particular about their drinking vessels at the *Moon Under Water*, and never, for example, make the mistake of serving a pint of beer in a handleless glass…

The great surprise of the *Moon Under Water* is its garden. You go through a narrow passage leading out of the saloon, and find yourself in a fairly large garden with plane trees, under which there are little green tables with iron chairs round them. Up at one end of the garden there are swings and a chute for the children.

> On summer evenings there are family parties, and you sit under the plane trees having beer or draught cider to the tune of delighted squeals from children going down the chute. The prams with the younger children are parked near the gate.
>
> Many as are the virtues of the *Moon Under Water*, I think that the garden is its best feature, because it allows whole families to go there instead of Mum having to stay at home and mind the baby while Dad goes out alone…
>
> The *Moon Under Water* is my ideal of what a pub should be —at any rate, in the London area. (The qualities one expects of a country pub are slightly different).
>
> But now is the time to reveal something which the discerning and disillusioned reader will probably have guessed already. There is no such place as the *Moon Under Water*... That is to say, there may well be a pub of that name, but I don't know of it, nor do I know any pub with just that combination of qualities…
>
> And if anyone knows of a pub that has draught stout, open fires, cheap meals, a garden, motherly barmaids and no radio, I should be glad to hear of it, even though its name were something as prosaic as the *Red Lion* or the *Railway Arms*" (Orwell 1946, emphasis in original).

These are the words of George Orwell in his final contribution to London's *Evening Standard* newspaper, appearing February 9th 1946. His idealized pub is a place where he can imbibe the distinct, warm atmosphere as he does his creamy stout, a place where he can feel comfortable, known and welcome, and be a part of some community, or merely be in communion with other people. It is, alas, a phantasmal place, existing only in his mind's eye. If you will forgive the slight variation in context – as in this study I look at themed Irish pubs – you can still find in the words of Orwell many of the qualities of place – those personal, social, and material in nature that he pondered – discussed herein. While his perfect pub of the imagination is not found in these pages – more's the pity – across the variety of pubs studied I have found numerous ways in which elements of the

retail settings influence consumers' experiences of these spaces as places full of the kind of sociality that Orwell's musing evoke.

My study is motivated by the fact that the extant literature on consumer experiences of servicescapes, retail spaces, and themed retail environments has thus far stopped short of exploring how settings such as Irish pubs are constituted so as to evoke such sociality or "Fullness." Fullness is a term coined by scholar Daniel Miller from anthropologies of peoples' homes (2008), and I adapt it here to understand properties of retail spaces. Miller considers how people's relationships with objects relate to their relationships with people: a Full house is one in which evidence of the centrality of interpersonal relations abound, largely through the proliferation of symbolically- and emotionally-laden objects (Miller 2008). In a Full house, the make-up of the space is reflective of the person or persons in the home and their networks of relationships and interactions. Equally important, these elements of the space can also serve to structure interactions and relationships within it. Miller argues that Fullness is often most evident when observing people within the space, through their interactions with the space, with objects therein, and with other people. I argue that understanding how Fullness comes about in retail spaces will serve as a useful complement to existing literature.

In contrast to studying how Fullness is constituted in retail spaces, previous studies pay attention to how consumers become attached to retail spaces and investigate ways their identity projects are enmeshed with them (e.g. Borghini, Sherry and Joy 2010). Further, extant research on themed retailing environments, i.e. 'stores that tell stories' (e.g., Diamond et al 2009) shows such places can be made meaningful and personally

resonant by processes of narrativization as a way to explain consumer immersion in retail settings. However, the ways retail places can be made or can become sociable has not been directly analysed. Perhaps coming closest to this notion is work on "third places," heavily sentimentalized by Oldenburg (1999) as spaces in which one can "enjoy company of others and delight in the novelty of their character ... in which the charm and flavor of one's personality, irrespective of his or her station in life, is what counts" (p. 24). I find that the literature on third places points toward the concept of sociality or Fullness as a property of some retail settings, but stops short of analysing how such sociality comes to be constituted in some settings, but not in others.

To address this lacuna in the literature I investigate Irish Pubs, retail servicescapes that have been traditionally associated with sociality, as I outline in Chapter Two. Through my ethnographic fieldwork I investigate how retail environments build relationships with customers, as well as how consumers socialize, interact and build relationships in these places. My research sites – five Irish themed pubs in Toronto – are designed and run to be social places (although their emphasis on sociality varies, as does their focus on other goals such as profitability). Although each was unique, in every field site researched, the pub's "lead marketer" articulated some version of a desire for the pub to be a place where people can come together to share in the company of others, and imbibe the atmosphere of the place as they enjoy food and beverages.

My analysis shows that in various ways these retail settings are places where people socialize and build friendships and relationships with one another, with the lead marketer/operator, and even with the site itself. Sometimes these relationships may be

fleeting and impermanent, while at other times they may be lasting and binding. To better understand consumer experiences in such sites I investigate how elements of the place – both material and expressive (DeLanda 2006) – form an assemblage that is variably characterized by sociality. DeLanda's assemblage theory allows me to investigate social entities via their components, and recognize that they are dynamic, flexible and always subject to alteration. The components are both material and expressive and they serve to continually stabilize and destabilize the assemblage through on-going processes of iteration and change. Informed by DeLanda's perspective on assemblages, my overarching research question is: "What elements of assemblages comprising retail environments make some more "Full" than others?"

In answering this I show how different assemblages of material and expressive components cohere to create Fullness in different pubs. I also show that Fullness can be created in many different ways, with some components more prevalent in certain assemblages versus others. I identify three components as most significant in contributing to or detracting from Fullness. The first relates to the way that the built space channels and shapes interaction, and the ways artefacts within the place provide elements of a mise-en-scene (Bordwell and Thompson 2010) that facilitate sociality. The second is the way groups of consumers can construct narratives that hold that their ties to one another are forged and re-affirmed by the retail space in which they interact. The third is centred on the identity of the marketer and the ways elements of this are imbued in the retail setting, to help create for the consumers a more socially rich value proposition in the place.

One of the most distinctive aspects of my work is that I balance an emphasis on materiality with an emphasis on narrative. Most of the extant retailing research (e.g. Borghini et al. 2009; Diamond et al. 2009) treats material aspects of space through a narrative lens, focusing on the images and meanings with which artefacts are imbued, but placing less emphasis on the ways material aspects of spaces themselves, irrespective of their narrative properties, contribute to the ways consumers act and interact in spaces. I attempt to balance the narrative and material perspectives in my investigations of how the pubs I study have been built by observing the agency of objects within them and the ways these material elements impact on this sociality. I acknowledge the symbolic and sometimes narrative value of objects and in so doing, show ways the narrative properties of objects can be outcomes of these social interactions in the place, rather than simply being created for narrative purposes *a priori*. This can serve to further enhance sociality within groups. Another distinctive aspect of my work relative to prior retailing research is that I investigate the role of the "lead" marketer (a term I discuss in greater detail in subsequent chapters) and how that person contributes to consumers' actions and interactions in spaces. Rather than simply regarding marketers as 'service providers,' in my sites I see ways marketers deploy certain aspects of their identities as resources to create consumer experiences, be it as constituent parts of their performances, or channelled through marketplace mythologies to which consumers respond.

This document is organized as follows: I review relevant literatures to provide a theoretical basis for investigation, and better expose gaps in extant knowledge. Next, the study's method is explained. This review is followed by presentation of the study's

findings. I conclude with a discussion of the implications of my work for understanding consumers' experiences of retail place, as well as for retail and marketing strategy and theory. Before these chapters however, I introduce the Irish pub.

CHAPTER TWO: THE IRISH PUB

The humble *teach tábhairne* (pub in Gaelic) has been used as the context of study in extant research to investigate what artefacts and factors consumers consider as important in creating an authentic themed retail space (Muñoz, Wood and Solomon 2006), as an exemplar of a service retroscape (Brown and Patterson 2000), as an instantiation of 'theming' in a retail environment (Patterson and Brown 2007) and as a post-colonial national identity project (Patterson and Brown 2007). What we see in this body of scholarship is Irish theme pubs serving as important sites of cultural construction, conveying cultural meanings throughout the pub in its design and displays (Muñoz et al. 2006). In this project, I draw upon but go beyond earlier perspectives, in that I investigate variation across such pubs in terms of the Fullness they achieve, and the ways they achieve it. As a point of departure, I provide a description and history of the Irish pub.

Origins of the Irish Pub: Myth and History

> I can sense that this place might be a contender in the Best Pub in the World competition. MacCarthy's is an effortless compromise. The front half is a grocer's shop with seats for drinkers; the back half, a bar with groceries. On the right as you enter is a tiny snug, once a matchmaker's booth where big-handed farmers arranged marriages between cousins who hadn't met. Aluminium kettles and saucepans hang from the ceiling, not for show, but for sale. Drinkers sit under shelves of long-life orange juice and sliced bread...
> The dense, luxuriantly-sculpted pint of stout is five minutes in the pouring, the precise amount of time needed to confess your entire life history to the skilled Irish bar person. I was jolted out of my introspection by a seventy-two-year-old woman who stood on a chair and sang "The Fields of Athenry." She was a bit wobbly on her pins, on account of having suffered a stroke the previous week, but

> it went down well anyway. Everyone followed with songs of their own ... I was in the dream Irish pub of the popular romantic imagination (McCarthy 2001).

The venerable site of author Pete McCarthy's description is MacCarthy's pub in Castletownbere, a small pub in a small town in the extreme southwest of Ireland. In this "dream Irish pub of the popular romantic imagination" the expected and the unknown appear to effortlessly co-exist in a place of community, tradition, adventure and friendship. McCarthy's animated description depicts the pub as an embodiment of the very qualities it seems Irish theme pub operators the world over seek to establish in their pubs. Such boisterous, convivial places of the imagination did not emerge in isolation but developed over the course of a long and oftentimes fractured history. In the present section I trace the origins of the Irish pub from taverns and shebeens through to public houses in their many guises and consider the varied manifestations of the pub today. Moving beyond Ireland, I also consider the international development of Irish pubs, from those that opened wherever the Irish Diaspora settled, to the more commodified and staged theme Irish pubs to later emerge. I also reflect on the effect that commodified theme pubs appear to be having on pubs in Ireland to show similar processes of thematization and staging as they are occurring there.

Romanticized, mythologized, mythicized, and latterly commoditized and commodified, the pub is a unique institution in Irish life and a vital part of the island's cultural and social history and heritage, both urban and rural, and north and south of the border. The Irish Public House, or pub or bar as it is commonly called, is a premises licensed by the government to sell alcohol to the adult population (anyone over eighteen

years of age). In its purest form the modern day pub grew out of a variety of drinking dens whose primary function was to supply people with intoxicating liquor in a controlled environment (Barich 2009; Grantham 2009; Molloy 2002). Tracing the precise origins of such premises is a complex task, but accounts of brewers, distillers and myriad drinking establishments in Ireland go back millennia in various myths, legends, and recorded histories. Myths abound about the centrality of alcohol and its purveyors in Irish history (Grantham 2009). One such myth is that of the *briugu*, or hospitaller, supposedly holder of one of the most privileged titles in ancient Celtic society who was only worthy of the status if he had 'a never-dry cauldron, a dwelling on a public road and a welcome to every face' (Molloy 2002). In the fifth century AD, it is said that St Patrick counted a brewer – the priest Mescan – among his entourage, while another of Ireland's patron saints, St Brigid, was a brewer in her own right (Molloy 2002). Monasteries, prevalent throughout in Ireland from the sixth century, brewed their own beers to serve to their monks and to thirsty travellers (Cahill 1995), while the 12th Century Book of Leinster proclaims that the first feet to tread on Irish land after the biblical Flood were those of a brewer and hospitaller, a Lord in the guise of an innkeeper who provided hospitality in the form of libations for his guests (Molloy 2002).

By the thirteenth century there is evidence of Norman taverns on the island, set up by wine merchants who supplied the cellars of the ruling Norman barons (Fennell and Bunbury 2008). These became social sites of conversation, debate, and commercial dealings but tended to cater to the Norman colonizers rather than those they considered to be foreigners – the native Irish (Molloy 2002). In these taverns the term vintner was first

brought to Ireland, and it remains to this day. Vintner (derived from the French word *vin*, meaning wine) traditionally meant a wine-seller, but in Ireland vintner now refers to anyone licensed to sell alcohol (e.g., the Vintners Federation of Ireland is the national trade association for pubs outside of Dublin). Even in these medieval times ways in which the nature and type of Ireland's drinking establishments differed somewhat from those found elsewhere. At that time networks of taverns and Inns were springing up alongside the main roads of Europe to provide food, drink and accommodation to passing travellers and pilgrims (Blake and Pritchard 1985). Ireland's relatively underdeveloped and dangerous roads meant the network did not extend so far west. Hence there was little or no Irish equivalent to the taverns and Inns that lined routes such as the great medieval Pilgrim's Road to Canterbury in England. These sites of hospitality heavily influenced the form and nature of drinking establishments in that country (Blake and Pritchard 1985). They took the form of Innkeeper-run Inns with a concentration on food and accommodation alongside the customary intoxicating liquor, all of which are historically quite different to Ireland where the traditional emphasis has been on the sale of alcoholic beverages (Blake and Pritchard 1985).

Along with the growing number of Norman taverns, Ireland boasted a slew of countryside shebeens, illegal drinking dens that served as secular communal gathering places for the large Catholic Irish-speaking peasantry. Whiskey and other spirits such as *poitin* (an unsanctioned, even to this day, spirit distilled from potatoes, grain and yeast) were consumed in large quantities while ale and beer, more common among the Norman occupiers and across England and Europe, were less commonplace (Fennell and Bunbury

2008; Grantham 2009). A bacchanalian aura surrounded these rough-hewn shebeens with their drinking, violence, prostitution, revelry, dancing, fiddle and pipe music, stories, and poetry recitations by the locals. Within many of these practices lay the remnants of ancient Gaelic traditions of music and literature, which then served to preserve and protract a local culture and heritage; traditions and practices that were later regenerated and renewed to become foundation stones of the late nineteenth century Celtic revival designed to foster a newborn sense of Irishness in the populace (e.g., Castle 2009; Kiberd 1995; Negra 2006). In shebeens locals were also entertained (and informed) by itinerant bards who told stories, played music and were purveyors of news passed on from the many different places they travelled. These bards were some of the few outsiders to enter these local spaces. In contrast, members of the English-speaking Protestant ruling-class rarely, if ever, entered (Blake and Pritchard 1985). To them, the shebeens had a mysterious aura to them and were places apart, reserved as sites for the largely dispossessed and disinherited Irish-speaking Catholics to gather and socialize to somewhat preserve and further produce their distinctive culture and community (Blake and Pritchard 1985; Castle 2009)[1].

[1] For a similar explication of a culturally resonant social place in a different culture see Karababa and Ger's (2011) discourse on the early Ottoman Coffeehouses.

Ever-Changing Nature of the Irish Pub

Through centuries of British rule a series of licensing laws was brought into effect to regulate those who distilled, brewed and distributed intoxicating liquors. In one sense the successive laws had limited effect in that they did not necessarily curb the sale or drinking of alcohol: a 1635 survey, for example, records that Dublin had 1,189 merchants selling ale and whiskey for the approximately four thousand family dwellings in the city at that time; in 1908 there were 17,000 pubs nationally for a population of about 4.4 million (one for every 255 people, but this ratio was in fact even greater when one considers only adult males were allowed into most pubs at this time) (Grantham 2009; Malcolm 1998); while as late as 1924 the small village of Ballymore in Co. Sligo had 27 licenses for the village's 200 houses (Barich 2009).

In other ways, however, the impact of the licensing laws was more long lasting. These laws were part of the widespread policy to make the country more closely adhere to English patterns of behaviour. A campaign against illegal drinking establishments resulted in a decline in clandestine shebeens. Licensed establishments with more stringent opening and closing hours replaced them. Indeed, houses were granted licenses to supply alcohol for sale to members of the public, to become known as "public houses," shortened to "pubs" (Malcolm 1998). One result was therefore a change in the nature of drinking establishments, which became more of a hybrid space between the home and public spheres as the domestic now became the commercial pub(lic) space. Indeed, as detailed by author and researcher Kevin Kearns (1997) the basis of the Licensing Act of

1872 was to accord to the owner of a public house the same control and respect as the owner of a private home. In fact, until 2002 publicans could refuse entry to anyone without reason, just as one would their own home (Keegan 2010). In these laws there also was an increased emphasis on the sale of beer, ale and stout rather than the whiskey, gin, *poitin* and other spirits of the shebeen. Essentially, through these shifts the rural establishments started to become more like the urban, where these forms of public houses had existed instead of shebeens. In more populous towns and cities, chiefly the capital Dublin, these pubs had long established themselves as the common meeting grounds for miscellanies of people (Blake and Pritchard 1985; Fennell and Bunbury 2008; Malcolm 1998). Typically larger than their rural counterparts (a fact that holds true to this day), with a more diverse blend of patrons than the more localized shebeens, these licensed premises had developed to become urban centers of community and the sites for various forms of entertainment, legal or otherwise, in their own right. Out of all these changes, the 'Irish pub' emerged in the latter half of the nineteenth century (Malcolm 1998).

Generally speaking, it was considered that pubs were divided into three categories: country style, shop style and Victorian style (Molloy 2002). Country style pubs were typically small, often just houses; places of simplicity and functionalism that lacked much decorative embellishment, save for an oftentimes brightly coloured exterior. Still sometimes called shebeens in the local vernacular, these pubs typically consisted of a simple bar lined with stools, several tables and chairs, with decorations often modest, little more than some drinks company branded signs and mirrors to adorn the wall

alongside some pictures. Setting such a scene at the beginning of *Playboy of the Western World* John Millington Synge writes:

> Country public-house or shebeen, very rough and untidy. There is a sort of counter on the right with shelves, holding many bottles and jugs, just seen above it. Empty barrels stand near the counter. At back, a little to left of counter, there is a door into the open air, then, more to the left, there is a settle with shelves above it, with more jugs, and a table beneath a window. At the left there is a large open fire-place, with turf fire, and a small door into inner room (1907, 1).

Shop style pubs were often similar in their simplicity and functional nature, but also contained groceries, tending as they did to serve more than one purpose. Some served as part undertaker, cobbler, hardware store, agricultural supplies outlet – often anything required to cater to the everyday needs of their communities. Indeed, before the arrival of supermarkets, the Irish licensed trade sold 95% of all foodstuffs and consumable household requisites used in the country (Molloy 2002).

In contrast to the unfussy sparseness and functionalism of these rural and town pubs, there was a greater emphasis on design and styling in many of the urban retreats in the more affluent towns and cities. While many urban pubs contained only simple adornments, others stood as symbols to sumptuousness. Pubs built in the Victorian and Edwardian periods were particularly ornate with decorative elements to the fore. Exteriors were often elaborate combinations of marble, glass and distinctive coloured signage, while the interiors were a medley of brass, glass, and ornaments designed to convey a sense of luxuriousness. Some of the classic pubs include The Crown Bar in Belfast, The Mandeville Arms in Portadown, and the Long Hall in Dublin. The following

description of the Long Hall, one of Dublin's most famous Victorian era pubs, gives a sense of these places (see Photo 2.1):

> The Long Hall is the sort of place Isambard Kingdom Brunel [2]would have created if he'd taken to pub design. The room is vast, reminiscent of a Victorian train station, its rich red-hued carpet split into distinctive halves by an elaborate arched partition ... Entering the bar, a line of aubergine-topped stools waits by the long timber counter running along the right side ... The back of the bar is a warren of deftly shaped baroque mirrors, fronted by shelves glittering with pewter mugs, brandy glasses, bronze dishes and bottles. At the centre of the bar stands a mantel clock called 'Old Regulator', designed by the Frengley Brothers of Dublin, which confidently declares 'Correct Time' ... A ceiling of deep red embossed oak is bordered by deep and elaborate cornicing. The lamps, all Victorian in style, come in different shapes and sizes – there are globe lanterns, gleaming brass lamps and a miscellany of chandeliers over the bar (Fennell and Bunbury 2008, 14-15).

Contemporary Irish Pubs

Although I detail the evolutions of different types of pub above, not all have the simple austerity and charm of the rural, or the high-wrought aesthetic of the urban. These are just two ideal-type pubs at opposite ends of a broad spectrum, (although both serve as templates for different Irish theme pubs worldwide) and indicate something of the great diversity of pubs in Ireland. Myriad pubs of various shapes and sizes exist in between, from music pubs, to bohemian pubs, to workingman's pubs, to gastropubs, to suit the diverse tastes of a town or city's different consumers. This miscellany remains today in Ireland, as explained by Bill Barich:

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[2] Isambard Kingdom Brunel (1806-1859) was the most famous civil engineer of the Victorian era. His work across Britain includes railway lines, railway stations, viaducts, steamships, docks, tunnels and bridges. He often mixed an essential functionality with an ornateness and style that to many now represents a particular "Victorian aesthetic" (e.g., Paddington Station, London) to which the authors allude.

> A quick tour of the city [Dublin] taught me that the homegrown pubs exist in a bewildering array of styles now, from the architectural splendor of Doheny & Nesbitt to the grottolike confines of the Dawson Lounge, down a tricky staircase into the cellar with only 350 square feet of space. Café en Seine was a temple of baroque overkill furnished with a hodge-podge of statuary, ferns, and scones, while John Kehoe looked so unadorned that it scoffed at the very notion of decoration. From friends I heard about gay pubs, Polish and Nigerian pubs, early houses that opened at seven, and illicit after-hours pubs that supposedly never closed (2009, p.3).

This rich pub culture, centuries in the making, has undergone significant change in recent years. Indeed, much has been made of late about the discordant rise and demise of the Irish pub (e.g., Barich 2009; Fennell and Bunbury 2008; Patterson and Brown 2007; Roth and McNamara 2006) where for every one that opens somewhere around the world per day, it appears one closes in Ireland itself (Fennell and Bunbury 2008; Roth and McNamara 2006). In their anthology of pubs in Ireland, Fennell and Bunbury (2008) chronicle the changing nature of pubs throughout the island and detail the difficulties in maintaining traditions in a fast-changing society[3]. In a similar vein, American author Bill Barich travels through Ireland in search of the archetypical ideal pub, only to discover that changes in Irish social and working habits (in conjunction with a smoking ban and stricter drink-driving laws) have changed Ireland, and Ireland's pubs to the point where his idealized pub no longer exists[4].

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[3] This is a theme taken up by numerous other writers (e.g., Barich 2009; Roth and McNamara 2006) and was creator Matt Groening's motivation for the 2009 episode of The Simpsons [*In the Name of the Grandfather*] set in Ireland in which Homer and his father Abe buy an Irish pub and then lament that Irish people no longer frequent them.

[4] Of course one of the points to which Barich wryly alludes is that there is no, and there never has been, one single 'traditional' Irish pub type in Ireland. Rather the country has a diverse range of pubs, many of which bear no relation to an Irish pub as conceptualized by the "Irish Pub Concept" (Irish Pub Concept 2002).

Traditionally, and not surprisingly, Irish pubs have tended to grow organically within their community and have come to reflect, and in many ways embody, the community's culture, histories and contemporary character (Butler 1972; Williams 1968). They served as touchstones that linked neighbours and generations and were distinctly of their place. Moreover, these pubs have often tended to be synonymous with their owner(s), whose personality, temperament and eccentricities (and sometimes idiosyncrasies) were elemental characteristics of each (Barich 2009; Fennell and Bunbury 2008). Molloy (2002) notes how Irish pub owners did not follow the English tradition of coming up with creative and decorative pub names, choosing instead to name the establishment after the current licensee or the family name of the pub's founder. Indeed it was often their family name that adorned the exterior[5], so an eponymous Cogan's pub in one village could mean something quite different than the Murphy's across the road, based in large part on the nature and character of the owners of each. This personal enterprise meant that "[e]ntering the house...entailed entering into a relationship with that individual" (Malcolm 1998, 71). Much of a pub owner's time was spent interacting with customers and generally making themselves a cornerstone of the pub 'experience' (e.g., Barich 2009; Fennell and Bunbury 2008; Keane 1992; Malcolm 1998; McCarthy 2001). This emphasis on the personal character of the pub as often composed and constituted through the character of the owner and operator is one theme I investigate later in my dissertation.

[5] Even those pubs not named after their owners would still also carry his/her name, as the name of the licensed proprietor had to be posted above the door.

Forces of Standardization

In his poem *September 1913* William Butler Yeats (1913) laments for lost Irish revolutionary zeal and cultural attachment at the expense of the commercial imperative with the famous refrain, 'romantic Ireland's dead and gone, it's with O'Leary in the Grave.' In a caustic paraphrasing, Kirby, Gibbons and Cronin (2002, 10) pithily note that "[r]omantic Ireland may be dead and gone, but it has not prevented it reemerging in commodity form." Commentators like these abhor what they see as the commodification of Irish national culture and the manner they believe it has been packaged, bastardized, sanitized, Disneyified and moulded into a saleable item. One of the most common ways this occurs is through the proliferation of the Irish pub. Indeed, the Irish pub, as many know it worldwide today, is far removed from its distinctive, cozy, personal heart-of-the-community ancestry ideal. Instead, the increasingly ubiquitous Irish-themed pub is seen as having little or no direct attachment to Ireland or Irishness; rather, it is designed to capture and amplify some quintessential commodified Irish character packaged for sale (e.g., Barich 2009; Grantham 2009; Kelley 2006; Muñoz et al. 2006; Patterson and Brown 2003).

'Irishness' is said to stand for many things, such as warmth, good humor, friendliness and a degree of sociability that allows for easy connections with others. Many contemporary Irish pubs are carefully designed with these factors in mind, so that "the conviviality, the communitas, the *craic* are certain to appear on cue" (Brown and

Patterson 2000, 655). *Craic* is a recurring trope across many forms of Irish pubs as it stands for the socializing and revelry that are apt to happen within. Although it is derived from an original English word, *craic* has been thoroughly 'Gaelicized' to stand for something uniquely Irish. As cultural theorist Terry Eagleton describes it,

> The word 'crack' or "craic" is rapidly approaching the status of 'begorrah.'... the term most commonly refers in Ireland to an atmosphere of comfortable and pervasive conviviality, a complete absence of distrust in pleasant, relaxed and relaxing company" (quoted on beyondthecommons.com, see also Eagleton 1999).

Craic is a generally organic, and always social experience of having fun, having a laugh and a good time with others. It sometimes, but not always, has a deviant undercurrent and often revolves around alcohol. Among the suite of services and performance options Irish theme pubs are said to offer to consumers, an abundance of *craic* in the company of others is an essential part of the package, as available on tap as ubiquitous Guinness (Brown and Patterson 2007).

Writing of Irish theme pubs and other themed environments (Brown and Patterson 2000) opine that,

> [t]hemed environments are often described as imitations, as simulacra, as parodies, as superficial tissues of ill-chosen quotations, as preposterous monuments to postmodern artifice... as the themes attempt to capture the essence, the core, the kernel of the concept concerned. They are epitomisations not imitations, syntheses not simulacra, the pith rather than the parodies, the quintessence rather than quotations. They are the apotheosis of the artificial, the kitsch, the ersatz. Archetypcasting prevails in the Hollywood-esque theme factory (656).

Brown and Patterson's epigrammatic description of themed places is far from unique. Much public and academic press attention on Irish-themed pubs tends to focus on the artificial, inauthentic nature of such spaces, as well as their growing ubiquity (e.g., Barich

2009; Brown and Patterson 2000; Freeman 2009; Grantham 2009; Kelley 2006; Muñoz et al. 2006; West 2001).

The widespread commodification of this aspect of Ireland's cultural heritage has not been a happenstance quirk of fate and it is unsurprising that the company which benefits most from the proliferation of these Irish-themed pub – Guinness – has been instrumental in their spread (Brown and Patterson 2000; Grantham 2009; Yenne 2007). It was in the early 1990s that the theme Irish pub as a corporate entertainment vehicle really took shape. Guinness Worldwide Brewing, recognizing that a large portion of the Guinness sales outside of the island of Ireland were in Irish pubs, embarked on a number of programs designed to foster the spread of these venues around the world. Two important related initiatives were the founding of the Irish Pub Company and the Irish Pub Concept, both of which I detail below. As Kelley (2006) notes on the Irish Pub Company's forming, "Ireland, as much of the world knows it, was invented in 1991." Pub concept companies went hand in hand with a repositioning of the Guinness brand back towards its Irish heritage, a connection that had been largely downplayed in the seventies and eighties. These initiatives reasserted, or perhaps simply solidified, Guinness' position as one of the most notable symbols of Ireland: to many, Guinness is synonymous with Irish pubs and Irish pub culture[6]. The brand has been revitalized since the pub company

[6] There are many factors that point to this truism, three of which are outlined.

- First, Guinness is by far and away the top selling Irish drink in Irish pubs. For instance, every one of my lead marketer informants ranked Guinness as their top selling product. Also, although there are many Irish beers, ales, ciders, spirits, and stouts (of which Guinness is one), few can realistically be carried in most Irish pubs. Guinness is a virtual prerequisite in any Irish pub. I have yet to visit an Irish pub in Toronto (going well beyond the five sites focused on herein) that does not carry it on tap.

concept was introduced, with over two billion pints now poured annually in over 150 countries (Mansfield 2009; Yenne 2007).

The Irish Pub Company came into being in 1991, created through a joint venture between Guinness and McNally Design Group. The company specializes in the design, manufacture and installation of 'authentic' Irish Pubs worldwide (Irish Pub Company 2012, see also Barich 2009; Patterson and Brown 2007) and have to date designed more than a thousand pubs and built more than 500 in over 40 countries (Irish Pub Company 2012; Barich 2009; Yenne 2007). Following this venture, in 1992 Guinness introduced a program called the Irish Pub Initiative (later changed to the Guinness Irish Pub Concept [IPC]) designed specifically to assist in opening and operating Irish pubs around the world. Guinness' rationale behind this venture was captured by Diageo's Tony Greener as he explained:

> Professionalism and pride in the product are only part of the enjoyment of Guinness. Atmosphere and ambience are also important, and where better than the friendly surroundings of an Irish bar? It is no longer necessary to go across the sea to Ireland to find the perfect environment (quoted in Yenne 2007, 198).

- Second, Guinness' place in the international imagination as something quintessentially Irish and interesting to them is reinforced by the fact that *The Guinness Storehouse Experience* at the Guinness brewery in Dublin is the most visited tourist attraction by foreign tourists to Ireland. Over one million visitors pass through annually, one of which was the Queen of England on her first State Visit to Ireland in May 2011. Indeed, the very next week photos of President Barrack Obama drinking a pint of Guinness in a pub in his ancestral Irish home village of Moneygall were carried globally by media outlets to accompany reports on his visit to Ireland. President Obama followed the well-trod route to the Irish pub already taken by former Presidents Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton when they visited Ireland.

- Third, Guinness has now become so synonymic with Irish in the pub context that a Guinness Pub has now opened in Newark, NJ. This is very clearly identifiable as an Irish-theme pub even though Irish symbols are absent save for pictures, signs, mirrors, and menus branded with Guinness' and other Irish Diageo products' iconography, all of which are designed to be shorthand for 'Irish'. Accustomed to Irish pub motifs, the customer seems to know almost intuitively that it is an Irish pub, even in the absence of some established markers.

In the name of consistency Guinness developed a comprehensive list of guidelines – a prescriptive list of "Critical Success Factors" that advises on locations, design and building tips, management techniques, staffing, food and beverage choices, music choices as well as overall advice on how to create a positive atmosphere befitting an Irish pub. For each, Guinness also provides details about "Guinness-approved" partners and suppliers who can aid the budding barperson in her or his task. Capturing the essence of the initiative is James Fellowes, Director in Commercial Development for Guinness USA who notes that, "The IPC is the most successful pub concept in the world. It offers all the benefits of a branded franchise without the downside" (quoted on Irish Pub Concept, 2002).

Through such initiatives Guinness helps to create, impose and control a certain ideal of what constitutes an Irish theme pub globally. Numerous companies offer variations on this theme: including Ól Irish Pubs Limited, Celtic Dragon Designs, Prairie Pacific Pubs, Sonas Design, Pub and Club Design Co, and Bar None Designs to name a few. Many are official "Guinness-accredited" companies that strictly adhere to certain Irish Pub Concept standards laid out by Guinness. These companies offer to carefully engineer the version of reality the proprietor requires by project managing the design, manufacture, transportation and installation of every single element that constitutes the pub. The package includes the entire interior and exterior design and fit-out including the furniture, flooring, signage, joinery, glasswork, painting, ceiling and wall details, finishes and treatments, and all appropriately themed bric-a-brac. Standard categories of pub themes are offered. The Irish Pub Company for instance, offers the following: Country

Cottage style, Brewery style, Gaelic style, Traditional Style and Victorian Dublin Style, while Ól Irish Pubs Limited offers Whiskey-themed, Country Pub style, Brewery style bar, Shop style, Victorian Style and High End Victorian style. Outside of these à-la-carte categories, bespoke pubs can be built to their owners' specific requirements, to reflect any aspect of Irishness or other characteristic the owner desires.

Indeed, so regnant are these kit-designed pubs that they have extended to Ireland. Echoing the passion for place that Pete McCarthy expressed in the opening vignette, Bill Barich, like McCarthy a foreign author scouring Ireland for the perfect pub experience, has his romantic image of the homely Irish pub broken as he discovers that his favourite local pub in Dublin is the same as packaged Irish theme pubs found elsewhere:

> The pub had once sold groceries and sundries as well as alcohol, and it retained a musty dignity that spoke of permanence. An antique apothecary's cabinet was on display, its drawers labeled "iodine" and "oil of camphor," while a penny-farthing bike collected dust by some scruffy church pews probably bought for a pittance at a rummage sale. I enjoyed the eclectic flavor and the haphazard charm, and interpreted the apparently random accumulation of bric-a-brac as a symbol of the genuine. That's what I craved, after all – some contact with the authentic, that soulful Ireland of legend ... Kevin set me straight. The bric-a-brac was phony. A designer had sourced it from various suppliers to manufacture a nostalgic, traditional atmosphere. The bicycle and the church pews were junk, worthless, no more than stage props (Barich 2009, 9-11).

The realization for this erstwhile traveller that the tentacles of Irish pub commodification had extended themselves to Ireland itself first comes as a surprise, but is then frequently reinforced as he travels the country in search of his ideal Irish pub experience. Barich comes to understand his quest as quixotic in that what he seeks is an elusive ideal. The reality is that Ireland's pubs can be just as much the stage-managed productions as those he has encountered outside of Ireland; the very source materials used in the process of

commodification have themselves become changed by the process, and are now charged by many of the same forces that they themselves set in motion (Muñoz et al. 2006). In these processes of 'reverse importation' a cultural product gets exported and then moves back and forth through various cultures. As it moves, it picks up myriad effects to get reconfigured in various ways, before circling back again to reconstitute elements of the cultural product at its source. His account of his time in the Oliver St. John Gogarty pub in Temple Bar, Dublin highlights this fact:

> Though I was undeniably in Ireland, I imagined that I *wasn't*, only longing for it as Finian had longed for his mystical Glocca Morra in *Finian's Rainbow*[7]. This strange delusion put me in a sort of trance, and I wasn't alone. I could see a dreamy look of yearning on the faces around me, too, some of their eyes closed, all of us lost in a mutually reinforced fantasy ... In retrospect, it's easy to see what happened. The entire experience had been carefully staged and choreographed – worked over, refined and tested on countless audiences before. Every critical element of the Irish Pub Concept's formula for success was invoked, whether by accident or not, and when you coupled it into a longing for the changeless, enchanted land I still half-believed in at the time – call it Fairytale Ireland – you had a potent combination. True no Dubliner would fall for it, but that was beside the point. Gogarty's wasn't for Dubliners. Here was the pub as theater, as entertainment, but also as caricature – sanitized and packaged – and though the fun it generated was harmless, it amounted to another form of replication (Barich 2009, 68-69, emphasis in original).

The author's wistful description echoes many of the more critical accounts of the seemingly ceaseless processes of commodification in Irish theme pubs globally (e.g., Paterson and Brown 2003; Muñoz et al. 2006). The next section offers some counterpoints to these critical accounts.

[7] A 1947 Burton Lane and E.Y. Harburg musical about a fictional village in Ireland named Glocca Morra

Reasons for Variation

While the current boom in commodified theme pubs captures much of the academic and popular press attention, there are many different types of Irish pubs around the world, many of which owe little or nothing to pub kit companies. Long before The Irish Pub Company's formation, successive waves of Irish emigration exported the Irish pub concept. Springing up to serve the emigrant Irish and provided many of the functions they did back home (Coogan 2001; Danahey and Hantschel 2011; Moynihan 2006) pubs became new community hubs and centers of commerce, places where jobs were sought and given, where people socialized, shared news from home, played music, and discussed and debated the local and Irish issues of the day. In many ways these places conjured up some of the atmosphere of pubs in Ireland without setting out to mimic them outright. They were also shaped by the prevailing attitude toward the Irish in many of the places they settled (Danahey and Hantschel 2011). Put bluntly, these pubs were often born of isolation and exile from a dominant class that sought to exclude the Irish from many facets of public and private life (Danahey and Hantschel 2011; Delaney 2007; Ignatiev 1995; Moynihan 2006).

While these pubs share many of the features of ones in Ireland they also acquired a look and feel all of their own. Much as those in Ireland grew organically from their surrounding communities, so too many of these diasporic pubs came to reflect and shape the character and unfolding histories of their locales (Danahey and Hantschel 2011). Indeed some contemporary Irish pubs now take the classic Irish-American saloons, such as McSorley's or PJ Clarke's in New York, as their inspiration in their pub staging, rather

than the 'original' Irish pub styles offered by the pub builders. In my field research I found, for example, that a pub called Allen's specifically notes the influence of PJ Clarke's on its pub design on their menus. Similarly, the steep high back bar in informant Paddy McMurray's The Céilí Cottage pub was designed as such to evoke such places). What we see in these and in many other cases is operators drawing from the well of their own experiences and countless other points of inspiration to design the look, feel, and theme, if you will, of their pubs with little or no outside professional help. The formulaic pub that has captured the attention of many (Barich 2009; Brown and Patterson 2000; Muñoz et al. 2006; Patterson and Brown 2003) is thus not always so as many publicans may not follow the Guinness-inspired stereotypical prescriptions regarding what should constitute an Irish pub in their design and ongoing operation. Instead, the contemporary Irish pubs I study comprise a diverse array of pubs and pub owners and operators falling into a very loose category of Irish pub.

Conclusions and Questions

This section details the gamut of Irish pubs from the shebeens, taverns and various other pubs of old Ireland, the waves of emigrants' diasporic pubs, to the many worldwide today that fall under the 'loose category of Irish pub.' It notes that processes of commodification have created an Irish Pub industry, a fact bemoaned by those who feel the quintessential characteristics of Irish pubs have been lost. Among those characteristics is the sociality historically associated with the Irish pub. Simply put, the question arises as to whether or how themed Irish pubs today can feature this sociality,

given the historical evolution of the Irish Pub industry and the current conditions in which themed Irish pubs operate.

This dissertation focuses on investigating what makes such retail settings into social, or what I will refer to as Full, places. As such, I adapt Miller's notion of Fullness (2008), a significant element that relates to sociality as it emerges from the myriad ways people relate to elements of place, as well as to one another within the place. I more fully discuss the concept of sociality or Fullness towards the end of the next chapter. Prior to doing so, however, I review prior relevant literature, highlighting how theorists have raised some issues related and conducive to Fullness by detailing some of the ways these places are made resonant and social for consumers.

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

As the preceding chapter indicates, Irish pubs are socio-commercial places, the sociality or Fullness of which may vary. In this section I review prior literature on retail spaces that may help shed light on how they come to have certain characteristics, including (but not limited to) sociality or Fullness.

"Place" in Marketing

Space and place, although long part of marketing vernacular, rarely receive the comprehensive attention and analysis that other topics receive as a matter of course (Borghini et al. 2010; Sherry 1998). Sherry (1998) for one believes researchers often fail to fully grasp the potential emotional and symbolic roles of places in consumers' lives. He demonstrates that our philosophy and practices of consumption studies have too often isolated us from place as important sites of lived experience (Sherry 1998). In spite of place being a relatively under-researched consumer and marketing topic (cf. Borghini et al. 2010; Sherry 1998) extant research demonstrates ways commercial places can be part of the extended self (Belk 1988), repositories of memories and feelings (Rochberg-Halton 1984), and sites where consumers can achieve self-affirmation, engage in role play, or avenues for escapism (Kozinets et al. 2004). Consumers can immerse themselves within these commercial settings and transform them into significant centers of their lives and personal experiences (Rosenbaum 2006; Kozinets et al. 2002). Moreover, they can also be sites for reinforcing inter-generational family relations (Borghini et al. 2009),

succouring national and ethnic identities (Penaloza 1994), or nurturing fantasies and personal transpositions (Maclaran and Brown 2005).

My study can be situated within the array of research studies on place whose overarching research question is "how these retail environments build relationships with customers" (Hollenbeck et al. 2008, 334, see also Borghini et al. 2009; Kozinets et al. 2004). In this section I identify some of the ways this question has been studied – with emphases on place attachment, immersive storytelling and performances, and engaging customers through socially vibrant third places. I then follow with an introduction of my own outcome of interest in retail settings – Fullness.

Place Attachment: Meaningful Retail Places

In a recent paper Borghini et al. (2010) study the relationship between place attachment and personal identity in the small and seemingly mundane retailers that populate our worlds, where place attachment refers to the positive emotional ties an individual establishes with locations that renders them important and meaningful. The authors build on research founded on a desire to understand the depth and complexity of places as they are experienced and fashioned by people (Relph 1976). They find consumers use retail locations as potent symbolic resources in their identity projects at different life phases (Borghini et al. 2010). They note how certain qualities of a place resonate differently with different consumers based on myriad factors. These potent meanings and strong associations are not merely a function of particular atmospheric properties, nor are they inherent in the servicescape or fashioned into the retail

architecture. Rather, they are constructed by consumers within (à la servicescape studies), but, importantly, also away from the retail outlets over time and space.

The places to which Borghini et al.'s (2010) informants feel attached are those where consumers create a collection of memories and sensations that mark moments in their lives and become a part of their identity and their cultural and personal heritage. They create unique personalized stories around these places to fit or facilitate particular life narratives; they are places that provide bridges with the past, and permit consumers to maintain a stable and coherent sense of the self in the present. The commercial places with which people most closely identify typically offer one or more of the following: they mirror owners' or managers' personal tastes, preserve some history of the store through material and social elements, stimulate social engagement and encourage individual appropriation by simulating the quality of domestic space. Moreover, those places with which people most closely identify also have a consistency of style between a) all of the goods and services offered, b) the display, c) the owners' taste and identity, and d) the history of the place (Borghini et al. 2010).

In showing the different ways, and the reasons why, places are resonant with meanings for consumers, Borghini et al. (2010) primarily focus on understanding individual attachment to specific places. Their goal is not to understand sociality or Fullness. It is worth noting, however, that one factor they do highlight as important in place attachment is that spaces may be perceived as stimulating "social engagement." Less light is shed on how the actions of marketers or characteristics of spaces may

actually evoke such reactions. Somewhat further illumination is provided in the literature on themed retailing environments.

Themed Retailing Environments

More than any topic in retailing or marketing research, it is the work on themed retail environments that is most influential in broadening our understanding of important aspects of 'place-making.' Consumers' interactions with space, consumer meaning making, and performativity are all core aspects of this research; in this work we see the retail *space* reconfigured as retail *stage* (Goffman 1959). Themed retail environments are retail spaces in which entertainment becomes an elemental part of the consumption experience. The growing interest in themed retail environments is driven by the aforementioned overarching research question of "how these retail environments build relationships with customers" (Hollenbeck et al. 2008, 334, see also Borghini et al. 2009; Kozinets et al. 2004).

This literature characterizes themed retailing environments as stores that tell stories (Kozinets et al. 2002), and suggests complex stories are particularly likely to lead to greater levels of consumers' immersion within these environments (Borghini et al. 2009). When retail locations are imbued with such stories, they can provide consumers with symbolic and material resources so they can construct their own stories and enact their own performances. Savvy retailers can evaluate consumers' cultural projects and make desirable resources available to these consumers to further these projects (Arnould 2005). To be able to better co-create experiences with consumers, retailers seek to

understand a variety of elements including, different types of narrative frames and devices consumers employ, the operation of transportation or immersion, the ways narrative frames and devices facilitate value-adding consumer performances, and how marketer-provided resources cue consumer narrative practices that turn performances into experiences (Arnould 2007).

Some themed retail research tends to focus on sites that are labelled extraordinary or spectacular. Retail spectacles are deeply evocative, complex, interactive, symbolically-loaded, multi-media-filled, hyperreal sites of consumption and play that engross consumers with their constant flow and sensory engagement (Firat and Venkatesh 1995; Kozinets et al. 2004). These places are given carefully constructed themes, rich and clear motifs, and staff trained in Disneyesque modes of performances. In an important early paper on the subject, Kozinets et al. (2002) break down four types of themed retailers into Landscape themed, Marketscape themed, Cyberspace-themed, and Mindspace-themed. They detail the ways experiences therein have become progressively more spectacular, immersive, technologically-enhanced and -enabled, and multidimensional. They note elements such as a spectacular cultural orientation, an experimental retail orientation and a multidimensional brand orientation as primary goals for forward-thinking themed retailers who look to create entertaining, spectacular, memorable, flexible, localized, immersive, and ultimately profitable retail environments.

Hollenbeck et al. (2008) build on Kozinets et al.'s (2002) guiding principles to create a model for the multitude of different types of themed retail spaces, set on a continuum from the least to most intensive focus on the brand experience. With this

framework they include all forms of themed retail environments as their continuum moves from a base of Themed Environments such as Disney Land and Caesar's Palace, thought to have the least intense focus on the brand experience, though Brandscapes, Flagship Brand Stores, Themed Entertainment Brand Stores, Themed Flagship Brand Stores to the type of themed space they determine has the most intense brand experience – Brand Museums. Their context of study is the Coca-Cola Museum and in specifying 'intensity' to describe the brand experience, Hollenbeck et al. (2008) mirror the work of Kozinets et al. (2002) in describing themed environments (see also Twitchell 2004).

Indeed, the measure of a successful themed environment – even in the least 'intense' case – appears to be the achieved intensity of consumer immersion, enchantment, playful reaction, and escape that cohere to enhance brand meaning for consumers (Hollenbeck et al. 2008). The rationale underlying this mode of thinking is that the measure of success of retailers' engagement with customers is often evaluated from the customers' level of immersion in the themed space (Carù and Cova 2007): immersion in the stories it tells (Mossberg 2008) and through the performances it cultivates, as consumers seek increasingly more enchanting and spectacular experiences (Ritzer 2010). Although my focus is on achieving sociality or Fullness in a space rather than on facilitating immersion, I turn briefly to a consideration of the ways immersion in spaces is thought to be created or brought about.

Immersion through Stories: Space, Place, and Narrativity

An important starting point in the analyses of notions of space and place that incorporates meaning making, performativity and narrativity, is the work of Michel de Certeau (1984). He draws the distinction between place (*lieu*) and space (*espace*). Rather confusingly he inverts the usual relationship between the two as he considers space to be a contextualization of place, stating:

> Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it, and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities. In this view, in relation to place, space is like the word when it is spoken, that is when it is caught in a proximity of an actualization, transformed into a term dependent upon many different conventions, situated as an act of a present (or of a time), and modified by the transformations caused by successive contexts ... space is practiced place (de Certeau 1984, 117).

Place in these terms is therefore simply a collection of pre-determined co-existing elements, whereas space is the animation of these places by the presence and intersections of moving bodies (Augé 1995).

De Certeau develops a model of spatial appropriation based on linguistics, to highlight narrative aspects to 'spatial stories;' he links narratives to movement and spatial practice. He formulates a rhetoric of space that amounts to a process of spatial demarcation, based on a linguistic model of narrativity (Leach 2002). The 'production' of space is therefore the result of space narratives: "it is a process of appropriation of the topological system on the part of the pedestrian (just as the speaker appropriates and takes on the language); it is the spatial acting out of place (just as the speech act is the acoustic acting out of language)" (de Certeau 1984, p.97-98). Although he inverts the

usual arrangement of the terms space and place, what is useful in de Certeau is how, through these productive narratives, meanings emerge within the spaces being created.

What we see in de Certeau's analysis is the process of people imbuing places with meanings through narrativity. 'Space narratives' are not abstract narratives but contextualized ones inscribed around the particular objects in the place – objects that are cultural products constituted by numerous discourses (Bhabha 1990; Leach 2002). De Certeau points to the ways meanings are constituted in the performance of these narratives – and the spaces thus created from these performances in place. He also notes that these narratives are themselves products of earlier performances. Moreover, just as objects' meanings and relations to them are influenced by the spatial narratives, so too these narratives are themselves influenced by the culturally-constituted objects in the place (Lefebvre 1974); narratives and objects in a place can be closely inter-related and interdependent.

De Certeau's insights on narrativity, spatial stories and ways spaces (places in his terms) are animated are important to understanding how place meanings are constructed. For the purpose of this paper I use the definitions in the present paragraph rather than de Certeau's contrary ones. Space is typically considered the more abstract concept than place: it can be mobile and nomadic, and belong to no one (Kociatkieicz and Zostera 1999). Space and place are sometimes distinguished in terms of absence-presence, in that *place* is marked by face-to-face encounters and *space* by the relations between absent others (Barker 2004). As Barker (2004, 144) describes,

> [H]ome is a place where I meet family with regularity and is the product of physical presence and social rituals, whereas email or letters establish contact

> between absent persons across space. Significantly then, a place is the focus of human experience, memory, desire and identity (which can themselves be understood as discursive constructions) which are the targets of emotional identification or investment.

Space can denote absence in other ways, including physical gaps between points, temporal gaps between points of time (such as the space of a week), and as advertising space – suggesting something to be filled in and given form and meaning through commercial scriptwriting (Augé 1995). A place, in turn, shows a certain stability as it represents a given position in space (Borghini et al. 2010). A place is experienced, relational, historical and concerned with identity, with one of its essential qualities being its ability to order and catalogue intentions, experiences and behaviours in space (Augé 1995). Indeed, place is considered as 'symbolized space' that does not exist unless someone occupies it physically or evokes it mentally as it can only be 'constructed' via the attribution of meaning (e.g., Augé 1995; Borghini et al. 2010; Jameson 2005; Relph 1976). Indeed, the simple shell of a building can be a mere *space*, inert and devoid of substance, ready to be remade into a symbolically-rich *place* when invested with meanings (Jameson 2005). Of course, this attribution of meanings for a place is a subjective experience of space so meanings will differ, co-exist, and change. Meanings are not tied to places as much as they float around them and remain attached so long as someone determines that they do so. As such, places are ever open to continual reassessment, reinterpretation, and revision as they may be redesigned, rebuilt or recontextualized (Maclaran and Brown 2005).

Also, in certain cases, there maybe little material might change in the constitution of a place; however its meaning may evolve – a topic not addressed in extant research.

Previous place-based research has not tended to trace any changes and movement in place meanings over the life of what can be a relatively fixed and unchanging space. In one of my field sites I show instances of this process of change in the relatively unchanging material space as certain assemblages of resonant components can shift and change.

Stores that Tell Stories

Collectively, but in different ways, themed retail environment scholars (e.g., Borghini et al. 2009; Diamond et al. 2009; Kozinets et al. 2004; Hollenbeck et al. 2008; Pine and Gilmore 1999) show how powerful storytelling imbues retail locations with strong meanings. These meanings provide consumers with symbolic and material resources on which they can draw in pursuit of their personal consumption projects as they construct their own stories and enact their own performances (Arnould 2005). In this section I highlight two settings that have been built on these stories – the Coca-Cola Museum and American Girl Place – to show how these and other stores that are rich in carefully crafted, narrativizing storytelling devices that consumers use in myriad ways, including to enact series of performances that facilitate their own immersion.

Complex storytelling on the part of marketers – through the physical settings and displays – is one of the principal ways retail places become imbued with meaning (Borghini et al. 2009). The stories these stores tell are designed on some level to speak to human needs, to stimulate the imagination, to amuse and entertain us, to involve us emotionally, and importantly, to bind us (Mossberg 2008). In Hollenbeck et al. (2008) we

see how the themed retail experience that is the Coca-Cola Museum is used to enhance Coca-Cola brand meanings for consumers. These meanings are managed along dimensions of humanization, socialization, localization, glocalization, contextualization, theatricization, and characterization (Hollenbeck et al. 2008). Coca-Cola craft the symbolic makeup of the place through the careful management of stories and brand narratives. Stories are told of culturally related brand meaning, heritage, Coca-Cola's omnipresence in consumers' lives and relationships, and the brand's enduring place within the fabric of America. Moreover the place is designed to encourage physical intimacy to have consumers bond with their companions over shared stories and shared performances.

In their analysis of American Girl Place, Borghini et al. (2009) also show the power of story, with an emphasis on the sometimes-neglected materiality of the retail experience. They show successful themed retailing as an intensely ideological affair, where ideology and place are inextricably linked. The American Girl Place retail setting is shown to be a deliberately planned series of symbolically-specific design elements which are carefully imputed and organized to elaborate and enable a very particular brand experience, and to dramatically realize individual values and an overarching brand ideology (Borghini et al. 2009). It is also seen as a 'place' in the true anthropological sense of the word, as it is a retail space transformed by "humanizing" it into a symbolically rich consumer destination (p. 365).

The cultural importance of the brand is inscribed and reinforced in every detail of the retail place and, through the physical immediacy of the consumer experience in the

place, cultural concepts are linked to a strong retail brand ideology (Borghini et al. 2009). Within the store there is a main stage and a variety of sub-stages on which this occurs. The primary stage is called The Museum and therein the brand experience, values and ideology are materialized through the actual American Girl dolls with their various period costumes, accouterments, storylines, and elaborate staging in dioramas. The brand experience, values and ideology are also materialized in different ways on the various other sub-stages – the Salon, the Café, the Library, the Photo Studio, and the Circle of Friends Theater – all of which are carefully constructed and places that meld narratives and performances with the goal of "providing consumers with an experiential immersion in retail brand ideology" (Borghini et al. 2009, 366). As an example of this process and ways in which material objects, stories, consumer performances and social interactions intersect, consider this observation from The Museum:

> [T]he reproduction of domestic spaces belonging to different historical periods provides opportunities for grandmothers to project themselves into the conversation. They talk to girls about their childhoods and share memories that may have been shared with them by their own mothers and grandmothers. In this manner girls learn about different times in a more immediate and personal way than they otherwise would, and immerse themselves in realities that are bounded and structured by the nature of the *American Girl* (Borghini et al. 2009, 367, emphasis in original).

The textured narratively rich material elements combine to allow for the enactment of a carefully orchestrated series of consumer performances, which range from the playful and whimsical to the serious and significant. In their performances customers use marketer-produced resources to conceive and tell stories, locate themselves and others as characters in their fictions to make them personally resonant, to socialize, and

most of all, forge and solidify bonds of female kinship across and between generations (see also Diamond et al. 2009).

Yet these narratively rich elements of the retail setting, while they serve to build and strengthen bonds within groups of consumers, do not necessarily beget sociality on a wider scale. Rather, the interactions between consumers tend to be rather modular in nature as sociality is contained mostly to the groups of consumers who visit together, rather than happening across groups within the retail setting. This same form of modular sociality also occurs within the Coca-Cola Museum as consumers' shared stories and performances fasten bonds within the group as they create a more intense brand experience. Thus, the authors do not speak to sociality as an outcome on a wider scale through ways in which elements of the retail story or setting foster social connections to heretofore unknown others.

In both retail settings, we see how themed retailers strive to engage consumers in particular narrative adventures, focus consumers' attentions on particular objects, and provide a privileged narrative for deciphering the given environment to generate a successful reading of that environment and consumer performances therein (Isenstadt 2001). Of course, the ways these stories are consumed and the ways performances are enacted by consumers are always open to negotiation and change. Each consumer brings their own ideas and narratives, sometimes collaboratively, to blend with the marketers'. How they choose to use the available narrative resources (Arnould 2005) allows them to create their own particularized stories and performances. In the following section I build on the above to further introduce the role of performances. The retail stories told beget

consumer performances, and oftentimes performances by other consumers and service providers are important elements in the storytelling processes. It is through these stories and performances that retailers can build relationships with consumers, and allow consumers to build relationships among one another. It is to performances, that I next turn.

Performances in Place

A performative and theatrical frame is often placed on matters commercial as a high number of retailing, marketing, consumer, and other business activities can be considered as performances or pieces of theater. One of the places where this is most clearly demonstrated is in Pine and Gilmore's (1999), *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*, a fact exemplified in the name itself. The authors specify how retailers and marketers can create compelling, memorable, and profitable experiences within their businesses. One cornerstone of this strategy is in selecting and building a business around a clear and unambiguous theme that "must drive all the design elements and staged events of the experience toward a unified story line that wholly captivates the customer" (Pine and Gilmore 1999). This carefully planned harmony of narrative is supposed to facilitate a range of individual and collective consumer performances that altogether create the compelling experience (Pine and Gilmore 1999). In this and related studies (e.g., Arnould, Price and Tierney 1998) the consumer is considered as retail actor who performs a primarily retailer-crafted script on a retailer-

designed and -structured retail stage to suit particular retailer goals, and in so doing fulfill their own myriad consumption goals.

Indeed, this theatrical frame – with retailers telling stories in spaces and consumers performing within them – is consistent through themed retailing research; in these studies researchers show an ongoing interplay between the stories the stores tell and various consumer performances. One of the earliest studies of the themed retail environment is Kozinets et al.'s (2002) multi-researcher ethnographic study of ESPN Zone (Chicago IL) in which the authors detailed the intertwined nature of entertainment and the brand experience in these places (see also Sherry's 1998 study of Nike Town). Kozinets et al. (2004) look at interactions between consumer play, agency, and retail spectacle. A significant finding is that consumption in these spectacular and textured sites is negotiated dialectically by consumers and producers, as they move though a complex series of tactical moves and countermoves in a process known as 'interagency.' One one hand they show how consumers use the retail space as a prop-filled retail stage on which to enact a variety of marketer-scripted performances. But even more importantly, they also show how consumers use the props and storytelling devices within the setting to script their own particularized storylines and performances in order to make their own meanings in and of the place, sometimes individually but often in conjunction with others Kozinets et al. (2004). As such, these performances are seen to have a productive quality: they are not simply reactions to a marketer-crafted and -imposed script, but can in fact enhance or create meanings and stories for themselves and others within the retail setting.

Other studies of performances in retail settings further show a variety of other performances. For instance, Sherry et al. (2004) show how highly gendered (male) roles and relations are elicited and performed by consumers in the ESPN Zone retail space. Alternatively, female consumers perform certain roles and use their experiences of the American Girl brand within and beyond the retail setting to forge and strengthen cross-generational female kinship ties, even as different consumers elicit varying meanings from the brand to suit their particularized needs (Borghini et al. 2009; Diamond et al. 2009). Collectively, the themed retail setting serves as a spectacular marketer-created retail stage on which consumption is a performance by customers in which they can create their own scripts, impose their own meanings and explore elements of fantasy, self and social relations within the marketer-created retail setting (Borghini et al. 2009; Diamond et al. 2009; Kozinets et al. 2004; Sherry et al. 2004); before the retail setting becomes a live stage through these myriad consumer performances it is just a series of sounds, images, symbols and untold stories in a space.

Having reviewed these studies which ultimately shed much light on immersion in retails spaces, I now consider the how my context differs from others studied previously, and reflect on the distinction between sociality and immersion.

Sociality, not Immersion, in Retail Places

Immersion in the themed retail experiences through storytelling and performances is not something evident in my Irish pub field sites. This may be because Irish theme pubs do not fit neatly into any of the categories of themed retail environments that

scholars have identified. Specifically, they are different in two main ways. Unlike the themed outlets in most extant research, the theming of Irish pubs is not centred on a brand that has an existence beyond the particular space. While the earlier focus on Guinness shows their influence on the structure and proliferation of Irish theme pubs, these pubs are not simply shrines to the black stuff: they are not *de facto* themed Guinness spaces. However, the main retail intention of the theme Irish pubs remains quite like those of some of the above categories – to sell products in an entertaining manner, the majority of which comes from sociality in the space, as befitting an Irish pub.

Also, my field sites are different due to being not-so-extraordinary, somewhat less event-ful, and only slightly spectacular-ish spaces of consumption that are not designed to immerse or take a consumer on a 'journey'. In contrast to the razzmatazz and extravagance of the retail spectacles reviewed to this point (e.g., Nike Town, ESPN Zone, American Girl Place, and the Coca-Cola Museum), the theme Irish pubs in this paper are relatively simple settings – being far more mise-en-scene than spectacle. Mise-en-scene is a term borrowed from cinema studies to characterize themed retail settings that do not fit into the more sonorous categories outlined above. Translated as "putting into the scene," in cinematic parlance a mise-en-scene refers to everything set before the camera and their arrangement – from the composition, sets, lighting, props, makeup, and costumes, to the actors themselves and their positioning and movement onstage (Bordwell and Thompson 2010); "[i]n creating and controlling a mise-en-scene a director is carefully managing every single aspect of a scene in order to "*stage the event* for the camera" (Bordwell and Thompson 2010, emphasis in original).

A mise-en-scene has textured semiotic similarities to aspects of a retail spectacle, but in a mise-en-scene detailing is more restrained. Elements of a spectacle tend toward the brash, the hyperbolic, and less of the intended meaning is left to the imagination. A mise-en-scene is more allusive and refers to how these aspects of a setting are all orchestrated to give an *impression* of a story, characters or situation, without necessarily explicitly articulating everything through spoken dialogue. The entirety of a mise-en-scène – from the most minute and subtle to the most prominent and obvious – is created with intent: to convey particular tone, meaning, and narrative information. This sometimes subtle quality is also present in the theme pub as I show though these case studies some of the more subtle and allusive ways in which the retail message is communicated to consumers, and in so doing I emphasize other qualities of the settings, beyond narratives and storytelling. While I still I focus on some of the ways in which these are made as meaningful places, I further investigate the Fullness of these places through sociality – how they are constructed to be social.

As many of the above examples demonstrate, the ways retail environments build relationships with customers come from the ability of the sites to tell stories and facilitate performances, but we also see how in large part this ability to build relationships comes through creating conditions in which consumers can come together for collective consumption experiences. It is to this important sociality to which I will now turn. Whether it is in Kozinets et al.'s (2004) examples of numerous playful consumers co-creating and co-performing in the retail space, of the sometime-collective nature of gendered male performances enacted in Sherry et al. (2004), or the inter-generational

bonding between consumers sharing the American Girl Place experience (Borghini et al. 2009; Diamond et al. 2009), many of these retail environments are sites in which interactive consumption occur among consumer ensembles that tell collective stories and facilitate collective performances. Together, the papers share in common a focus on consumers as retail actors who perform and play in retail spaces by interacting with the atmospheric elements that constitute the structures of the retail stage, and with one another on it. In the case of retail settings such as American Girl Place and Coca-Cola Museum, it is the stories, and the host of material elements that help to tell these stories that facilitate different consumer experiences, some of which is the collective consumption by consumer groups.

Understanding sociality in these sites is rarely the overarching goal of these research papers, as indeed, creating sites of unrestrained sociality is rarely the goal of the creators of these places. More often, this sociality and collective consumption is bounded to some degree, as it is typically between consumers who arrive and remain together throughout the experience, as in American Girl Place, Coca-Cola Museum, ESPN Zone (although in each case there are sporadic and typically fleeting interactions with others), and the focus on sociality is almost incidental to other themes explored in the papers. However, in some other retail settings, sociality is a cornerstone of the experience and a focal element of research on those sites. This is most patently the case in research on third places wherein sociality is a core component of the consumption experiences (Oldenburg 1999).

Third Places

Third places are locations, typically commercial (e.g., diners, pubs, taverns, cafés, and coffee shops), that exist between the formality and stiffness of the work sphere and the privacy and intimacy of the domestic. Ray Oldenburg (1999) coined the term to denote those public places that he said "host the regular, voluntary, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings of individuals beyond the realms of home and work" (16). These are places he claims foster an important sense of community as they unify neighbourhoods, enhance social cohesion across classes and age groups, cultivate political debate, and serve as sites in which people can socially regenerate among friends as well as satisfy needs for companionship and emotional support (Oldenburg 1999; Rosenbaum 2006). According to Oldenburg, third places are independent, small-scale establishments, owned and operated by someone who is known by, and seems to know almost everyone in the locality (Oldenburg 2001). While Oldenburg's description remains the third place archetype, it is a somewhat sentimentalized ideal as larger companies such as Starbucks have built successful businesses based in part on creating, standardizing, and implementing an upscale third-place ambiance on a global scale (Schmitt 1999; Thompson and Arsel 2004). For Oldenburg, larger corporate chains are inherently antithetical to the third-place experiences. However, Thompson and Arsel (2004) neatly encapsulate third places when describing Starbucks as places "conducive to informal conversations and casual friendships, where patrons imbibe a comforting sense

of community, camaraderie, and social engagement" (633)[8]. The qualities deemed inherent in third places are now considered by some to be transposable to the most hyperreal of commercial locations. Indeed, many Irish theme pubs are essentially themed third places as they focus on elements such as sociality and conviviality as means to commercial success.

Third places often take on such important roles in consumers' lives that regular patrons transform them into homes-away-from-home (Oldenburg 1999). Consumers wrest domestic metaphor out of a third place's layout, design, ambiance, servers, fellow patrons, or indeed any element of the setting to suit. The places to which consumers most readily relate are often those places that create in them a sense of comforting and cozy homeyness (McCracken 1989). Related to this sense of familiar comfort and a significant element of Third Places, and indeed place in general, is what Relph (1976) calls 'insideness,' that state in which people feel themselves 'in' that place rather than another, because there they may feel safe, protected, and released. The person who experiences the sensation of 'being in the place' is in actuality transforming the physical space into a personally meaningful place through consumption, ascribing to the place the meanings and emotions that provide the requisite level of personal comfort to make it worth his or her custom, affection, and perhaps, enduring loyalty. This act of consumption through meaning-making by consumers is the hallmark of the consumption of space/creation of places. While there are many servicescape factors that marketers look to put in place to

[8]A fact that has been recognized by Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz who "had a vision to bring the Italian coffeehouse tradition back to the United States. A place for conversation and a sense of community. A third place between work and home" (Starbucks.com)

make their space into a third place, ultimately consumers determine what a place will mean to them, as they use the company-provided resources and their own personal resources to construct their own sense of the place (Arnould 2005).

While much research has been undertaken on third places, they have not yet been looked at in a thorough comparative manner. As such, both the characteristics of consumers' experiences in third places and the factors that contribute to them have not been systematically studied. Therefore, the material makeup of third places – their servicescapes – has been insufficiently analyzed. With some exceptions notwithstanding (e.g., Venkatram and Nelson 2008, see also Hall 2010), our understanding of how to create third place servicescapes to make them such social hubs has been less well articulated than many of the outcomes and benefits such places purport to provide to consumers (see Rosenbaum et al. 2007). This is something I address in my study.

In this paper, I pay close attention to the ways the retail settings that are my field sites have been constructed, often with this particular sociality as the intended outcome. From the lead marketers, who were the creators and builders of these third places, I learn about their specific intentions behind how the places were constructed and set up. Also, through interviews, interactions and observations with the variety of actors within these sites I analyze a host of outcomes of these intentions, many of which revolve around the sociality or otherwise of these places. It is to this outcome I next turn, as I investigate the concept of Fullness that marries meaning and sociality in place.

Fullness

"Fullness" is a concept developed by anthropologist Daniel Miller in his book *The Comfort of Things* (2008). Much of Miller's work relates to the ways in which social relations are mediated by objects (particularly objects of consumption) in the everyday (see also Miller 1987; 2010), with his notion of a Full house very much in this vein. A "Full" house is one in which evidence of the centrality of interpersonal relations abound, largely through the proliferation of symbolically- and emotionally-laden objects (see also McCracken 1989). Miller details the considerable effort, care and personal investment people in Full houses put into their relationship with others. He notes how these qualities of effort, care and personal investment are reflected in the home as the home evokes so much of the people within it, and their relationships to others. In essence, by looking in detail at our relationships with objects of significant personal interest Miller really explores the role of objects in our relationships, both to each other as well as to ourselves.

In looking at these person-object relationships, it is important to note that Fullness is a characteristic of places rather than of a collection of people within a place. However, it must be noted that although Fullness is a meaningful property of a place, Miller's (2008) notion of Fullness also relates to people. In his delineation, Miller speaks to how a Full house is often representative of the person who owns it also enjoying a Full life – one in which he or she shares deep and meaningful relationships with others. Consider this in terms of the counterpoint Miller presents to Fullness: the notion of the "Empty" house. In Fullness, the closer our relationships are with objects of personal interest then so too the closer are our relationships with other people. This is reflected in the domestic

sphere to create a Full space. In contrast, a sparse and Empty house is often one in which an atomized, socially enfeebled individual resides, the Emptiness of one matching the Emptiness of the other.

In my analyses I investigate the properties that make places Full, rather than speculating about the Fullness of the lives of the people within these places. A sense of what makes a house "Full" might not necessarily come purely from what one sees in a space, but instead emerges when one observes the person (or people) in the space interacting with the space, its constitutive objects, and with other people. Indeed, it is in this interrelationship between people and place that Fullness becomes most evident. To acquire this sense of the importance of objects and their relations with people Miller writes about how he needed to interview both. Every one of his interviews was not simply an interview with the person of interest, but also an 'interview' with the place about which he was writing. As such, the data collection method did not simply rely on questions being put directly to the people of the house, but also on questions being put to the interior of the house. As Miller himself explains,

> This might seem a rather absurd thing to do. How can one ask questions of things that cannot speak for themselves? Objects surely don't talk. Or do they? … These things are not a random collection. They have been gradually accumulated as an expression of that person or household. Surely if we can learn to listen to these things we have access to an authentic other voice. Yes, also contrived, but in a different way from that of language… I am paying proper respect to that which some people have themselves crafted as patiently as any artist, as an outward expression of themselves (Miller 2009, 2-3).

From Miller's perspective, Fullness is a variable property of places. In this light, what is important to note it that is not simply that a space must be laden with *things* or frequented by many people to make it "Full" (as a quick initial guess at the term might indicate).

Rather, a Full space must evoke a sense that the things in the space are meaningful in how they are selected, in what they represent, and in how they can facilitate a host of social relationships in that space. There is meaning and intention behind the construction and organization of the space, and objects within it. These are seen as being both reflective of networks of relationships and interactions and also serve to help structure networks of relationships and interactions. In a Full place, for instance, the fixtures, fittings, and décor are neither designed nor resigned to remain only as background. Instead they continually enter in the shaping of personal interactions (as will be detailed in my pub case studies). It is in this intersection of people, objects and place that Fullness emerges. What Miller describes as happening in domestic spaces I study in commercial retail ones.

However, although Miller coined the term Fullness, he is rather elusive about what precisely does or does not constitute a Full place. Instead, through the context of one richly textured family home and the lives of those residing within it, he describes Fullness in terms of the holism of the home as it relates to that family. While his particular case description is replete with details about the family and the home, the reader is left with the abiding impression that to deduce Fullness in another site one will deduce its presence from knowing the people, knowing how they create the place, and seeing how they interact with elements of the space and with others within. While I do not advocate that Fullness should necessarily be broken into neat little compartments or be coarsely dimensionalized, certain elements might be more or less conducive to creating the assemblage of components that constitutes a Full place.

Indeed, as Miller articulates in the quote above, any approach to studying Fullness must account for the equal importance of the expressive and the personal alongside material components (DeLanda 2006). These myriad components are interlinked and intertwined, and to attempt to study any one in isolation, or to remove a component from analysis would result in an incomplete picture. By treating Fullness as the result of an assemblage of components, this comprehensive approach is taken in the current study. In chapter four I introduce assemblage theory (DeLanda 2006) as a useful research tool that allows one to look at the components that cohere to create a sense of "Fullness" within the retail settings. Taken together, the overall focus is on how human and material aspects of retail spaces can encourage or discourage a variety of interactions and consumer experiences. More specific to the material, close attention is paid to physical elements of the space, how the space is created and why certain elements were imputed therein. From the more personal and expressive side, attention is paid to how people interact with the space, with the objects within it, and importantly, with one another. In a Full place, objects can sometimes hold deep meanings as they relate to the person who has set up the place, and others within their myriad networks.

Across the gamut of research reviewed, the Fullness of commercial places has not been investigated, though the literatures I have reviewed touch on related issues in retail settings. However, as Miller shows, a Full place relates closely to the person or persons who create, design and reside within it. This element is not well reflected in prior research on commercial spaces. Throughout the literature reviewed, particularly on place attachment and the variety of themed retailing papers, the active role of the marketer has

been less investigated than have the roles of consumers. Consumer voices, actions and the myriad ways they consume places have been more in evidence than specifics as related to marketers. I redress this imbalance by paying a greater attention to the marketer within retail settings. In the next section I look at a variety of research on identity – as it relates to the marketer – as I consider, much like as in the experience of domestic Fullness analyzed herein, some of the ways facets of marketer identity and place are enmeshed.

Identity

While past research on retail and themed retail environments focuses on consumer actors within the sites, relatively little attention is paid to the role of the lead service provider in creating these conditions for consumption. In preparation for addressing this omission, I review relevant literature on identity. In covering this literature I ground a focus on this overlooked element in retail settings that may help explain the experience of Fullness.

Marketing and the Position of the Lead Marketer

Marketing and retailing research typically considers the marketing function as the primary role or responsibility of a specific department within a large organization. The organizations studied are often large and complex; so too the scale and scope of their marketing (Gebhardt, Carpenter and Sherry 2006). In such large organizations, a vast and hierarchically organized group of individuals with varying job titles and duties is responsible for the marketing effort, (e.g., Homburg and Pflesser 2000; Kirca,

Jayachandran, and Bearden 2005; Kohli and Jaworski 1990; Narver and Slater 1990). However, in many smaller businesses marketing is the responsibility of one or of a small group of people, often led by the owner or manager. I refer to such individuals as lead marketers. "Lead marketer" is not an official designation or title bestowed upon an but instead refers to an individual at the helm of an organization who makes and helps to enact most, if not all, of the organization's marketing decisions. Their various roles and responsibilities include decisions related to the construction and design of the business or retail space, which customers to target and how, decisions related to the suite of products to carry, what prices to charge, whom to hire and how to train them, and what customer service is expected to look like in the organization. In many instances, these decisions are accepted components of the task of running a small to medium-sized enterprise. Hence, lead marketers make almost all strategic and tactical decisions related to the business with limited if any opportunity to delegate these to others.

The Personal is Professional: The Person and the Business

As scholars who study small businesses show, owners or managers in small organizations (e.g., lead marketers) are deeply embedded in almost all facets of the business and maintain close and ongoing interactions with its various stakeholders from staff and customers to suppliers and all other network partners (Down 2006). They pervade the organization and transcend departments, making their influence felt in all corners of the business. They represent their businesses in ways that other marketing professionals rarely can. In many cases, they themselves encompass the entire business, a

fact especially true of owner-operated businesses, which includes many Irish pubs. This is quite distinct from the role of more 'traditional' marketers, or indeed some CEOs[9], in larger organizations, no matter how influential these individuals might be. As much as their prescriptions about what the organization stands for and how it should operate might influence the philosophy and direction of the business, a larger company cannot be a monocracy in the same way as a smaller one can. The smaller and more intimate the business, the more likely it is one person will exert an overarching influence on the business. Small businesses possess characteristics that are quite different from larger organizations in terms of factors such as business objectives, management styles and also how marketing is viewed and conducted within the organization (Carson and Cromie 1990). It has been demonstrated, for instance, that the identities of an entrepreneur and his or her venture can be very closely intertwined (Fauchart and Gruber 2011; Hoang and Gimeno 2010; Miller and Le Breton-Miller 2011; Shepherd and Haynie 2009), and the organization will often be viewed by entrepreneurs in terms of personal growth and fulfillment ahead of economic indicators of success (Bruno, McQuarrie and Torgrimson 1992).

In order to understand the influence that lead marketers may have on their customers, I pay particular attention to how they imbue their businesses with particular elements of their identities. Identity is a multifarious term and refers in part to the variety of meanings attached to a person by self or others (Gecas 1982) and is constructed and

[9] It might be suggested that someone like Steve Jobs – famous for having been all things Apple Inc. and the overwhelming influence on the direction of the business in a way like few other major CEOs (Kahney 2008) – would be characterized as a lead marketer. However, a highly complex transnational organization like Apple is far from being the reflection of a single CEO in the way that might sometimes be presented and assumed (Fischer, Parmentier and Reuber 2009).

negotiated in social interaction (Mead 1934). The attached meanings, or self-conceptions are based largely on people's social roles, group memberships (social identities) as well as other personal and character traits that they display and others ascribe to them based on their conduct (personal identities) (Gecas 1982; Ibarra 1999). It is a multi-faceted and complex entity that has been widely studied across numerous disciplines over time. As consumer researchers note, people's material relations also affect identities as they engage with a multitude of objects in the everyday (e.g., Belk 1988). I analyze these varied means and modes of identity construction below.

The Narrative Construction of Self-identity

> "Because neither social action not institution-building is solely produced though ontological [self-] and public narratives, our concepts and explanation must include the factors we call social forces... The challenge ... is to devise a vocabulary that we can use to reconstruct and plot over time and space the ontological narratives and relationships of historical actors, the public and cultural narratives that inform their lives, and the crucial intersection of these narratives with other relevant social forces" (Somers 1994, 620).
>
> Self-identity is not a distinctive trait, or even a collection of traits, possessed by the individual, it is *the self as reflexively understood by the person in terms of her his biography*... A person's identity is not to the found in behaviour, nor – important though this is – in the reactions of others, but in the capacity to *keep a particular narrative going* (Giddens 1991, 53-4, emphasis in original).

As the quotations indicate, self-identity is not a fixed essence held within someone separate from society, but rather is a changeable achievement that may evolve and refract in various ways across time, space and through interpersonal relations (Down 2006; Giddens 1991; Somers 1994). This social constructivist approach underpins much

research on consumer culture (e.g., Arnould and Thompson 2005; Askegaard, Arnould and Kjelgaard 2005; Oswald 1999; Thompson and Tambyah 1999; Üstüner and Holt 2007). In this paper, I adopt a similar perspective in terms of understanding marketer identity. This approach seems better suited to the purposes of this dissertation than theories such Social Identification Theory (SIT) and self-categorization theory (SCT), where identity is the relatively straightforward conferral or adoption of a role, function or category (Sveningsson and Alvesson 2003).

Enacting Identity in Organizations

There is a vast literature on identity and organizations, spanning organizational identity, organizational identification, corporate identity, professional identity, and more. I limit my review to those areas related to my emergent theoretical position, focusing on individuals' active construction of identity in social contexts (e.g., Alvesson, Ashcraft and Thomas 2008; Alvesson and Willmott 2002; Ibarra 1999; Mangham and Overington 1987; Tian and Belk 2005). The perspective I adopt "refers to people being engaged in forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening or revising the constructions that are productive of a sense of coherence and distinctiveness" (Sveningsson and Alvesson 2003, 1165), and generally deals with how individuals construct a sense of self to locate themselves as social beings within an organization.

Extant identity research in organizations considers a number of different forms of identity work by individuals within these contexts, including the management and public display of symbols such as dress, office décor and objects of sentiment (Elsbach 2004;

Pratt and Rafaeli 1997; Tian and Belk 2005); the search for optimal balance between different identities (Kreiner, Hollensbe and Sheep 2006); experimenting with a suite of possible selves (Ibarra 1999); and the use of rhetorical devices such as stories, accounts, disclaimers and justifications to navigate the identity transitions faced by individuals (Pratt, Rockmann and Kaufmann 2006; Van Maanen 1988). Each is a form of identity enactment, played out in different ways within the boundaries of organizations. Ashforth (2001) looks at these different forms and categorizes them into three identity enactment categories (a) identity markers, such as dress (Pratt & Rafaeli 1997) and office décor (Elsbach 2004); (b) performance outcomes, such as the quality and quantity of output; and (c) actual behaviours by the individual such as task behaviours, and adherence to identity norms and organizational citizenship behaviours.

These enactment practices are inextricably linked with a process known as sensemaking, wherein "people learn their identities by projecting them into an environment and observing the consequences" (Weick 1995, 23). Sensemaking, literally 'the making of sense,' is a process in which individuals "construct, filter, frame and create facticity (Turner 1987), and render the subjective into something more tangible" (Weick 1995, 14). In sensemaking, individuals rely on their array of cultural resources and repertoires to structure the unknown, often *ex post*. It often occurs after organizational members encounter some sort of discontinuity or surprise, the result of which members begin to seek information and extract cues from the environment to help them "make sense' of the event (Weick 1995), but is really an ongoing process within an organization.

This approach recognizes that individuals strive to shape and construct their identities within organizations, as well as look at how these discursive forces shape identities. It has echoes of Giddens' thesis on the interplay between agency and structure (1976), which pays attention to the choices available to actors in rule-bound circumstances (which are ubiquitous). He observes that "the structural properties of social systems ... are like the walls of a room from which an individual cannot escape but inside which he or she is able to move around at whim" (Giddens 1984, 179) as individuals are both agent in the world and subject to it. In engaging in social actions people necessarily draw on structures which themselves come into being and are continually reproduced through human action, while agency implies the capacity for individuated thought and behaviour.

In considering how lead marketers identities matter to their business, I draw on the insights from research on the identity of members of organizations, but I argue that scholars stop short of fully illuminating my particular context and questions. I make this argument because, unlike most other actors in organizations, lead marketers can themselves have a significant bearing on the makeup and structure of the organization in which they operate, in a way that typical employees in large organizations cannot. I turn to the literature on narratives and identity to obtain further insight on how lead marketers' identities may be relevant to the experiences of customers in their retail establishments.

Self-narratives and Identity

A narrative is a form of self-referential discourse that helps people to articulate links between the past and present to forge some sort of continuous sense of self and to enlist others in the desired account (Ibarra and Barbulescu 2010). Narratives are frequently linked to personal identities (e.g., Down 2006; Ibarra and Barbulescu 2010; Sveningsson and Alvesson 2003; Van Maanen 1988). Through narratives, identity is produced as "the internalized and evolving story that results from a person's selective appropriation of past, present and future" (McAdams 1999, 486) in a manner that can assist people in gaining or maintaining social goals (Ashforth 2001; McAdams 1999).

Narratives need not always necessarily be about public articulation or display. Rather, they can simply be internalized self-justifications by an individual. However, narratives are often useful for social purposes. Some argue that the most legitimate of all self-narratives are those that embed the individual's story in a larger cultural discourse recognizable as part of some canon (Ibarra and Barbulescu 2010; Somers 1994).

A recent ethnography of entrepreneurs suggests how identity narratives may be relevant for lead marketers in small retail businesses such as those I study. Down (2006) shows how informants define their entrepreneurial self-identities through narratives by building coherent stories of who they are, what they do and why they perform their roles. The entrepreneurs studied selectively mobilize their narrative resources to suit particular contexts and dynamically emphasize various narrative resources to explain and motivate the execution of their various roles within their businesses (Down 2006; see also Ibarra and Barbulescu 2010). Down demonstrates how people adopt widely varying narratives

and identities at different times to suit different roles and contexts, but also how these can all change markedly over time.

Similarly, other relevant research shows how elements of firm founders' identities systematically shape key decisions in the creation of new firms, as they "imprint" their start-up businesses with their distinct self-concepts (Fauchart and Gruber 2011). Similar to Down (2006), these authors look at dynamic identities among entrepreneurs in terms of what identity elements founders invest in their businesses as well as the profound outcomes these identity decisions can have in terms of the types of business they operate (see also Miller and Le Breton-Miller 2011; Werner 2008). They find substantial differences in the creation processes and outcomes of different firms, and argue that social identification leads individuals, through their founding choices, to behave and act in ways that confirm their identities (Hogg and Terry 2000).

Identity: Some Concluding Points

This section outlines some identity research on identity management within organizations, highlights the socially constructed nature of identity, outlines ways identity narratives can be selected and employed for specific purposes, and investigates the impact a founder's identity can have on myriad facets of their business, down to its very identity and *modus operandi*. In the next chapters I outline and analyze the particular roles that identity, alongside many other factors identified above, can play in the creation of a Full place. Prior to that, I introduce assemblage theory (DeLanda 2006).

CHAPTER FOUR: ASSEMBLAGES

Up to this point I have addressed the prior research on how themed and other retail environments are made meaningful and social, and explored the history and advance of Irish pubs – the current research context. I now build on that research to investigate how marketers and consumers create a sense that these retail spaces are Full places (Miller 2008). To analyze these processes I use assemblage theory (DeLanda 2006) as a framework suitable for understanding how a varied range of elements can contribute to Fullness within a retail space such as an Irish pub. This chapter introduces assemblage theory and ties it to the concept of Fullness in retail settings.

Assemblage Theory

In this paper I adopt DeLanda's assemblage theory perspective as a framework to help understand why pubs vary in the extent to which and the way in which they achieve Fullness. The concept of an assemblage originally emerged in the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1988) and has since been developed in various ways by different theorists. Chief among these is Manuel DeLanda (2006), whose conception of the term assemblage as representing any dynamic social entity forms the basis of how I employ it. Assemblage theory encourages investigating social entities via their components, which are regarded as dynamic, flexible and always subject to change and alteration. As Marcus and Saka (2006) show, the notion of assemblage is a sort of anti-structural concept in that it permits a researcher to speak of emergence, heterogeneity, the decentered and the ephemeral in a nonetheless ordered social life. To conceptualize entities through the lens of assemblages

one must be aware that although different entities may have quite similar identities and identity markers, they are at the same time consistently put together in a dynamic manner, often with quite distinct component parts (DeLanda 2006; Palmås 2011). As stated by DeLanda (2006), "[t]he ontological status of any assemblage, inorganic, organic or social, is that of a unique, singular, historically contingent, individual" (40).

Although different assemblages may fit into the same categories in our mind, they are inherently different things. Every assemblage is an emergent entity and so too they can combine with others in the creation of larger assemblages. For instance, DeLanda (2006) writes of the creation of national markets (for instance the US market) in which the national market is an assemblage that includes many other forms of more minor markets, each of which is itself an assemblage. He details how small town markets are assemblages that originally synthesized into regional markets (another assemblage), which in turn synthesized into larger markets (others assemblages) again, all the way up to national markets, and beyond (to even bigger assemblages). Similarly, individuals can form social networks that can in turn become organizations, each an assemblage. In every case, each component of an assemblage can be involved in a range of other assemblages, often with very different roles in each. In this section I will detail assemblages, their component parts and interactions, and highlight how they will be used in this paper.

Dimensions of Assemblages: Material-Expressive and Stabilization-Destabilization

Components of assemblages are characterized along two dimensions. Along the first dimension are the variable roles component parts play, ranging from purely material

to purely expressive. Material elements include content, such as bodies, physical components, entities and actions; expressive elements that entail enunciations, acts, statements, symbols, expressions, and the intangible aspects of narratives (Canniford and Shankar 2013; DeLanda 2006; Deleuze and Guattari 1988; Marcus and Saka 2006). With a few notable exceptions notwithstanding (e.g., Canniford and Shanker 2013; Diamond et al. 2009; Epp and Price 2010; Kozinets et al. 2004; Maclaran and Brown 2005; Thomas et al. 2013), consumer culture theory researchers have tended to under-emphasize the material as it affects consumer experiences, focusing more on the symbolic. Drawing on assemblage theory, I look at both material and expressive elements in order to conduct a comprehensive analysis of my research sites.

The second dimension that characterizes elements of assemblages is the extent to which they serve to either stabilize or destabilize the assemblage (DeLanda 2006). Stabilization refers to the ways an assemblage becomes more coherent and fixed, while destabilization refers to the ways an assemblage becomes challenged, unsettled and disrupted, as to some degree it changes the assemblage into something different. Both can occur in a number of ways.

A recent example of the application of assemblage theory is Canniford and Shankar's (2013) study of consumers assembling romantic experiences of nature. They meld the expressive and material, in this case showing consumers' experiences of nature as the outcome of consumption assemblages wherein expressive elements such as romantic cultural scripts combine with material geographies and technological resources. Consumers' meanings, uses and encounters of nature emerge from this assemblage of a

totality of multiple elements, yet these assemblages are ongoing, iterative processes in which stabilizing and destabilizing forces are continually at play.

Similarly, in their study of running communities, Thomas et al. (2013) use assemblage theory to look at heterogeneity within communities and show how myriad elements of the assemblage interact as stabilizing and destabilizing forces within the community. Their assemblage includes various consumers and producers, as well as social and economic resources which include material artefacts such as running shoes themselves. Consumers include a range of people from hyper-competitive runners, all to way to recreational runners, joggers, and walkers. Producers in turn include all forms of stores that cater to the aforementioned consumers, major and minor athletic apparel brands, race organizers and race coordinators. Social resources are identified as those that take on expressive roles as symbols and sentiments to build individual and collective identities and communicate meanings to others (anything from producer-created hubs through which runners can communicate to runners' times being used as benchmarks for others). Economic resources take on the material roles in the community such as objects, commercial experiences and monetary instruments, examples of which would be running equipment or prizes, and sponsorships of races or other group activities.

The heterogeneity they identify comes mainly from the addition of many of the above to the assemblage, including the millions of new runners and joggers who are typically less competitive and more recreational in outlook than the original participants, new cultural understandings of running and running group culture, and myriad new producers and their products and services that responded to and drive the changes and

growth within the community. Within this multi-layered and complex assemblage the authors pay close attention not only to the components of the assemblage, but just as importantly to the relations between the various components to demonstrate how communities maintain some sense of continuity even as rampant heterogeneity operates as a destabilizing force. It is the nature of these relations that I move onto next.

Relations of Exteriority

Assemblages are characterized by what are called "relations of exteriority" and are often presented as being fundamentally different from totalities, which are characterized by relations of interiority. In relations of exteriority, components' roles within an assemblage do not entirely define them, and in contrast to totalities, the parts of an assemblage do not form a seamless whole. In relations of interiority for example, components' roles within a totality would define them and they cohere to form a seamless whole. One of the best ways to describe is through explaining an organic totality. To take a rather macabre example, an organism's heart is a fixed and central part of an organic totality with clear and unalterable functions. The character and function of a heart is inextricably linked to the body to the point that it has no functional role outside of the organic totality. Its sole role is that of a heart and it can neither be removed from the totality (as it would have no function outside of it) nor be used for some other function in the totality. These are characteristic of relations of interiority and of totalities. As DeLanda says of these relations of interiority:

> [T]he component parts are constituted by the very relations they have to other parts in the whole. A part detached from such a whole ceases to be what it is,

> since being this particular part is one of its constitutive properties... Thus, in this conception wholes possess an inextricable unity in which there is a strict reciprocal determination between the parts (2006, 9).

In relations of exteriority however, there are two important features that help in understanding assemblages. First, a component part of an assemblage can be detached from that particular assemblage and plugged into another one in which the other components and the interactions need not be the same. It can fulfill any range of different functions in the other assemblage. Returning to the social network example above, we can see how people can be detached from one social network and fit easily into another. Alternatively, a runner can play a passive role in her running community assemblage yet she might be an active leader in an assemblage of local resident groups, moving seamlessly between these assemblages. Any part is not entirely defined by being a component in an assemblage and it may fulfill different roles within different assemblages. Second, relations of exteriority mean that the properties of the components' parts can never explain the relations that constitute a whole. In a social network for instance, we can see that people's 'properties,' such as their age, gender or position within a group, need not explain the relations of the network as a whole.

Assemblages therefore, unlike totalities, are open to different forms of analysis because they can be reconstructed from their constituent parts. While an important aspect of assemblages is that these components (material and expressive) come together through relations of exteriority, the components that go into the formation of the assemblage should not be seen as necessarily constituting the essence of that assemblage. On one hand, the compositions of components differ from assemblage to assemblage. Equally, if

not more importantly, it is the interrelations between various components that create an emergent whole. A significant aspect of the analysis of each assemblage is to therefore analyze the relationships between the components, all of which may be in constant motion. Thus, a certain component does not necessarily play the same role in all assemblages.

Nonlinear Causality

Another important feature of an assemblage is that there is a "nonlinear causality" among it elements (DeLanda 2006). Certain factors may become catalysts or triggers for particular events, and that which acts as a catalyst or trigger in one assemblage need not necessarily act as one in another assemblage. Essentially, this means that different causes can lead to the same effect across different assemblages. Another feature is that of the synthesis – the way in which assemblages are created through components of the assemblage interacting with other components in their creation. This emphasizes the dynamic interplay between various components in each assemblage with no fixed patterns necessary between the various components, the interactions and the outcomes.

Conclusion: Assemblages of Fullness

In the chapters that follow I look at the five pub cases studies and analyze the inter-related material and human components comprising the assemblage of factors that cohere and are transmuted into the holism of the place itself to create that pub's particular sense of Fullness for at least some period of time. Every assemblage is in a process of perpetual

change; assemblage is a verb as much as a noun, a process of becoming as much as it is a state of being. Any assemblage emerges from the coming together of myriad material and expressive components, which may have developed quite independently of one another but for a period of time fuse into a temporarily coherent whole. Through my case analyses I will show that Fullness can be triggered in many different ways, with some components more prevalent in certain assemblages than in others. In one pub an important contributor to Fullness might be the lead marketer's personable and entertaining interactions with customers, in another it might come more from the social interactions of consumers that make this pub their local, while in another it may come primarily from the material elements that comprise the pub's built space and that influence how consumers interact with others in the setting. My analysis will also consider the case of a pub that lacks much Fullness and consider the elements in the assemblage that contribute to this outcome. It is unlikely that there would be one single element of the assemblage that triggers Fullness or lack thereof; in highlighting the more important components in each of the pubs I also account for how these interact with the other components in the creation or dilution of Fullness. In this I show the syntheses between different components in each assemblage, both in terms of their emergence and influences. I also account for the dynamism of assemblages and look at change within them – through the stabilizing and destabilizing forces – and the variable effects on Fullness. I then conclude with some theoretical contributions leading from the etic analysis of my sites and suggest some avenues for future research.

CHAPTER FIVE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

The primary objective that emerged in this research was to look at ways retail places come to be, or fail to be sites characterized by Fullness. To this ends I conducted a series of hybrid ethnographic case studies (Allen 2002; Burawoy 1991; Ekström 2006; Hannerz 1996; Marcus 1998; Schouten and McAlexander 1995) of a variety of Irish pubs. In addition to observation, I used marketer and consumer data to identify a core set of dynamic factors that lead various degrees of this type of sociality to emerge for a time in a retail space. In this section I will outline both my research method and context, and demonstrate how together they enable rich theoretical insights and answers to my research questions. I borrow elements from two inter-related research methods, namely ethnography and the Extended Case Method (ECM) (Burawoy 1991), to form a method loosely described as hybrid ethnographic case studies. I introduce each method and describe it in detail below, and offer a justification for why my methods are useful and appropriate.

Ethnography

Ethnography involves a deep and sustained engagement in a research site, where the researcher develops close connections with the subjects and situations being studied, and where particular attention is paid to the broader cultural context within which events and social interactions occur. It is a very broad concept, with a variety of strands, and is

often considered a philosophical paradigm as much as it is a research method (Atkinson and Hammersley 1994). Methodologically speaking however, in an ethnographic study, through participant observation, a researcher typically explores the nature of a social phenomenon as opposed to testing theory, works with unstructured data on a small number of detailed cases, and presents an analysis involving explicit interpretation in the form of verbal descriptions and explanations (Atkinson and Hammersley 1994). The strength of the method lies in being able to unpack the imbricated layers of cultural meanings and local interpretations; it is only from working through these, and sorting out 'structures of signification' that the researcher can arrive at a more encompassing cultural understanding (Geertz 1973).

However, within an increasingly complex globalized world researchers are finding their studies often require more than one site, and so undertake 'multi-sited ethnographies' (Marcus 1998). Although I study a number of different sites, my research is not easily categorized as 'multi-sited ethnography' since in essence I study multiple cases, not multiple sites in which a given phenomenon unfolds in a sort of coordinated structure or network (Hannerz 2003). As an example of a multi-sited ethnography, consider a recent paper by Knowles (2009); he visited a number of sites and talked to and observed workers, managers and consumers across different countries to highlight local and global movements in capital, labour and goods through the context of the production and sale of the flip flop shoe (see also Kjeldgaard, Csaba and Ger 2006). In contrast, I have a collection of theoretically rich, interrelated case studies of pubs and their lead

marketers and customers, which need not be studied as part of a structure, network or constellation.

Extended Case Method (ECM)

The ECM is a particular form of ethnography that involves theory reconstruction, extension and development in light of anomalous cases (Burawoy 1991; Eliasoph and Lichterman 1999). In my case, the anomalous factor is the application of a theory founded in the domestic sphere in a commercial setting. Existing theory plays a primary role in ECM, as opposed to grounded theory approaches that tend toward an engagement with the context in a manner that is influenced less directly by extant research and more by following emergent observations and findings (Glaser and Strauss 1967). This is not to say that the ECM researcher must narrowly follow one single line of inquiry. As with other ethnographic methods, there is an inherent flexibility to pursue contingencies. ECM is a reflexive model of science: one "that embraces not detachment but engagement as the road to knowledge" (Burawoy 1991, 5). It involves a deep, prolonged engagement by the researcher in one or more research contexts where the researcher can be as active in his or her engagements with the object of inquiry as is deemed fit. The researcher must gain a nuanced understanding of the local environment and local knowledge and an appreciation for how informants understand their environments (Kates 2006). In so doing, the researcher relates informants' actual practices to larger structures, and through the micro observational and interview data seeks to understand the effects of macro social, cultural and contextual forces on situations and people within them (Burawoy 1991; Kates 2006).

Summarizing, the extended case method "take[s] previous theory as a springboard, demonstrate[s] how the contexts are anomalous and, through analysis of interview and observational data, subsequently extend[s] or reformulate[s] previous theory" (Kates 2006, 177). With this in mind I introduce my research sites and detail how the method was employed therein.

Research Site and Method

I chose to undertake a comparative case analysis of a set of themed retail environments in Toronto, Canada, all of which are purportedly Irish pubs. These sites were purposively sampled to differ in terms of size of the space (from very tiny rooms, to larger, multi-roomed spaces), clientele (having Irish to non-Irish), lead marketers (Irish to non-Irish), and being independently owned and operated versus corporate-owned and operated. I immersed myself in the different contexts and relations in and across the research sites (Ekström 2006). I conducted ethnographic fieldwork over the course of three years and engaged in multiple means of obtaining data, including formal interviewing, participant observation (including conversing with the lead marketers, employees and customers inside, and sometimes away from, the pubs), visiting other Irish pubs with informants, taking photographs and tending bar part-time for almost five months in one of the research sites. Through deep and prolonged engagement in these field sites, I was able to observe and analyze nuanced cultural, social and material marketing practices in action.

Conducting ethnographic research in more than one site allows for depth and breadth as a multiplicity of voices can be heard and a more comprehensive understanding of cultural objects, meanings and identities and their production and circulation under analysis gained across the sites (Marcus 1998). Yet the early phases of this study differed from traditional ethnographies in another significant manner, as each pub had but one focal informant – the lead marketer (see Down 2006 for an example of this method in action). The research sought to unpack and illuminate the cultural details and specificities that underpinned their identities as pub lead marketers. In keeping with the notion of pubs as personal identity projects, I also investigated how the pub was designed, built and operated, including material and social elements put in place in its construction. I sought to gain an inside, or 'emic' view, of these individuals whose jobs involve creating images, texts and semantic associations intended to result in the creation of cultural and social meanings around a business enterprise (Cook 2006; Dávila 2001).

At the early phases of research I engaged in ongoing interactions with customers and staff through conversations and participant observation, but the focal point of interest was the interplay between the identities of lead marketers and their businesses. Yet, in keeping with the flexibility that ECM facilitates I followed some of my evolving findings to expand my focus within the sites. I broadened my initial circumscribed focus of inquiry to include customers and staff, and their productive roles within the pub. Moreover, throughout the three-year process emphasis was also placed on investigating the material makeup of the pub. Overall, this expansive method reflects that these pubs

are the product of a complex assemblage whose component parts are in a constant interplay.

Table 1: RESEARCH INFORMANTS – LEAD MARKETERS (names and pub names are pseudonyms except Paddy McMurray and The Céilí Cottage)

Pub	Informant	Nationality	Age
The Céilí Cottage	Paddy	Canadian	42
McArdle's	Mairéad	Irish	39
Hibernian Inn	Breda	Irish	48
	Rose	Chinese	31
	Gerard	French-Canadian	48
	Ned	Irish	42
JP O'Donoghue's	Mick Quinlan	Irish	78
	Eamon Quinlan	Irish – Canadian	53
Fibber O'Toole's	James	Canadian	35

The lead marketer in each pub sat for least one long interview (McCracken 1988a), which lasted from between 45 to 240 minutes. Each was conducted in the lead marketer's business and transcribed verbatim. Moreover, in some select cases I interviewed customers from different sites, as I wanted them to speak in more depth about certain experiences. Interviews allow for focus and greater elaboration on relevant areas of study. Following the advice of McCracken (1988a), a list of grand tour questions was developed, and carefully selected probes were employed during interviews to further explore topics pertaining to the research question. This technique facilitated the unearthing of relevant information, while acknowledging the contingencies of the interview process (McCracken 1988a). To understand the extent to which customers in pubs experienced them as places characterized by Fullness, I followed phenomenological interviewing techniques (Thompson, Locander and Pollio 1989). These allowed me to

examine how participants understand within their own cultural contexts and their processes of sensemaking their experiences in the environments of interest.

Questions for lead marketers broadly explored informants' experiences surrounding the business and their relationships, probed their reasons for buying or building the space, looked at the rationale behind operational decisions made, examined how the pub had changed over the course of time, and interrogated their future plans and goals for the operation. Customer interviews explored their experiences with the pub and people within it, as well as traced changes over time. In addition, in all cases I also sought to gain a detailed understanding of informants' personal histories and life worlds. This knowledge allowed me to better understand how they interpreted and organized the phenomena under investigation, how they made sense of the retail space and how they gave reason to lead marketer decisions. Moreover, these emerged both through the formal interviews as well as the general conversations and interactions that constitute participant-observation.

Table 2: RESEARCH INFORMANTS – CUSTOMERS (ALL NAMES ARE PSEUDONYMS)

Pub	Informant	Nationality	Age
The Céilí Cottage	Lacey	Canadian	31
	Cas	Irish	34
	Jen	Canadian	40
	Godott	Unknown	Unknown
	HendyK	Unknown	Unknown
	Peter	Irish	29
McArdle's	Rich	Irish	31
	Declan	Irish	Approx. 55
	Darragh	Irish	32
	Cian	Irish	30
	Mimi	Canadian	33
	Sarah	Canadian	31
Hibernian Inn	Martin	English	48
	Gino	Canadian	34
	Jeff	Canadian	24
	Michelle	English	47
	Mattius	Canadian	42
	Jerome	Irish	55
JP O'Donoghue's	Conor	Irish	67
	Mairéad	Irish	39
	Margaret	Irish	Approx. 65
	Sean	Irish	Approx. 55
Fibber O'Toole's	Dave	Canadian	32
	Larry	Canadian	34
	Mimi	Canadian	33
	Jeevan	Canadian	36
	Simon	Canadian	25
	Laina	American	37
	Paul	Canadian	37
	Ned	Irish	42

The formal interviews provided me with valuable insights into understanding focal informants' personal histories and cultural understandings but were only a very small part of the time spent in the company of the pub lead marketers and customers. Participant-observation was another vital research tool that allowed me to interact with lead marketers, customers and staff within the sites in order to experience the dynamics of the business first-hand. Through this I could grasp peoples' understanding of place and their roles within the pub, see how lead marketers, staff and customers interacted with

elements of the site, and in some cases to form an understanding of the ongoing processes of change within the pub over time (Marcus 1998).

The very nature of the pub business means that ongoing interactions and conversations are maintained between the different parties in the pub: between staff and lead marketers and the consumers, and between the consumers themselves. Indeed, from a retail ethnography standpoint it is rare to find a profession in which the role expectations of the retail professional include such sustained personal interactions with customers. As a researcher I observed the various retail actors *in situ* over an extended period of time and engaged in ongoing interactions with many of them without unnaturally imposing myself on the context, on both sides of the bar as customer and bartender. Through this I garnered very natural insights from all retail actors within the sites. Moreover, as all of these various actors are continually interacting with various elements of the retail setting throughout, I also observed and understood the importance of the physical elements of the place, how some elements took on certain meanings, how they influenced and structured actions and interactions, and how the physical components were used throughout.

A significant part of the rich tapestry of voices, images, interactions and performances that participant observation facilitates is that it allows an ethnographer to achieve a better balance between subjectivity and objectivity than interrogative methods alone (Clifford 1986). I created field notes during pub visits and these numbered approximately 800 pages. Finally, in order to enrich my research data I immersed myself in popular press articles, websites, consumers' weblogs, books and novels on the topic of

Irish Pubs and Irish Pub culture. Furthermore, I also visited other pubs outside of my field sites, sometimes with informants.

An important aspect of ethnographies in general and extended case studies in particular is the role of the researcher as an insider (Burawoy 1991). I earned this insider status in a number of ways. One is through my longstanding immersion in my field sites where I became to be seen as an 'insider' in terms of being a frequent pub patron. I became a regular fixture and gained acceptance among many of the pub regulars who considered me as a customer just like them, rather than an outside investigator. This is also the case with the employees, many of whom openly shared with me their perspectives and thoughts about the pub, the lead marketer and the customers. What they shared was not always complimentary. Indeed, the very nature of the barperson-customer relationship is one naturally built on this free-flowing exchange of thoughts, opinions and feelings; when I too worked on the other side of the bar this same free flowing interaction and feedback was in evidence. It is not a case in which the researcher will struggle for feedback and ideas; rather, these tend to flow quite freely. It was my job to ask the right questions to probe some issues of interest and gain the most out of other emergent issues. I also earned the trust of the lead marketers, and was given privileged access to many of the strategies and machinations behind the operations. As an example, one shared with me news that she was selling the pub before telling anyone else in the pub, staff included. Also, some lead marketers consulted me about proposed changes within the pubs.

My insider status was further assured through my Irish nationality, even though my field sites are constructed 'Irish' spaces in Canada. A shared heritage, history, cultural

background and life experiences and knowledge of certain cultural codes were useful in my discussions with Irish-born or Irish-identified informants. With some of my non-Irish informants I was sometimes assigned a different role as my knowledge of Irish traditions, customs, and pub culture sometimes made me a source of information and validation for them. Indeed, in one instance my nationality was such an appealing trait to the lead marketers that it helped to secure me a part-time job tending bar in the Hibernian Inn.

Also contributing to my insider status is my general knowledge of the industry. I have a range of previous work experience in the pub industry in Ireland in a number of different capacities: as barman as an undergraduate student, as well as organizing, managing, staffing and sometimes the on-the-ground supervising and actual operation of a range of promotions and other below-the-line marketing efforts in bars, pubs and clubs for brands such as Guinness, Budweiser and Carlsberg as a Senior Associate for a national marketing company. The co-existence of my researcher and insider positions, according to Clifford (1986, 9), afforded me "new angles of vision and depths of understanding" not otherwise available to outsiders.

Yet, the choice of Irish pubs as my study site goes beyond mere convenience and personal interest. The overarching goal of this research is to study the various ways retail settings allow interpersonal relationships and interaction to abound within them. This entails a mutually constitutive interplay between the various retail actors and the setting itself and is a complex perpetual process, the unraveling and understanding of which lends itself to the above outlined ethnographic methods. Through deep and prolonged engagement in these field sites, I have been able to observe and analyze nuanced cultural,

social and material marketing practices in action. While the above detailing of some of the advantages of conducting my ethnographic research provides starting rationales for why pubs, I limit my focus to Irish pubs for a number of other reasons.

The common Irish theme allowed for some semblance of consistency across the different cases, while diversity within the cases is possible based on the sheer volume of Irish theme pubs in the city of Toronto (approximately fifty at last count) from which to choose. Holding some factors constant allowed me to reduce some of the complexity inherent in ethnographic research, as well as allow for generative and illuminating insights through comparison and contrast across a number of dimensions. I purposefully sampled these sites so that they differed across a number of dimensions, in terms of size, clientele (having Irish to non-Irish), lead marketers (Irish to non-Irish), and being independently owned and operated versus corporate-owned and operated. Additionally, a significant part of the worldwide growth of Irish pubs has been based on a concerted effort on the part of Guinness and other companies to codify and standardize elements of 'Irishness' as embodied by the choices related to the location, design and kitting out of the pub, drinks, food, music, staff and all-round atmosphere (Irish Pub Concept 2002; Yenne 2007). With such an emphasis placed on consistency by some powerful agents within the industry it is interesting to observe the ways in which variance is made manifest across the various pub assemblages.

Data Analysis

The purpose of conducting ethnographic research is to gain a sense of "being there" (Geertz 1973) and to provide a deep theoretical understanding of the context. This not only allowed me to understand the process of cultural production and interaction but also allowed me to capture and present the sense of reflexivity and complexity of voice (Marcus 1998) in the contexts. Working across the different sources and field sites allowed me to develop thick descriptions of identity work in a number of sites, and to check my emergent interpretations against one another. I conducted data analysis in accordance with the data reduction-data display-conclusion drawing framework proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994). Data collection and analysis were not conducted in temporally discrete stages, but undertaken concurrently. Multiple readings of a transcript followed data collection prior to coding. Data were reduced on an intra- and cross-case basis and through close coding. Constant comparison of emergent ideas and interrelationships were displayed and organized to initiate a cyclic process of analysis and refinement. I constantly compared emergent themes and categories and reinterpreted them in order to achieve a theoretical understanding of my context and questions. Themes and patterns that emerged facilitated my investigating them in greater detail and the crafting of more germane questions for subsequent interviews and discussions. Throughout the course of data collection, I regularly reviewed interview recordings and transcripts, the results of which I will delve into in the coming chapters. Moreover, while each research site is presented as an individual case study for in-depth analysis, in my conclusion I address some common themes across the variety of case studies, and analyze these in greater detail.

CHAPTER SIX: FULLNESS THROUGH MATERIAL STAGING THAT SUPPORTS PERFORMANCE

The Céilí Cottage

This chapter builds upon themed retail environment research (e.g., Borghini et al. 2009; Diamond et al. 2009; Kozinets et al. 2004) that frames the space as a retail stage designed to tell resonant and interactive stories, and in which patterned performances are played out. What I will show, in my analysis of The Céilí Cottage, is how Fullness can be encouraged from some of the same staging elements – design, layout, and the multitude of props in the place – in conjunction with performances that are fostered and encouraged by these material staging elements. Fullness emerges in part from peoples' interactions with the staging elements, and in part from their interactions with those who perform within the ambit of the space. In introducing this field site, I describe both the place and its charismatic lead marketer, whose efforts to engineer a space and practices within it that encourage sociality, have been quite deliberate.

The Céilí Cottage is a two-room, 60-person capacity pub in Toronto's East End. It opened its doors in July 2009 and had line-ups within 48 hours. Initial profit expectations were exceeded by almost 400%, and this early success has continued. It remains the busiest pub in East Toronto in terms of the volume of Guinness sales, the standard best-seller across Irish pubs. Additionally, food sales are three times what the owner initially expected. The owner, and most certainly the lead marketer, is Paddy McMurray, a 42-year old Canadian of Irish heritage with almost 25 years' experience in the hospitality

industry. Since 2001 he has been the owner, operator, and the "face" of Starfish Oyster Bed and Grill, a successful downtown Toronto Oyster and seafood restaurant, as well as being a former world champion oyster shucker, reigning official Guinness World Record holder for shucking most oysters (38) in a minute (to shuck means to prise open an oyster) and author of one book to date, *Consider the Oyster: A Shucker's Field Guide.*

Although Canadian-born, Paddy feels a deep affinity for Ireland and Irish culture. His paternal grandparents immigrated to Canada from Ireland in the early 20th century but his Irishness was not a major element of his identity when growing up. Instead, it was at his first international oyster shucking event in Ireland in 1996 that he began to think more of this side of his family history as being a part of himself. He then began to actively cultivate his Irish-Canadian identity, throwing himself into Irish culture with the zeal of a convert. He travels to Ireland frequently, has many friends and professional contacts there and within Canadian-Irish networks, and speaks knowledgably about Irish culture, heritage, food, drinks, pubs in Ireland and Irish pubs abroad, and some of the nuances of Irish national identity. He has woven many of these qualities into his pub. Indeed, his connection with Ireland is such that he now officially works in an ambassadorial capacity with Tourism Ireland, the pan-island body responsible for promoting tourism to the island of Ireland.

Paddy articulates his notion of the ideal Irish pub as follows:

> There's the thing with the pub. You should be able to sit. Have a bite to eat. Have a pint. Have a read on a quiet afternoon and no one should disturb you. Or you just have an idle conversation with your neighbour or the bartender or whatever. If the TV's on, it's on and it's low. Music's playing in the background. Nothing should overpower another. You should be able to do whatever you want (Paddy McMurray, interview).

This is the essence of what he tries to create with The Céilí Cottage. He is very clear in his vision for the business and speaks frequently of "doing things his own way," of not being bound by what others think a pub should be. He follows his own instincts in confecting a space in which customers can enjoy good food, drink and company. All is designed, built and choreographed with deliberation, starting with the pub name. The word *Céilí* in the name is a deliberate signifier; as Paddy (correctly) explains, *céilí* is "an Irish word for social get-together for food and dance, and that comes about with drink and socializing." Moreover, Paddy designates The Céilí Cottage to not be a pub, but rather a Local, the official business name actually being "The Céilí Cottage: An Irish Local." As he explains,

> The Local is somewhere someone goes in and they put their story into it, and it creates the Local. That is why I call this one an Irish Local I don't call it a pub ... The difference between a pub and a Local is the same thing as between a house and a home. The home is where the heart is, etc.

This conceptualization melds themes of home and meeting place. One of the cornerstones of research on third places is the idea that commercial outlets can serve as both homes away from home, and centers of community for those who frequent them (e.g., Oldenburg 1999). The home away from home feel comes largely from the outlet's warm, convivial way, and how it makes customers feel comfortable and rooted (Oldenburg 1999). Paddy keeps returning to these overlapping themes of pub as home and as social space where people can come together. Moving beyond the third place language of the pub as customer's home-away-from-home, Paddy instead likens the pub to *his* home, and consumers to welcome family guests within it:

> This is my family. Everybody's my extended family. You're welcome to my house any time. Well it becomes a home rather than a house. Because it's got the stories and the lore and all that. So these are the stories that created the joint. Now it's sort of open and we're open to make other stories.

To facilitate sociality on an ongoing basis, Paddy believes he must create a space through material artefacts that evoke, or can be made to evoke, a story:

> And I've been in, I've worked in places where people will take photographs from one end to the other and want to copy it. You can do that, but there's a feeling – you've got to have some story behind it. You really have to come down to the story and the history. Especially an Irish style too – works to your advantage if you can tell stories, if there are stories to be told. And you can't make them up … That's what precedes all other forms of entertainment – is telling the story and the lore, sitting around a campfire and that's it. That's how you learn. It's what this place is. It ends up being a big fat campfire and stories are told across the board.

Judging by the reactions of consumers to the setting, Paddy's efforts have been successful in creating a setting that encourages sociality and storytelling. For example, when asked her opinions of The Céilí Cottage, Lacey, a frequent visitor to the pub, stated:

> Well, I was impressed by the way it smelled for sure--- woodstove-like. I also liked how no one really stood on ceremony. The bartender/waiter kind of mocked us in his Irish way right away. It wasn't reverential to Ireland, if that makes sense. It was more of a gathering place – a community. I felt comfortable yakking away to people at other tables. I'm from a place where it's common to do that, so it felt home-y. It didn't try too hard, you know? Being from the East Coast, I get the Celtic culture stuffed down my throat daily when I'm home. But this place was Irish without having to call everything by an Irish name or use that Celtic font you see everywhere. It was Irish in it's not taking itself too seriously and in it's welcoming you with its wry humour. Not by blaring Great Big Sea and boasting of soda bread like it was going to make you a third Celtic if you consumed it … And at least this one didn't try to be dank and cellar-y and pub-y, all the while being built in 2009. This one actually has an ambience - it has a root cellar, for God's sake! (Lacey, 31, Canadian).

Being from Eastern Canada which has its own pub culture and rich Celtic heritage, as well as having lived for a time in Liverpool, England, Lacey believes hers is a well-cultivated opinion on what constitutes a good pub. Indeed, in Lacey's vocalization of her experience she mirrors Paddy's ambitions for the pub and describes the sort of place he tries to create – with material elements (e.g. the smell, the root cellar) and performative elements (e.g. the bartender's banter) that combine to create a place she considers to be a comfortable, communal, gathering place with ambiance. In describing her experience, she points to some of the elements that contribute to Fullness at The Céilí Cottage, as well as articulating the effect of these on the pub experience. In my analysis, I focus first on material elements that embody stories, and then on the performances that are encouraged by the setting these material elements create.

Material Elements that Embody Stories and Facilitate Sociality

When designing the physical infrastructure of The Céilí Cottage, Paddy deliberately worked with an existing space and took advantage of elements of the building to contribute to the story he is telling. To him, this is not a case of compromising or being constrained by having to work within limitations of the space. Rather, he uses elements of the space to inspire and improvise his narrative. He recounts his first impressions of the building that would eventually become The Céilí Cottage:

> I sit there and I kind of look across the street at this garage. It's got this shape of an old slate roof cottage. Not the thatch, but the slate; it looks like a slate roof cottage from the West [of Ireland] even though it's brown and it's dirty and it's rundown … So I knew that I had this lust for this building because it looked right … And the idea when we came in. We said okay, we're going to take this space and then, in my mind an Irish bar should be a small tiny little place. And it should

> reflect the, the building is what the building is. It's either, it's this old bank building then it will be an old bank. If it's an old whatever building then it's whatever. If it's a greengrocers, which this could have been a greengrocers or something. I'm not sure if it was that. This happens to be an old garage. So that's what it is. We just leave it what it is, hang a few pictures. Bring some tables and chairs in. And you call it a day … We're not going to try to gussy it up and smudge the walls and make it look like it was like a thatched roof cottage somewhere in Ireland. It's a garage.

In the outline of a dilapidated garage Paddy saw a cottage taking shape, and from this The Céilí Cottage emerged (see Photo 6.1). While there is nothing in the way of theming that would suggest to the casual observer that the building's former purpose was as a garage, much of the shape and texture of the garage walls and beams remain, infusing the pub with rough hewn look and feel, reminiscent of, but deliberately not attempting to mimic an Irish cottage. Paddy's comments on his Dining Room walls are illustrative:

> When it comes to this room here [Dining Room], we didn't know how lucky we were to have this room. This room is tagged at 1884, 1882, by the Fire Department. So this is an 1880s building, and you can see it in the layers of the paint. Now people will say who did your walls? Well like Mother Nature. This is all natural … So when I came in here, the walls were down and the paint was so thick. It's years and years and years of work … It's got such a three dimensional texture. You can't duplicate that anywhere. It's a museum. It's an oil painting. It's Mother Nature has done this … You couldn't pay a designer to do this type of thing. You just leave it as it is. It is what it is. And photographers love it. Like everybody loves it cause it's got this strange new wonderful dirty look to it. And you tell people, 'that's what I think – it is what it is'. So the structure itself is where it starts.

As Paddy indicates, the walls are deeply textured, bearing paint applied over the last 150 years, with its accompanying watermarks and stains, and outlines of bathroom and other equipment that once stood there (see Photo 6.2). The story of the building is in these walls and they play the part of storyteller in the building's new guise. The net effect of

the walls and other artefacts placed within the pub's Dining Room is remarked upon by Troy Burtch, writer of the *Great Canadian Beer Blog*:

> Walking into the dining room feels like entering a proper Irish local the way it would have been in the late 1800's (judging by photographs from the book: Dublin Pub Life and Lore). Large thick wooden plank flooring, barn like [sic] open wooden rafters, church pews, original brick and stone walls that have been cleaned up but have otherwise been left untouched and undistributed, are just some of the key pieces that put this room together (Burtch, 2009).

Consumers' comments echo the impression that the walls and décor within them contribute to fullness. Cas (Irish, 34M), for example, said, "I love the way it looks – it frames the experience for the entire room … It's cozy."

Many other physical elements of the pub contribute similarly in both material and expressive ways. One such element is the wooden floorboards that Paddy sawed and joined together to build tables for his Dining Room:

> These are floorboards here. This here, this all comes from the distillery in downtown Toronto. If you think about it as well, and this is the way I thought about it, who were one of the major people and bodies that work in the distillery, were the Irish. They came over during the Potato Famine. A lot of them ending up working out of Corktown in the distillery. So this is probably about a hundred years and thousands of Irish feet before it actually gets here. So it lends a little karma to the place … So I got all this stuff that I could make things out have that had stories to it as well … That's got probably more Irish history to it than anyone else, but nobody knows. Because more people have been on that than you can think of. And so without thinking about it, I actually got a lot of historical bits without, it's great to create these wonderful stories without having the forethought, without it being contrived. It's just what I got (see Photo 6.2).

The story of the floorboards procured by Paddy is one of a longstanding whisky and spirit making tradition in Toronto. Paddy re-construed this as a tradition in which the Irish played a vital ongoing role and sees the floorboards as fitting representations of their toil. They are artefacts with a distinctively local, Toronto-Irish, significance that renders the

narrative of the place nuanced and unique. The provenance of the table boards is not annotated, publicized or celebrated in the pub; instead they look like any relatively nondescript timeworn wooden-top tables, blending with, and contributing to, the aged aesthetic of the Dining Room. Although he practically poeticizes them in private speech to me, Paddy doesn't foreground their importance in the mise-en-scene; rather, he shares the story with those who ask, and regulars can pass it along as they choose.

Another subtle, social-material element of The Céilí Cottage is the bar top. Paddy wanted Kilkenny limestone, a dark grey-blue stone named after the Irish city around which much of it is quarried. He desired it for its color and other visual effects, as well as for its cool texture and for the way in which permeable limestone will literally absorb the spills that are part of pub life. He recalls how some came into his possession though one of his many extensive personal and professional networks:

> So how am I going to get Kilkenny limestone in Toronto when I have the bar built? At the same time as I was just thinking about opening up and started the process, I go where am I going to get the stones? And Ireland Park[10] opens up. And I know the Kearns who organized, designed and built Ireland Park at the base of Bathurst Street. And it is built with Kilkenny limestone ... And this is ancient sea floor. It's 25 million years old. That's coral right here [he says pointing at markings on the bar top]. And you'll see, there's little critters and stuff all stuck, and oysters too in the bar. So we have this story as well. And it actually comes from Ireland. Which is rare to have any stone, any granite bar tops they're all Canadian granite.

Paddy not only gets his limestone but serendipitously for him he acquires the leftover slabs from the batch that went into the making of Toronto's Ireland Park. Having this association with a tribute to something so central to Irish history and national identity

[10] Ireland Park is a Famine Memorial Park opened in Toronto in 2007 by the President of Ireland to honour the 38,560 Irish immigrants to arrive in Toronto (whose existing population was 20,000 at that period) during the Great Famine of 1847 [www.irelandparkfoundation.com].

gives his bar top another story. Of course, also having something as elementally Irish as a physical part of the land of Ireland itself is another string to the bar top's narrative bow. While he does not emphasize this 'Made-in-Ireland' aspect of the bar top, Paddy is proud of its origins. When in the pub, he is happy to share the stories with anyone that asks. Staff also let inquisitive customers know the origin of the stone and the particular history of those slabs.

Another story Paddy wanted to tell with the Kilkenny limestone is one that enmeshes his "oyster shucker" identity with the pub's identity. Embedded within the mottled-effect stone are the calcified remains of life from the ancient seafloor where the stone formed (see Photo 6.3). Again we see Paddy the *bricoleur* assemble themes from a variety of sources, with this one close to his sense of who he is. He is proud to show me the outlines of coral, oysters and other marine life when we talk, but as before, these are not elements that are necessarily highlighted for customers. Instead they tend to found by customers through engagement with the setting's props, in this case through careful study of the bar top, which can resonate when customers have a little bit of knowledge about Paddy, and the processes that formed the stone. It can also entail added engagement with staff as they chat and explain the meanings of the markings to customers.

During periods of participant observation I have been privy to such interactions and witnessed customers' impressed reactions. On being told of the bar top's origin, Jen (Canadian, approx. 40F) exclaimed, "wow, just when I thought I heard it all about this place now there's this; this gets better and better!" For Jen the layers of the mise-en-scene were being revealed piece-by-piece, drawing her further into a sense of being part of

space that connects people across time and space. This engagement between retail actors is extended as I have also observed customers telling other customers about the meanings and story of the bar top and thus fulfilling one of Paddy's wishes that consumers will use his various setting props as storytelling devices to engage more deeply with one another.

The examples I have detailed thus far highlight material elements that might be seen or touched. However, this retail setting also features material elements that cater to other senses, such as the sense of smell. Irish peat turf burns in a little stove behind the bar. Paddy says of it:

> So we light up the turf and we burn the smoke, and it gets in here and everyone goes what's that gorgeous smell. I go that's turf. That's what a real thatched roof cottage, old fireplace – real. This is what the place smelled like…this is the real deal.

Those customers, who know the peat smell may automatically make the association with Ireland. Those who do not can inquire, and hear still more stories that make them feel a part of the place, and the community of people who know its stories.

To fully appreciate the role of the material elements in making this pub a Full one, it is also necessary to consider the pub's Barroom. In the quote from Lacey above, she mentioned how the pub somehow allowed her to feel "comfortable yakking away to people at other tables" Lacey's feeling of being comfortable chatting with others within the pub is something that that Paddy deliberately sought to encourage in his creation of the space. To encourage interaction, Paddy designed the space to influence the positioning and movements of the people within it. We see this in his explanation of carefully considered decisions about where exactly to build the walls (and thus position

the bar) in the Barroom and the consequent implications on performances within the space:

> In the end we took 12 inches off the kitchen ... It's stupid small inside. But that allowed us just enough space to have the bar where you have a person sit and the person on the left should barely have about 16 inches to sort of snuggle your wife. It's the gauntlet, that's what it is. And you bump into your neighbours and generally going over to the washroom you either, if it's too busy you go out the front door into the back. Or you walk the gauntlet and you, it takes you 15 minutes because you say, hey, you bump into your friends. And that's what happens. It's the camaraderie. Forced camaraderie. Taking people from Toronto and forcing them into a situation where they have to bump into their neighbours and they're forced into a tightknit group. Normally Torontonians like to spread out and use the space that they have. And be alone.

The creation of this cramped 'gauntlet' space was a very deliberate decision on Paddy's part. He wanted to create a pub setting in which customers are almost obliged to feel like they are sharing the same space and be compelled to interact and intermingle. This quasi-coercion to be physically close to others in the bar appears to play an important role in the assemblage. If people could more easily avoid one another, as Paddy suggests, they would more likely keep only to themselves and socialize with those they know. This coming together of people is evident in the space. When more than a handful of patrons are in the Barroom, the pub positively bustles and navigating the "gauntlet" is as tactile an experience as Paddy intended. One cannot but help but touch or bump against others at some point and generally recognize the co-existence of others sharing the same retail space (see Photo 6.4).

I also learned that when the bar itself was installed, no low lights were placed above it. Paddy told me this was in order to allow people to walk or dance on the bar, if ever a raucous mood dictated. Similarly a piano and its accompanying seat were placed in

a corner waiting for anyone who wishes to play and entertain his or her fellow patrons. Stories about both impromptu bar top dancing and piano playing were in abundance in my conversations and interviews. Here again we see built into the material elements of the pub the potential for stories and interactions to emerge.

Performances Scripted in the Space

While Fullness is fostered by material elements that embody stories and facilitate sociality, actual performances that are scripted within the space are also part of the assemblage that contributes to Fullness in this space. Various forms of performances have been deliberately anticipated and designed by Paddy. My field-notes contain numerous examples such as the following:

> Standing by the bar conversing with a friend Kate, I spotted out of the corner of my eye a large spider slowly descending from the ceiling directly toward her head. Nothing worth telling I figured, so our talk continued unabated. Soon the spider came closer and had drawn the attention of others around, as it came to rest menacingly not six inches above the back of Kate's head. Again, Kate remained oblivious and nothing was said. Suddenly the spider dropped and she shrieked, to laughter from much of the room. After the initial shock she joined in, as she turned around to see the large cuddly toy spider being slowly hoisted upwards by the barman manning a rope pulley from the far end of the bar.

As a piece of fun this mini-performance brought together a number of the people in the Barroom in some small way. Kate's dramatic reaction was a key element of in its success, but not the only one. She was cast as the unsuspecting victim of a prank, other consumers the expectant and entertained audience members, and the mischievous staff members as the *agents provocateurs* Although split into diffuse groups, many in the room enjoyed the performance, and in some cases it served as an intra-group icebreaker. After

the incident a couple of strangers turned to Kate to joke consolingly, and they all chatted for a couple of minutes about the spider and more. At the same time the general din of conversation increased as others in the pub talked and laughed about the same incident. As a source of mirth that becomes a topic of conversation it also helps to fulfill one of Paddy's goals that the pub becomes a place where interactions occur not just between groups of friends, but across them as well.

Paddy has introduced a number of elements to create this atmosphere. Behind the bar for instance, are three pulleys that allow the barman to slyly lower one of the two fluffy spiders or the rubber rat onto the heads, shoulders, or tables of unsuspecting customers at three different points in the pub. Another example is the flooding of the courtyard in front of the pub during the winter months to create a small curling rink on which people can play (e.g., Kozinets et al. 2004). On some nights outdoor wood fires will be lit beside the rink to create a Canadian winter wonderland effect for customers to congregate around and enjoy, giving an *actual* campfire to go with Paddy's previously described metaphorical one (see Photo 6.5). He also hosts a local Farmer's Market on his pub patio twice a month. He claims this is both an opportunity to give something to local vendors as well as to position the pub as providing a service to the local community; of course it also provides further opportunities for interaction.

Interaction is further facilitated by the license Paddy grants his staff to engage in performances he regards as opportunities for social interaction. While staff are encouraged to be efficient, they are given permission to be playful as well. An example from my field notes illustrate this in action:

> Sitting at a table in the Barroom, drinking with a group of others, when my friend Cas (34M Irish) orders a half-pint of Guinness from our server, to be met instantly with the acerbic retort of, "half a Guinness? When does your little sister get here?" This deadpan delivery elicited laughter from a table of customers, including from a sheepish Cas. He still drank his half.

Performances are also elicited through events held each weekday evening. Each Monday features The Céilí Cottage Kilt Club: customers are invited to wear kilts, and for doing so, they get a miniscule discount on drinks (the paltry saving is intended to make playful reference to the Scottish reputation for being tight-fisted with money). Tuesday nights feature a group of musicians playing a traditional Irish music session. Wednesday is matchmaking night where Paddy himself enacts the traditional role of Irish village matchmaker, a persona that he has created for himself that has proven to be popular among many of his single customers. Thursday night in turn is Shucker Club, where people come together to be instructed in the art of oyster shucking. These performative activities again seek to facilitate further interactions between people – be it consumers, musical performers (who are drinking as they themselves sit at a table and play), staff and Paddy himself.

Paddy considers it important that in The Céilí Cottage consumer performances not be over-determined. Although he goes to great lengths to script and stage-manage much of The Céilí Cottage experience, ultimately he knows that what makes people feel the space is a comfortably social one is only partly down to him. He seeks to create the conditions for customers to craft their own performances in the space, saying:

> They've got to be organic. And everything about it is organic. People think that there are days that they come in here and it must be like this every Thursday. I don't know, it just happens. You just walked into a happy, happy time. I can't program it all. I have certain ideas what I want with the place … but it's creating

> that fun. No corporate structure could ever come up with these ideas. You've got to let it flow. And it depends on the characters you bring in too. Because you can make the box. You can make your theory. You got, you got your program, but you've also got to let things happen for a reason. Your clients come in. You buy them a beer. You can have this. You throw in a little of this. Make them feel at home. You let them do stuff.

Material artefacts that testify to past performances in the space are also worth noting. Mementos that today hang memorializing what happened in the pub during a pivotal moment in the 2010 Winter Olympics illustrate this point. To help foster social interactions during the Olympics, Paddy wanted to get something akin to cowbells for people to ring when watching the major events in the pub. Cowbells are traditionally rung by spectators of outdoor winter sports and quickly became part of the 2010 Winter Olympic soundtrack being played out daily on TV. During the Canada v USA Gold Medal game in Men's Ice Hockey, in lieu of cowbells he provided customers with metal pans and spoons with the idea that they create a racket by bashing and smashing them against kegs to their hearts' content during the game. He recalls:

> And pans are destroyed. Like literally. The one with a hole in it [points to one of the pans hanging at the side of the bar], this guy had a knife and was just banging so hard it pops out the bottom end. And they're mushing it and bending it and breaking it and trying to make this cowbell and stuff, so everyone was going sorry I wrecked your pan. And I say no, here's a marker, sign it. And everybody give me the pans, sign the pans and I can put them up somewhere. So we get all the pans. It tells the story of Canada-USA too (see Photo 6.6).

The battered and signed pans now proudly hang at the side of the bar as material markers of consumers' communal experiences within the space (see Photo 6.7)

This material memorialization of past customer performances in a space happens across a number of pubs. Subsequent chapters will detail these processes of inscribing the customer into the setting in both the Hibernian Inn and McArdle's. Such purposeful

weaving of customer mementos, gifts, and stories into the permanent fabric of themed space has not been noted in extant themed retailing research, or in research on most other retail spaces. In extant theme retailing research we see consumers being allowed to play, interact, and to create their own stories though interactions with others and the setting (e.g., Diamond et al. 2009; Kozinets et al. 2004). However, in these studies consumers are not made part of the materiality of the space in a manner that contributes to the ongoing story and experience of the place in quite the same fashion as in the Fuller pubs I have studied; instead consumers in places such as ESPN Zone and American Girl Place are shown to contribute to the overall sense of the place in a rather transitory way. For the length of time they are in the space, they may interact playfully and become deeply immersed in their performances, providing an engaging spectacle for others as well. However, when done all they leave behind are their dollars spent. In contrast, at The Céilí Cottage, and in some of my other field sites, some customers have literally become part of the place with their stories physically displayed. Lead marketers, workers and other customers often perpetuate these consumer stories, linking them to the place over time and becoming part of the ongoing pub assemblage.

A further illustration of how consumers' narratives can be inscribed in a retail space is provided by the "pub wedding" that occurred in The Céilí Cottage. While retail spaces can have special resonance for customers for myriad reasons (Borghini et al. 2010), in the case of two customers The Céilí Cottage held a special place within the story of their relationship. It was the site of numerous relationship milestones: where they first met, went on their first date, and where the husband proposed. They approached

Paddy and asked if they could now get married in the pub, and for a $5,000 fee the pub was closed for three hours to house their service and a small reception. Adding to the already heady storytelling mix, it was Paddy himself who presided over the ceremony, having hastily registered as a licensed wedding officiant. Conceived of by two consumers, and scripted and performed by them in conjunction with Paddy and staff on the retail stage, the wedding is a story now told by Paddy and others to contribute to the pub's own evolving overall story. That performance is also now materially memorialized through pictures displaying the Dining Room (including the church pews that already serve as benches around the room's largest dining table) rendered as nave, altar and reredos with the participants in situ (see Photo 6.8).

Reflections on The Céilí Cottage Assemblage

The following quotation seems to capture well how the components of this pub's assemblage together create a space the customers recognize as Full:

> This place is an absolute delight and if you like quality pubs with good food you will love it here! … Everything about this place makes you want to like it. First of all, when you consider that this pub is actually a transformed old auto-garage you can only marvel at the vision, effort and craft it took to make it such a beautiful warm, comfortable and authentic looking Irish cottage. Everything from the white washed exterior with black borders and bright red door to the dark marble long-bar lined with high wooden chairs, whisky, framed quality photos, hurling sticks and books, to the small stove that fills the room with the aroma of burning Irish turf -- this place reeks of love and attention. Even the summer patio (always packed) is surrounded by a lovely white picket-fence and is transformed in the winter to a small curling rink with a log-burning fire place. This particular "Irish pub" wasn't quickly assembled from a franchise cut-out, slapped with a shamrock and declared open. The commitment to detail and quality pays-off in spades in our enjoyment …

> The obvious desire of the owner to make this place a memorable destination -- and not just another bar -- is well ingrained in the people he employs. One result of this is that this beautiful, quaint "Gastro Pub" is often transformed into a riotous "kitchen party" cottage -- complete with sing-alongs. As a caution, I should mention that one or two of the people working here do posses [sic] that peculiar caustic humour almost-unique to the Irish (constant playful "slagging") -- and if you are unused to it it may cause some offence -- but it is intended as good fun. A least that's what they told me -- when I broke down in tears :-)
> ('Top Contributor' Godott, tripadvisor.com)

At a theoretical level, this case suggests that Fullness can be encouraged by assembling material elements that encode stories and encourage storytelling interactions, as well as by eliciting collaborative performances within the setting, and by further encoding these in material artefacts in the space. The role of the lead marketer in this instance is partly as the motivated actor who creates the assemblage, and partly as a performer within the space who helps artefacts tell their stories and participates in emergent performances. As I have indicated, some of these same elements are parts of other assemblages in other pubs I studied. However, from a theoretical perspective, neither building a space that contains storied artefacts nor scripting performances within that space are necessarily guaranteed to ensure that retail space becomes or remains Full. Over the course of my engagement with this field site, what I noted as much as the recurring elements, was the lead marketer's keen eye for continually updating, adding to, and editing the material props and the performances elicited. The continuity of an assemblage that is Full is never assured, a point to which I return in discussing other field sites.

A second observation gleaned from this site is that what makes a space Full for some does not necessarily make it Full for all. While my in-pub observations suggested

those who came and stayed found the place convivial, a search for reviews of the pub yielded some critical commentary on the very elements that I have singled out as contributing to Fullness. For example, the banter the bartenders engage in has been taken by some to be more akin to derision or ridicule rather than a socially engaging performance. A comment from Hendy K. on Yelp.com conveys the alienating effects that some have experienced:

> We went in [to The Céilí Cottage] recently and a friend had a skateboard. The server asked us if we wanted some mountain dues [sic]. The skateboarder is around 30 and makes more in a year than the server will make in his lifetime ... Terrible place. Stay away and spend your money elsewhere. They don't enjoy your business and don't deserve it.

While this customer had other gripes about the pub, it is clear that the performance of "Irish-style" pub humour was the significant contributing factor to his indignation and the reason for his angry, one-star review. This highlights one of the polarizing effects that elements contributing to Fullness may have. This polarizing nature will be articulated in greater detail in the overall conclusion.

CHAPTER SEVEN: FULLNESS THROUGH CREATING A COMMUNITY CENTRE

McArdle's

In the preceding chapter, the pub I discussed had repeat clientele, some of whom knew one another but most of whom did not. While the patrons of that pub experienced moments of communality, they did not cohere as a collectivity of people that creates a particularly cohesive network (Warner 2002). In contrast, in this chapter I consider how such cohesive networks can be nurtured in a manner that fosters Fullness.

The case I discuss here is McArdle's pub where lead marketer Mairéad fashions Fullness by fostering the networks of Irish and Irish-heritage customers that called her pub their Local. Mairéad, aged 39 when I began my fieldwork, had opened the pub nine years earlier. Her customers comprise a rotating cast of mostly Irish-born or Irish-identified regulars and droppers-by. While Mairéad herself was probably the original focal point around which these networks grew, her base of regular customers is such that some of them are also central nodes the pub's extended network. Indeed, the pub has such a strong reputation among many Toronto Irish that in the early days of my research project almost any Irish person to whom I spoke would inquire as to whether I had yet been to McArdle's. It was mentioned far more than any other pub in the city. On saying "no" I was invariably regaled with tales of the owner, her pub, and the collection of Irish regulars. To many with whom I spoke, McArdle's is the apotheosis of the "Irish pub for Irish people" (Brion, Irish 33M).

Cloistered away in a mostly residential area in East Toronto, McArdle's is the smallest pub in the study with an internal capacity of 22, including staff (there is also a wood patio deck with long benches and two tables that seat 15). It has a window that runs the length of the front and the effect is almost that of the front room of a house, in terms of size and, partially as a consequence of that, feel (see Photos 7.1 and 7.2). Indeed, in some respects it *is* a front room as the unit has a small residence upstairs where Mairéad once lived. She now rents it to Irish lodgers who can sometimes be seen popping their head through the little window behind the bar that opens on to their stairs to pick up mail or strike up a conversation.

Overall, McArdle's is a rather higgledy-piggledy space that would win few prizes for design, style, originality, comfort, aesthetic beauty, or even cleanliness. To describe the pub setting as being "no frills" is almost to oversell it. It has a simplicity and austerity not unlike many of the smaller rural pubs covered in Chapter Two. However, there is nothing in Mairéad's planning or design to try to specifically emulate this particular pub style. As her quotation below indicates, she feels the pub is Irish because she is Irish, and that any themed décor is an unintended outcome that evolved without deliberate intent. Describing her pub's origins she states:

> I started really for the catering but then, it had a liquor license, so I said, you know, I might as well keep the liquor license and turn it into a pub as well as do my catering ... It was a coffee shop/catering kitchen. So then I didn't do much for renovations. Just put in the woodwork and stuff ...
>
> I just do my own thing really. I didn't open it focusing on Irish pub. I think it's just because I am Irish I got the Irish. Is it Irish themed? Well I suppose posters make it a bit, but I prefer neighbourhood pub, you know what I mean. So like, I had stuff from Ireland anyway – a lot of the pictures and posters that got sent over.

> And then some Guinness stuff inside, and it kind of just works out that it looks kind of Irish. But it could have been any kind of pub really I suppose.

What McArdle's lacks in atmospheric charms, however, it more than makes up for in its effective creation of a community center. The following quotation provides some indication of the extent to which McArdle's serves as such for Irish Canadians in Toronto:

> It's like a good pub from home, but here in Toronto. Sure I suppose Canada's our new home now and we make what we can of it. Here [the pub] there are all sorts of people from different walks of life sharing the same space – you will have millionaires 40 years in Canada sitting next to a labourer less than two weeks off the boat, and they'll find plenty to talk about … And they [talking about Mairéad and her twin sister who is also often in the pub] will make them all feel welcome, chat to them, introduce them to others. They'll feel right at home in no time at all (Connor, Irish 65M).

I am using the term community center to denote a space where people with a shared sense of identity can co-mingle with one another, and potentially find resources that will help them as a member of the community. One of the appeals that clients of this pub almost uniformly articulated was that at McArdle's there are many other Irish customers (and staff) with whom they can socialize, chat, and share information. Mairéad emphasizes the importance of her Irish customers wanting to be around other Irish when talking about the popularity of one of her sadly deceased Irish regulars and the important role he played in attracting customers to her pub:

> Mairéad: And then I had, you remember old Phil Kinane? He was one of my most regular customers.
>
> Interviewer: Which one was he?

Mairéad: He died. He used to sit in the corner there - the big man from Galway.

Interviewer: Oh yes.

Mairéad: So he brought a lot of customers to me. He died last year at 80. We had a big 80th here last …September and he died just the following July. So he was well known. So he brought a lot of customers, you know, a lot of the older crowd would come in and see him. And, sure I suppose word gets around that you're an Irish pub.

This is not a unique example as conversations and interactions with customers also regularly pointed to the co-presence of Irish customers as one the pub's appealing traits. They populate and promote the place and are a source of information, education, relationships, conversation, friendship, discord, debate and whatever else one wants from the pub.

"Helping your own"

Pub conversation and activities often centred on the core tenets of Irish emigrant life – drink, jobs, work and resident visas, accommodation, sport, relationships, and socializing and revelry. Many recent Irish-born arrivals to Toronto will come to McArdle's as they learn it is a go-to destination for Irish immigrants looking for information and connections for jobs, accommodation, Toronto-Irish community associations, and more (Clifford 1994). They also know that it is a place in which meeting and talking with other Irish expats is an almost ironclad guarantee. Many of the conversations in which I partook or heard were about people looking for new jobs, being offered the chance to move jobs, or just being given useful employment information. Declan (Irish, approx. 55M) told me that he has hired at least twenty different Irish guys

he had met in McArdle's to work in his construction company, and then pointed at Mairéad to add, "and she's sorted out much more than that for others." Finding accommodation or roommates is another issue faced by many customers and is frequently sorted out through those met in McArdle's. Many customers lived with one another, often having first met in the pub, and in some cases had also lived above the pub. Other times Mairéad or other customers would dispense advice about best areas to live, who might be looking for someone to move in, or one deals with some of the vagaries of local tenancy laws.

Customers also go to McArdle's for information about immigration and working visas. Mairéad and some of the customers – specifically her twin sister Siobhan – are experts in this area. Mairéad estimates that Siobhan has helped more than 150 Irish people file their immigration papers (free of charge), while Mairéad herself is adept at providing nuanced information to customers needing assistance. In March 2010 I was privy to a conversation between Mairéad and a recent immigré from Dublin (approx. 23F) who came in and sought advice on how she and her Irish boyfriend should go about securing employment in Canada. Mairéad proceeded to provide a shrewd and detailed explanation about what a non-Canadian such as an Irish person needs to do to be able to secure a sought-after job in a country in which legal priority for all jobs is granted to Canadian citizens and permanent residents. She spoke about how job applications need to be framed, how if the employer wants to hire the Irish applicant they should word the job posting in a particular manner, and generally how to ensure foreign qualifications are accepted as valid. As welcoming as Mairéad was to any customer who walked through

the door she was certainly someone who liked to "help your own," as she put it, in the ways in which she assisted many Irish. The Irish girl did not even buy a drink and there was no expectation on the part of Mairéad that she should (indeed she was even offered a free soft drink by Mairéad). Instead she was tapping a vital diasporic resource in Mairéad and others in the pub, and was taking some early steps into her new Toronto-Irish community. Also, it is noteworthy that at this point she had only been in Toronto for four days and already people among the Irish diaspora had directed her to McArdle's pub as a place to find out what she needs to know.

Being Oneself

As well as receive information about jobs, visas and accommodation, the *de facto* community center that is McArdle's offers other staples of Irish life that give customers the leeway to perform a range of comfortable Irish performances not always so easily done elsewhere in Canada. One of the things that might strike an outsider (if they can decode the many Irish accents), or indeed what might meet with their existing expectations, is the number of conversations in McArdle's that center on the theme of drink – what was drunk, how much drunk, where the drinking was done and with whom, and the stories and shenanigans during and after the drinking. Some revolve around time spent in McArdle's; many revolve around drink consumed elsewhere. Other topics of conversation include Irish community events, politics, mostly Irish-focused, and of course sport, which is again more Irish or European in focus than Canadian. Gaelic games, soccer or rugby are talked about far more frequently than hockey for instance,

something that tends not to the case in other pubs with a more Canadian clientele. Indeed, many of the Irish sports teams have McArdle's as their social hub. Mairéad sponsors a local Gaelic football club and a local hurling club, both of which are made up mostly of young Irish-born males. They have their pub nights at McArdle's, as well as provide an array of regular customers at other times.

As always, sport serves as a device to bind as it divides. While soccer supporters in Ireland typically support major English clubs such as Manchester United, Liverpool and Arsenal, allegiances for the national sports of Gaelic football and hurling are set based on geography – by parish and by county. Indeed, in many respects Ireland remains a quite parochial place. People are separated on the basis of these regional allegiances and generally good-natured teasing and joking occurs between people from different parts of the country. New Irish customers at McArdle's are typically asked where they are from and the answer can suggest a lot about the person in the mind of the inquisitor. To say which county will rarely suffice; one must give their town or village as well. Follow-up questions take the form of a verbal dance in which the conversation's protagonists move back and forth trying to deduce if each knows someone from their respective areas or through their networks – be it back in Ireland, or living now in Toronto. For instance, if a newcomer is from Kilkenny he will invariably be asked if he knows two brothers, Don and Matt, who are pub regulars that hail from that area. This comfortable and predictable Irish script can serve as a launch-pad for customers to engage in a familiar array of other Irish-centric conversations (Eagleton 1999). For example, the conversation will at some point often move to sport and in the case of

someone from Kilkenny to the Irish sport of hurling – of which their county team are traditionally some of the greatest exponents. In these sorts of interactions conversation is often designed to link the people to one another through common friends or acquaintances or through some forms of shared experience. Mairéad or customers with whom they had been speaking then often introduce these newcomers to others. The person might have been quickly categorized but is also accepted as another face they will have to get used to knowing or hearing about in the pub.

> One of the best things about that place is that you can just go and be yourself. When you go to a pub you want to leave all the bad stuff outside – just come in and relax and be one of the lads. You know yourself, what you get there is something you get from a good pub at home (Darragh, Irish 32M).

This sense of "being able to be yourself" was an important factor for many in McArdle's. Customers can discuss highly Irish-centric topics but are also unencumbered by a particular Canadian political correctness to which they must adhere in other places, retail and otherwise. Here they are freer to use the shared (often curse-heavy) language of Irish people and conversations can sometimes be laced with subtle racist, xenophobic, or homophobic comments, which may often go unchecked. Even if challenged, severe social censure would not necessarily result.

McArdle's is also a comedic place in which witticisms and waggish humorousness abounds. Indeed, the Irish sense of humour is often playfully deprecating or self-deprecating in nature, and used as a social levelling device: as one informant, Cian (Irish, approx. 30M) told me, "Coming here will bring you down to earth." To many, these forms of role performances in which they can themselves engage as well as interact

with other similar Irish performers creates for consumers a comfortable, social setting and are significant contributors to Fullness[11].

And while the design and décor of the place is not as deliberately crafted in a multi-layered fashion as was true in the case of The Céilí Cottage, and lacks much aesthetic appeal, the space itself can still be argued to be a significant material element of this assemblage that contributes to its Fullness. To the right as you walk in the pub door is a small wooden bar with stools to seat five. Behind the bar is a rather simple set of 8-foot high shelves holding many Irish and Irish-theme books, a couple of other Irish knick-knacks, a family photograph, and some bottles of whiskeys and spirits. To the left as you enter are three sets of mismatched tables and chairs that seat ten to twelve. Between this section and the bar is a small open space in which people congregate, mingle, and chat to one another as well those seated at the bar and behind it. This open space does not lend itself to small group interactions, but rather one that fosters interactions among all. It is difficult for groups of customers in McArdle's to socialize separately from other customers and staff in this area. Thus, customers and staff inevitably mingle.

Being with "your own"

Indeed, in this small pub space that is so clearly oriented toward making Irish and Irish Canadians welcome, the lines between customers and staff are often blurred. The

[11] Of course, among those at McArdle's, as with almost any close-knit group of people, there exists some rancor and discord. Although I have painted a picture of a pub thriving on community I do not want to say that all there get along equally. Rather, the existence of some interpersonal conflicts and personality clashes does not necessarily negate the overall value of the place for customers.

examples that follow all occurred on a single evening at the pub and are drawn from field notes.

> At about nine in the evening I was sitting at the bar chatting with four Irish-born males in their late twenties and early thirties when one regular (Peter, Irish, 29M) arose, entered the kitchen, rooted around in the fridge and proceeded to make for himself a sandwich to eat at the bar. There was no food being served at the time, no staff in the kitchen, or even a staff member behind the bar. Instead the sole barmaid was sitting in the outside patio conversing with the other (all Irish) customers. Soon after we joined the group on the patio, leaving the inside empty, another regular arrived. She waved at us all – the chatting barmaid included – and went inside to serve herself with her own bottle of beer from behind the bar.

I noted during my fieldwork that the bar, so often the physical separation of workers and customers in a pub, is a very permeable barrier at McArdle's with customers frequently going behind and the staff and lead marketer frequently socializing in front of it. My field notes also indicate that earlier that evening, one of the regulars (Rich, Irish 31M) walked behind it to seek out the remote control in order to turn the pub's TV onto his favourite soap opera. Another, Peter again (Irish, 29M), walked behind the bar to pick up a set of DVDs that a friend had left for him. None of the practices listed are exceptional practices for regulars at McArdle's, nor are they frowned upon, or questioned. Instead, the easy interaction between all – the regular customers, the staff, and the lead marketer – creates a space of fluid boundaries between roles that reinforces the sense that this is more of a close-knit community than like a commercial establishment. Reinforcing this point, my field notes also reflect overhearing Mairéad and some regular customers reminiscing about the Christmas dinner they had shared at Mairéad's home the previous year.

This sense of communality and almost of shared 'ownership' was evident in my observations and interviews, and an interesting element of this was the recurrence of

customers using the word "we" when talking about the pub. One example is seen through Matt, a New Zealand-born man with such a strong connection with his Irish heritage that he not only regularly plays in Irish traditional bands throughout Toronto, but is also a fluent Irish language speaker. When talking about the upcoming Ireland-France rugby match he asks Mairéad, "will *we* [meaning McArdle's] have the match showing on Saturday?" Customers feel that this is their pub in a way that is quite distinct from some of the others I studied. This sense of common 'ownership' over the place recurs and is used to denote customers' deep affiliation with the place as well as the lack of distance between them and Mairéad (Oldenburg 1999). It also speaks to a deeply held identification customers feel with the pub and with the community it supports. Such identification may be similar to that felt by some employees for firms in which they work as well as that felt by some customers for companies they patronize (e.g., Press and Arnould 2011).

The community center character of the place is further reinforced by the display of notices relevant to Irish clientele who are making a life in Canada. These include Irish posters promoting local Irish events, various Toronto Irish sports clubs and other Irish-relevant information. Personal mementos of specific community members are also on display. For instance, a notice board hangs beside the bar replete with photographs of the children, nieces and nephews of many of the pub regulars, including Mairéad's own nieces: the co-mingled families of the owner and clients further reinforces their close ties. Another artefact is one that was 'created' by a pub regular. This is a hole in the wall at the base of the stairs leading to the bathrooms that has been affectionately dubbed Mark's

Landing, a wry reference to a pub regular who drunkenly fell down the stairs and left the personalized indentation with his arms and head. A potentially perilous incident has been transmuted into a symbol of humour about one of the group (see Photo 7.3). A third artefact is a small brass plaque on the bar top beside the window that commemorates the recently deceased customer mentioned above. Simply noting his name and dates of birth and passing it marks the spot at the bar where he liked to sit for the eight years of his regular patronage. He is a man about whom Mairéad and customer informants still speak in warm tones as he was a significant character within the pub and the Toronto Irish community. The plaque has the quiet dignity of a lone headstone and allows the memory of someone so central to the cohesive pub community to live on *in memorium* as a physical part of the setting.

The materials on display in this setting contribute to making the pub a more Full place, marked by the network of relationships that exist therein. While they may initially have a limited impact on new customers, their meanings can grow as the customer becomes more embedded into the group and the pub plays a more focal part in their lives – which for many it does.

Reflections on McArdle's Assemblage

As an assemblage of components, McArdle's includes the lead marketer Mairéad; the group of customers; a cast of Irish-born staff; a small physical space that invites group integration; and some artefacts that reinforce the connections between members of the community that share the space. All are needed with each having a role to play in the Fullness of the place.

In terms of the stability of this assemblage and of its sense of Fullness however, much depends on the continuous influx of new clients as older ones die off, move, or become too busy to frequent the pub. The interplay between new and extant clients is also critical, as the continued Fullness here relies heavily on performances by customers who provide resources to newcomers, and model the kinds of interactions that characterize the place. Although the lead marketer is instrumental, no one person can constitute a community. In pubs such as Fibber O'Toole's (discussed chapter nine), or indeed even The Céilí Cottage, customers' practices are much influenced by those of the staff and by material elements in the space. In McArdle's, regular customers are critical to the reproduction of the practices the give the place its particular sense of Fullness.

The distinctive character of that Fullness is as alienating to some as it is inviting to others. I have visited McArdle's with numerous non-Irish consumers for whom the otherness it invokes in them makes it a less than enjoyable pub experience. It has few of the Irish theme pub tropes to which they are more accustomed and what is does have in lieu of this is an insufficient alternative. Those who have not enjoyed it have variously commented on it being "drab," "grimy," "uncomfortable," "too Irish for their tastes," and "a place where I don't necessarily feel comfortable … I'm different here." As one ethnically Chinese, Canadian-born informant Mimi (33F) put when asked to review her first visit:

> It's not a place I would go by myself without you, or an Irish friend. I was talking to my sister after I went there and was saying how I really felt like I was in a different country when there.

The otherness that it invokes in them to make it a less than enjoyable pub experience is not shared by all non-Irish customers. Some others manage the discourses and greatly enjoy the pub experiences as McArdle's is a place that can feel welcoming to some who are not Irish. Sarah (31F), a Canadian of Central European origin, is a pub regular who feels comfortable with the predominantly Irish crowd. She is a lawyer and budding author so is differentiated even further from many of the more blue-collar Irish. She recounted for me her first time in the pub and told how she "fell in love with it," although it could have been a quite different experience. She had come in with her then-boyfriend and he ended their relationship as they sat at the two-person table beside the window. He departed and she was left crying alone at the table. Soon the men at the bar beckoned her over to them, consoled her, bought some drinks, and made it a memorable night for the fun and friendship she found in them. She has been coming ever since and is as much a pub regular as any one else; when there she is a part of the conversations, fun and revelry that makes for a pub experience (Gluckman 1963).

A final comment on this pub's particular sense of sociality relates to motivations emigrants have for seeking out such social places. The narratives of home, community and friendship that help create the pub as socio-commercial place cannot be dissociated from the lived experience of being immigrants in Canada, for the lead marketer and many of her customers alike (Danahey and Hantschel 2011). Extant research on the ways in which immigrants construct identities in their new countries has shown that peoples' newer identities tend to be more versatile and flexible than before as they are able to draw on a greater number of cultural markers with which to negotiate their cultural identities at

any time (e.g., Mehta and Belk 1991; Murray 2002; Thompson and Tambyah 1999). In this they mediate the local and the global by appropriating complex meanings (often countervailing) on the basis of their expanded knowledge and value systems. In consumer acculturation research we see how consumer ethnic identities are not fixed but are instead discursively produced, fluid identities that evolve through acculturation (Askegaard, Arnould and Kjelgaard 2005). When people move to a new place previous ethnic identities are neither dissolved nor is a host identity adopted wholesale; discursively negotiated identity positions are constructed from the many cultural forces in their milieu.

However, from my time spent in the pub, and the conversations and interviews I had with the Irish-born customers I developed the sense that McArdle's provided a venue where Irish expats enjoyed taking a break from having to negotiate a new identity position. This is especially true of some of the more recent immigrants, for most of whom leaving Ireland was born of economic necessity after the economic downturn and recession. Being in a new country often brings with it uncertainty and anxiety: when in Ireland people have more of an unquestioned sense of belonging to their national place (Skey 2011), a sense now lost for many. These people are torn from the nourishment of family, tradition and geography (Said 2000) and many of the comments and conversations bring to mind Kristiva's (1988) discourse on the foreigner: "to live with the other, with the foreigner confronts us with the possibility … *of being an other*. It is not simply – humanistically – of our aptitude for accepting the other; but of *being in his or her place*, which amounts to thinking of oneself and making oneself other than oneself" (quoted from the original French in Burgin, [1988 p.23]). Although Toronto is an

English-speaking city, and shares many cultural similarities with Ireland, it is still a foreign and separate place for an Irish immigrant. For many Irish, McArdle's offers a 'haven of Irishness' of sorts, as a place in which they are granted freedom to comfortably and safely enact Irish identities. They know their audience at McArdle's will understand what it means to be Irish, to come from a particular county, and a particular town (Eagleton 1999). As I indicated above, heavily localized Irish identity narratives still exist and thrive McArdle's, while at the same time it helps support a new more unified Irish identity people feel in their pluralistic new host country. McArdle's thus serves as a place for the construction of an ongoing sense of self among expats, as well as for those whose Irish heritage is of importance to them.

CHAPTER EIGHT: FULLNESS THROUGH LEVERAGING IDENTITY RESOURCES

JP O'Donoghue's and the Hibernian Inn

In this section I look at some of the identity resources on which lead marketers draw to shape their pubs, and show how the close connection between a persona and the retail establishment can be a contributor to Fullness. I show different ways that lead marketers can leverage identities to imbue their retail establishment with certain qualities that create a sense for consumers that the pub is more than simply a place to drink and eat, but is instead is a place a where they can enjoy socializing. In the context I have studied, one tactic is for lead marketers to stylize their individual histories into identity narratives (such as the narrative of the successful entrepreneur-cum-pub owner) that create a human-brand persona to which consumers are attracted and with which they enjoy affiliation. An alternative, not mutually exclusive, tactic that was particularly in evidence given the context I studied is that lead marketers may draw on their Irish heritage, in particular stereotypical sociality that is associated with being Irish, and is associated with traditional notions of what constitutes an Irish local pub. In addition to drawing on personal or national identities lead marketers may also draw on market-place myths such as the notion of the "third place" (Oldenburg 1999) to play the persona of hospitable host and create a setting to which consumers may respond by playing the part of "welcome guest in a home away from home."

In discussing these practices, I want to highlight the diversity of ways identity can be integrated into an assemblage. In the following section I show these happening with lead marketers in two different pubs: JP O'Donoghue's and the Hibernian Inn.

JP O'Donoghue's

Leveraging An Idiosyncratic Identity

One means by which lead marketers can create a sense of Fullness through identity resources is to stylize their individual histories into identity narratives that create a human-brand persona to which consumers are attracted and with which they enjoy affiliation. Mick Quinlan's case, associated with JP O'Donoghue's pub, is particularly noteworthy. Before his death in November 2009 Mick was the lead marketer of two pubs in Toronto (JP O'Donoghue's and The Gaelic Consulate), as part of a consortium of investors in a range of pubs and restaurants. Of these, it is with JP O'Donoghue's that he was most closely associated. Although Mick's name was not over the door he had carefully been positioned as the pub's figurehead. In this section I detail ways in which elements of the pub became constructed around his persona – part material, part social. I first investigate the pub as a built space, emphasizing the ways in which the space is constructed to cater simultaneously to different types or groups of consumers who frequent the space. I then look at the symbolic management of the space and how this facilitates a sense of Fullness, both in terms of how Mick's persona is inscribed on the space and in the role performances that he used to enact prior to his death. In this I pay special attention to how this symbolic management and performances can carry different

connotations for different groups of consumers, and specify how it creates Fullness for Irish and regular customers in particular (who in some cases are one and the same).

Many Spaces in One

JP O'Donoghue's is a crossover space that is co-consumed by many different customer groups. In our interview Mick likened his pub to famous downtown Dublin pubs such as "Doheny and Nesbitts" and "The Baggot Inn:" like them, JP O'Donoghue's is a relaxing, city-center pub. And like them, it is a pub of choice for many locals, including those within the city's business circles. Indeed, Mick identified his largest customer bloc as the brokers, bankers and workers from the adjacent financial district, particularly during the hours of lunchtime and after-work. However, he also spoke of the many other customers that frequent the pub, young and older alike. Many are those who live or socialize in the downtown core and come to JP O'Donoghue's for a local or an Irish pub experience. It also attracts some tourists, and very importantly has a consistent Irish clientele. And always among this mélange are a large number of regular customers (Irish and otherwise), many of whom were personally known to Mick, or who were very aware of who he is.

The layout of the pub easily allows for different customer groups to consume in parallel (see Oldenburg 1999 for a quite different, class-based delineation of same in his historical analysis of the traditional English pubs). The pub is divided into three sections (four counting the upstairs private party room, but as this is separate from the main pub area with its own entrance and bar it is not included in this discussion). As one enters,

one walks into a main Victorian Dublin-style pub barroom (Irish Pub Company 2012) that holds about sixty people, standing and seated. On the left is copper-topped bar backed with layers of spirits and numerous different whiskeys. There are between eight and 10 high stools in front of the bar. A number of low tables and chairs are by the windows to the left of the bar. Opposite the bar against the far wall are a number of other tables with some chairs and low-slung plush red benches set against the wall (see Photo 8.1). Between these and the bar is a standing area, which can quickly fill up with customers when the pub is bustling and busy.

Walking through this section toward the rear of the pub one goes straight through an entrance in a dividing wall into a separate seated area for about fifty customers. This section is arranged in a more standard restaurant-seating pattern with tables of twos, fours, and sixes, as well as one snug-like booth. This is mostly for customers who wish to eat as well as drink and is particularly popular with diners during lunch and dinner rushes. Although the walls and shelves here teem with the standard Irish pictures, photos, and old-style kettles and other assorted bric-a-brac (see Photo 8.2), this room has a more structured and sedate feel than other areas; it is more restaurant than pub. For one thing, there is rarely anyone standing or flitting about this section. Customers tend to remain in their seats and interact almost exclusively with those with whom they are seated. There is limited free-flowing interaction between groups at different tables. Also, although conversation in this section can be loud and often boisterous, customers are not as raucous as they can sometimes be in the other sections, although later into the evening on busy nights this section can become quite loud.

Back in the main pub, on your left at the end of the bar is a small set of four stairs that leads through a narrow passageway to the Mick Quinlan Lounge. This is a multipurpose room that is akin to another self-contained pub in itself: it has a dedicated bar, is ripe with Irish iconography, has a space by the large windows for staged performances (typically music and speeches), as well as seated and standing areas. This section is the newest, having been added a couple of years after the pub was purchased, and was designed and built by a pub-kit company (see Photo 8.3).

The pub's partitioned design means three spaces can exist quasi-independently within the one, yet the pub also fits together as a singular whole. Particular markers throughout the pub give it a sense of coherence. A significant contributor to this is the wood that is used throughout the pub, the proliferation of Irish-themed bric-a-brac, and the various pictures and photographs spread throughout the pub (Muñoz et al. 2006). These include images of Irish landscapes, Irish sporting teams and events, urban and rural photographs depicting times past, maps of Ireland, and photographs (many signed) of Irish celebrities. And an important recurring image and theme was (and in some sense still is) Mick himself – in the form of photographs, articles, stories about his life in Ireland and Canada; and when he was alive, his very presence, often with his dog Guinness at his side.

Mick's personal mythmaking revolved around two particular elements of his identity: those of Irish community icon and entrepreneurial impresario. Rather than parse these apart entirely I will write of them in overlapping terms and focus on the ways in which, together, they provided the basis for the persona that he projected. As I will show,

the very nature of Mick's celebrity among many customers – particularly older Irish – means that these need to be considered together.

Mick's self-narratives positioned him as a key member of the Toronto-Irish community. He spoke of some the many community-centric activities he engaged in through the years:

> I bring the Irish acts over here, well I used to bring a lot more – The Dubliners, The Fureys, Brendan Grace, Paddy Reilly, Jim McCann, Johnny Doyle, Daniel O'Donnell ... When I came here this time 20 years ago there were no – the Irish, there were no big bands coming in and I think the first big one I did was Paddy Reilly and The Dubliners, or was it the Fureys? And I put them in big theatres and I gave the Irish a bit of class. (Mick Quinlan, November 2008).

For more than forty years Mick took it upon himself to be a representative of the Irish in Toronto and providing these entertainment options was just one example among many that demonstrated his commitment to this cause (and which may have resulted in personal gain along the way). In stating that he "gave the Irish a bit of class" Mick was referring to two things. One was Toronto's lack of top-end 'real Irish' entertainment options before he came on the scene. The bands, singers and comedians he promoted were those who found particular fame in Ireland in the sixties, seventies and eighties, and drew large crowds of Irish émigrés when they played. He brought big names and put them on in big theatres and concert venues. However, Mick's statement about giving the Irish a 'bit of class' also speaks to the fact that many Irish perceived that they were regarded as second-class citizens in Toronto up until the nineteen eighties and nineties. Many of my Irish-born informants, both lead marketers and customers, described, unprompted, how

Toronto used to be a very "Orange[12]" city in which Catholic Irish immigrants were not always afforded the full respect of the 'Protestant Anglo-natives'.

Mick thus positioned himself as uniquely dedicated to raising both the profile and status of the Irish in Toronto and many within the community recognized this positioning. When I met Sean, an Irishman living for 35 years in Toronto, at a Cork Association Pub Social, I was given some insight into how Mick was regarded:

> Mick's been great for this [Toronto-Irish] community – always been around and done a lot of things to support it through the years ... He knows a lot of people – he's good to a lot of people – and clearly a lot of people go to the pub because of him (taken from field notes, November 2009).

Even had he not gained this profile through Irish community activities, Mick would still have had another identity resource on which to draw. Prior to immigrating to Canada, he was a very well known Irish entrepreneur; a business celebrity famous for having built up what was once Ireland's largest chain of supermarkets. He lent his family name to these stores and loved putting himself forward into the public eye, starring in a series of long-running television commercials promoting them (and himself). After selling to Galen Weston in the early seventies, his subsequent Irish business ventures tended to also be well publicized. Some of the commentary following his passing gives an indication of

[12] The term "Orange" is taken to mean Protestant, but a form of Protestantism that many Catholics associate as being divisive and vehemently anti-Catholic. In Northern Ireland there are many Orange Institutions – Orange Orders or Orange Lodges – that are organized Protestant fraternal organizations with strong links to Unionism. This has admittedly changed quite markedly as Toronto now lays claim to being the most integrated and multi-cultural city in the world. However, from many emic accounts of those Irish who have been more than twenty years in Toronto – both lead marketers and the many Irish customers – this idea of Toronto as having been an "Orange city" that could be a sometimes difficult place for Irish people recurs.

both his celebrity[13], as well as the entrepreneurial dimension of his persona, and of how firmly it was established. Writing in *The Irish Independent* newspaper, Sam Smyth recalled:

> It was the fashion and retailing statement of the late 1960s: Mick Quinlan promoting his supermarkets decked out in a white polo neck sweater like a TV game-show host. There was no escaping the instantly recognisable dome and spectacles above the ubiquitous white polo neck that dazzled out of newspaper ads and television commercials for Quinlansworth. He was a pioneer, wooing customers to his shops using the latest American marketing techniques in an era when Gay Byrne and the 'Late Late Show' were arbiters of public taste ... His trademark spectacles, bald head and polo neck sweater dominated the advertising -- and he had a huge advertising budget -- but he was also a gifted self-publicist. (Smyth 2009).

As such, Mick had a celebrity among Irish-born people that could be associated with his businesses, and cultivated to this end. On helping open, JP O'Donoghue's Mick sought to leverage these aspects of his personal history and transfer them onto his pub.

Irish Event Space

Within the Toronto Irish diaspora, JP O'Donoghue's was regarded as Mick's pub and he remained a central presence up until his death. His fame within the Irish community helped draw Irish people to the pub, and also allowed Mick to make his pub one of Irish people's prime choices for events or functions – some of the cornerstones of Irish community life in Toronto. Over time, by playing host to a large number of such significant Irish events within the community, Mick purposefully put JP O'Donoghue's even closer to the center of the Toronto Irish community. Events include the after-party

[13] His celebrity is reflected in the fact that most national Irish newspapers carried stories about his death, even though he emigrated from Ireland in 1986. Moreover, many Canadian newspapers also did.

for the annual St Patrick's Day Parade, which sees dignitaries, marchers, and spectators congregate in the pub. Indeed, Mairéad McArdle told of just how important a place JP O'Donoghue's is for her as an Irishwoman on such days:

> I love the parade – Siobhan and me get there early for a good spot, and of course after to JP's for the session. It's always great *craic* … The place is packed – everyone from the Parade goes there ... God, I know loads of people there. You should go too – you're bound to meet loads too … And it's great to have a place like that on parade day. We don't have a community center in Toronto so it's great to have places where we can all come together.

As well as having a parade party, the pub also hosts a Ireland-Canada Chamber of Commerce Speaker Series, which has included among their roster, members of the Irish Parliament (*Dail Eireann*), as well as other talks, speeches, Irish-centric events, performances, and album and book launches. As one older Irish lady Margaret, a customer there who was a close personal friend of Mick and heavily involved in Irish social and cultural events, evocatively put it to me in Irish, "*Níl aon tinteán mar do thinteán féin.*" Literally translated as 'there is no fireplace like your own fireplace,' its meaning is there is no place like your own home and it connotes comfort, warmth and familiarity with place. While usually reserved for discussions of one's own homestead, this was how she expressed her opinion on having JP's as a welcoming place to have so many such events.

Yet, while these events draw large numbers of Irish community members to the pub and facilitate the sociality and connection that are a hallmarks of Full space, there is not the sense in JP O'Donoghue's of there being a consistent close-knit community of customers that dominates a pub and contributes to Fullness as happens in McArdle's. At

McArdle's, customers' Irishness is central to what the pub is as it sets the experience for just about any customer that enters the pub. At JP O'Donoghue's, Irish customers do not predominate and so clearly define the pub. Rather, even as Irish talks and events are being staged, there remains a large customer base that is not overly concerned with this and instead is seeking to enjoy the downtown theme Irish pub experience. Indeed, the pub's partitioned layout means these Irish community events can take place in the Mick Quinlan Lounge while not impacting on the experiences of customers in the front section of the pub. Therefore, while McArdle's seems to be almost like an always-open community drop-in center, JP O'Donoghue's becomes an ad hoc Irish community event center when certain special occasions draw large numbers of Irish people to the pub.

Material Markers Reinforcing the Persona

Mick's penchant for merging self- and business-promotion extended to his Canadian pubs. His celebrity persona was given pride of place and promoted throughout the pub through various material markers. One entailed naming one room in the pub the 'Mick Quinlan Lounge.' Further, a section of the pub was a visual shrine to Mick's life story and achievements (and now ultimately to his memory too). In a commercial form of McCracken's "memory wall" (1989), two sides of the long downstairs corridor are covered with pictures of Mick with various dignitaries, Irish and international celebrities, interspersed with over forty years of newspaper articles from Ireland and Canada that recount Mick's life and various business achievements (see Photos 8.4 and 8.5). Some of these detail achievements such as him being the famous and public Irish supermarket

entrepreneur through the 1960's and 70's, a star in long-running TV ad campaigns, an Irish event and concert promoter, a valued member of the Toronto-Irish community and a dogged entrepreneur that helped to organize various other high-profile ventures, including being the promoter behind the infamous 1965 Rolling Stones concert in Canada. Other displays include articles and reviews that report on the pub itself, with Mick prominent in each and are so numerous that some overflow to other areas of the pub. Moreover, his active membership in many Irish community associations and the Toronto chapter of the Canada-Ireland Chamber of Commerce is noted, a fact strongly reinforced by the large hanging banner that proclaims Mick's honour of having been voted the 2001 Canada Irish Person of the Year.

These artefacts help to reinforce, for any customer who pays attention to them, how the persona of the man was inscribed in the pub. They also reflect the variety of interpersonal networks in which the persona, and thus those affiliated with the pub, is situated (Miller 2008).

Performing Persona

Up to shortly before his death, Mick performances of his persona were particularly conducive to creating a sense of Fullness. A story that provides some indication of Mick's character was recounted to me by a manager; it dates back to when Mick first opened JP O'Donoghue's for business. His other pub – The Gaelic Consulate – is a two-minute walk away and was already operating successfully this point. At lunchtime on the day the new pub opened, Mick stood at the door of The Gaelic

Consulate to inform incoming customers that the pub was unfortunately full that day, but if they followed him he would bring them to his new pub just around the corner. Their two-minute walk was filled with Mick chatting to them and espousing the virtues of the new pub. It was in this way that he started to lead many of the early customers to the pub – literally so in this case.

A more ongoing way in which Mick's persona facilitated Fullness was through his almost daily presence in the pub. Although his role was not one of serving customers, he was a social presence. A booth at the rear was reserved for him and he would typically spend hours every day chatting with customers, friends and staff, often in the presence of his dog, Guinness. Speaking in a newspaper interview he emphasized, "I'm always at one of them [one of his two pubs]... but we'd make a lot more money if I weren't; my daily bar bill is always a few hundred,' he quipped, referring to his habit of buying customers drinks. It's his way, he said, of recognizing his regulars and welcoming new ones" (Langton 2008). Note that in enacting his role in this manner, Mick did more than enacting the role of host. His particular enactment of the role drew on and reinforced his persona as an entrepreneurial impresario with resources to spare. In this, it was a case of Mick performing the role of Mick that he had spent a lifetime cultivating, and that many people knew and were drawn towards. He actively managed his human brand persona in order to foster greater customer attachment to him, and through him, to the pub (Mende, Bolton and Bitner 2013; Thomson 2006).

However, these performances are unfortunately a thing of the past as Mick has since died. On the night of Mick's passing a vigil was held in his pub, with pictures of

memoriam alongside candles on every table. Even since his death, in a pub that does not bear his name, an attentive customer will have little difficulty in spotting connections between Mick's persona and the pub. He lives in memory via the life story told on the walls. For now, the pub continues to leverage Mick's persona through the material representations, but it is unclear whether or for how long this can continue to be a source of Fullness in the pub.

Hibernian Inn

The Hibernian Inn is a small pub, with seating for 42 and a capacity of 60 people. From the time I began data collection there in September 2008, it has looked like a relatively nondescript setting from the outside, flanked by a pizza restaurant to the right and a Tim Horton's coffee shop to the left, just another small retail outlet on a half mile strip of restaurants, bakeries, cafes, travel agents, pharmacies, liquor stores, banks, offices and other such commercial premises in Toronto's West end. The sign on the black awning over the pub simply reads "Hibernian Inn." It features the image of a small green shamrock. One opens the door into a small passageway that leads into a floor of large brownish-coloured stone tiles. The pub is a small but open space: long and narrow as it stretches from the window at the front to the kitchen at the rear, and absent of any dividing walls which leaves no corners, nooks, or snugs in which to cloister oneself away (see Photo 8.6). The front third of the pub is well lit (see Photo 8.7) from the natural light that streams through the large front window, but as one moves further back it becomes a little more dusky and intimate. All of the walls are painted a light pale yellow and are

relatively bare with just a few framed posters and pictures hanging, most of which relate to an Irish theme. One poster has black and white face shots of famous Irish writers beside which hangs a copy of *Forógra na Saoirse*, the Irish Republic's declaration of Independence document. On another wall hang two framed pictures of famous Franco-Irish wine estates (many of which descend from the 'Wine Geese'[14]), while two other Guinness- and Magners cider-branded mirrors hang on two other walls. Above some of the pictures, on a couple of small high shelves, sit some assorted bric-a-brac, but there is nothing particularly memorable or Irish themed about them. Indeed, no customer I asked could provide any insight as to what most of these items were supposed to represent. Similarly, customers could not articulate a theme beyond "Irish" or a small "local" pub. Also on the walls are three flat screen TVs. One is at the very front of the bar, to be watched by those sitting by the front window. The second is on the pub's back wall, hanging over a service window to the spacious kitchen while a third hangs on the wall behind the bar. All three are usually on, and is typically turned to something sporting, even if no specific game is showing at the time.

The large varnished mahogany-coloured wooden bar, set at the back left hand side, dominates the pub. Hewn from the same dark varnished wood are the seven or eight high chairs that sit around the bar, as well as the two pillars set into the bar and the large overhang that they support. Rows of wine, brandy and martini glasses hang upside down

[14] Refers to the Irish wine families of France who are descendants of Jacobite Catholics who fled Ireland after defeat at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690. It derives from the "Flight of the Wild Geese" which refers to the departure for France of the Catholic Irish Jacobite army under the command of Patrick Sarsfield after the Treaty of Limerick in 1691. From France, many moved throughout Europe, often working as mercenaries. They were said to have "spread like wild geese," thus giving birth to the term. Wine Geese is a play on this term.

from the overhang (see Photo 8.8). There also hangs an infrequently used bell and a string of white fairy lights that run along the top. The bar also dominates the pub in another less material sense. From behind it the bartender can see every seat in the pub: from those at the five low tables against the right hand side wall that faces the long side of the bar, to those at the three low and two high tables that are by the front window. On the bar top itself sit eight taps serving a cider and mixture of Irish and domestic beers on draft. Behind the bar are two black bottle fridges, on top of which are two low shelves, each of which is lined with a generic selection of whiskies and spirits. Above the shelves, two simple, unadorned black-frame mirrors hang on the wall. Unlike in pubs where pub kit companies designed and built the ornate wooden Guinness-branded back-bars and mirrors to evoke a Victorian Dublin pub, in the Hibernian Inn one of the local customers – Martin (English, 48M) – was asked by Breda (the first of the owners studied) to build the shelving and mirrors and they combine to offer little in the way of aesthetic flair. They appear purely functional. The Hibernian Inn-branded clock that hangs above the bar was made by another customer, and the area behind the bar is decorated with a few pictures and assorted knick-knacks, the most prominent of which are a small photograph of the Irish soccer icon George Best and an Irish flag sticker with a shamrock and the word "Ireland" on it.

There is little order or organization in this pub with no clear pattern to how items have been selected and arranged. The effect is a setting that looks at times messy, unorganized and partially finished. The yellow-coloured wall is randomly interrupted by a rectangle of white paint covering a fixed hole in wall. Around every electrical appliance

are bundles of wires that have been neither hidden nor camouflaged. The till that sits at the end of the bar by the kitchen is cluttered with paperwork, old c.d. cases, some little boxes, books and other items, nearly all of which serve no discernable purpose and most of which have gathered dust. The area at the far end of the bar is similarly disordered with some unused board games and old books on a low shelf behind the bar, as well as some half-empty shelves on the wall beside the drinkers. Moreover, the pictures and posters on the walls, while popular with some customers, seem rather randomly placed, with no discernable pattern. In other pubs, such as The Céilí Cottage, photographs and pictures are often carefully arranged in a far more artful manner to serve as specific narrative devices. In the Hibernian Inn, elements of the setting rarely speak to customers with such clear intentions. Instead, as we see below, it is more often through the proprietor in this pub that any sense of Fullness is created.

When I began collecting data at the Hibernian Inn pub in September 2008 it was operated by Irish-born lead marketer Breda. She was the first of four lead marketers who have been associated with the pub since that time. The Hibernian was a viable going concern under Breda's ownership but as she disliked many of the aspects associated with owning and operating her own business, she decided to sell. In February 2009 it was bought by a 31-year old Chinese-born accountant named Rose who cut costs at the expense of quality, and who in the space of eight months managed to lose almost all of the goodwill Breda had built for the business, owing to the departure of many regular customers. Not surprisingly, she also lost money on her investment. In November 2009 she sold to a 48-year old French Canadian, Gerard. Thirteen months after taking the reins,

Gerard brought onboard an Irish-born partner – Ned (43) – to become an equal partner in all facets of the business. Despite winning back some lost customers who had patronized the Inn during Breda's time, Gerard and Ned could not make the Hibernian Inn a profitable concern. In June 2011, they closed it entirely, gutted the space, and built in its stead a higher end craft brew pub - The Trappist's Cask (see Photo 8.9). This opened in September 2011 and by Christmas of that year they were doing well financially with average weekly turnover four times that of the last days of the Hibernian Inn.

Given the changes in ownership and leadership, and changes to the space itself, this pub demonstrates some within-case diversity, to augment the existing cross-case diversity across the different pub case studies. I will focus first on understanding how Breda was able to use her Irish heritage as an identity resource as part of the assemblage in way that contributed to its Fullness, and then contrast this with how identity resources factored in under the leadership of Gerard and of Rose. I will show how the different lead marketers tried to use various elements of their identities as resources, or sometimes looked to tap into the identity resources of others in creating the retail experience, and show the variable outcomes of each of their efforts.

Leveraging Irishness

Lead marketers typically have a variety of identity resources available to them on which they can draw. Leveraging aspect of Irishness is one such strategy employed by some lead marketers in the pubs I have studied. The initial owner of the Hibernian Inn, Breda, provides a particularly strong illustration in this regard.

Breda moved to Canada in 1989 but stubbornly regards herself as Irish rather than Canadian. For Breda this cultivation of Irishness is something ongoing through her family, friends, hobbies and interests, and also borne of her more than twenty years experience of working in Irish pubs. Having visited her home it is clear that her commitment to things Irish goes beyond the pub as it is rife with Irish iconography such as Celtic crosses, Irish crochet and lacework on display, Irish pictures on the wall, and music and films often being played. Also, she remains actively involved in Irish community and cultural events, partakes in Irish craft making, and ensured her daughter spent every summer in Ireland when she was younger to maintain an Irish sense of identity. Moreover, she is a lover of traditional Irish music and dance; her brother is one of the foremost Irish musicians in North America and her sister-in-law runs an internationally successful Irish dance school, further contributing to Breda's carefully nurtured Irish identity.

When Breda ran the Hibernian Inn, she was very conscious and deliberate about forging the connection between her Irishness and that of the pub. Indeed, to Breda, running an Irish pub is almost a form of nationalistic self-expression that she ties closely to her identity as a proud Irishwoman:

> Obviously I'm very proud to be Irish, and very proud to be Irish in the sense too that everybody loves the Irish. So I'm proud to be Irish and that this is an Irish bar. And as I say as long as I'm here it will always be ... I'm working on it being Irish, on being more Irish all the time.

Some of her Irish-making activities included infusing the retail space with various Irish cultural elements, about which she insists Canadian customers often need to be

"educated." She was less concerned with determining the unique needs of the consumer than with crafting a pub in her Irish image, seeing this as the route to success. These Irish elements include Irish dishes and Irish drinks served in the pub, Irish music and musicians featured in the pub, and a Celtic cross plus myriad pieces of Irish iconography on display in the pub.

Beyond these material symbols of Irishness, and in my view more compelling than any of them, Breda also draws on a trait she regards as quintessentially Irish: the skill of engaging others in conversation. She explains that she has always been an open, vocal and very social person, and my observations of her interactions with clients suggest she routinely behaves in a warm and gregarious manner. I often observed her acting as an entertainer or raconteur; in her mind, these behaviours are both quintessentially Irish, and good for business:

> What's good about this bar is I'll tell you, and I'm not being smart, is the fact I'm here and I love storytelling. I love telling stories. People come in here and say, "Oh my God Breda, you just told that story and I felt I was absolutely right at that event that you were talking about." But you have to. You have to make it interesting that makes people feel... because they weren't there, and you are telling something about which they weren't there and people go "Oh my God I just thought I was there." But that's something Irish. We have that ability (Breda, Hibernian Inn).

Breda exploits what she regards as her Irish heritage as a storyteller to make the pub experience a more entertaining and memorable one for her patrons and helps to create the pub as a friendly, convivial, space, the way she understands an Irish pub should be.

Scholars working in the organizational identity area have noted how people adopt different narratives and identities to suit different roles and contexts and how they may

selectively and dynamically emphasize various narrative resources to explain and motivate the execution of their various roles (Down 2006; Ibarra and Barbulescu 2010). For Breda, this came in the form of her active performance of marketable elements of her Irish identity in running the pub: a marrying of the material elements that contribute to the look of an Irish pub she is proud to call hers, alongside the projection of friendly openness that she routinely cultivates through her own performances and those she elicits in others (Arnould and Price 1999).

The case of Breda can be contrasted with that of Gerard. When Gerard took over the pub, his consulting background provided him with what he considered to be a highly customer-focused and service-minded approach to business, but not with an identity resource per-se. His began to make changes to create a more comfortable and welcoming space. He says:

> I realized I could make a big impact by doing simple things like fixing tables and chairs, fixing up the taps, fixing up the washroom, and only concentrating on what people feel. What they care about when they come into the pub and it looks great ... I want to keep it warm where people can come in and have a laugh, have a pint.

Yet he quickly recognized that the material changes he made to the physical space were insufficient to create the sense of Fullness patrons sought. In looking to foster that social sensibility, Gerard identified certain resource limitations. While we see in the previous section how Breda's identity and the mobilization of her Irish heritage resources served as a useful resource, Gerard – with his consulting background and his French Canadian roots – did not believe he had equivalent elements of self on which he could draw. Specifically, he believed his lack of commodifiable Irish heritage on which he could draw was a hindrance. He stated:

> I as a French-Canadian cannot stand behind the bar of an Irish pub on St Patrick's Day and make like this is an Irish pub. The customers won't buy it.

Resourcefully, he tested a solution, which took the form of bringing in the former owner, Breda, so as to leverage her Irishness:

> I'm bringing Breda and Triona [Breda's daughter] back to work for the day [St Patrick's Day]... I'm letting them do whatever they want for the day. I am not Irish; there were no Irish here even though it is an Irish pub (see Photo 8.10).

After that St Patrick's Day, Gerard realized that by affiliating himself closely with an iconic Irishwoman with a personable demeanour and 'gift of the gab' he could better achieve some of the results he desired. Breda was invited to return to work two days every week, and Gerard gave her considerably more latitude than he would a less symbolically significant employee. As Breda herself stated:

> "I'm left to do my own thing fairly much. It works for all. I do a couple of afternoons and I enjoy it – plenty of my friends come in especially to see me and I love to catch up. It works for Gerard too as he gets more of the older crowd with me and then come nine o'clock I leave and the younger crowd will be coming in"

In addition to employing Breda, over time Gerard adopted an almost Irish-first attitude in his hiring practices as he sought to buy Irish elements that he could not personally provide. At one point, everyone on staff was Irish-born: a full-time chef from Co. Wicklow was hired to cook an Irish-inspired North American pub menu, two full-time barmen from Dublin and Derry, and three part-time Irish-born staff in Breda, her daughter Triona, and me.

This practice of leveraging un-owned resources is well documented within the literature on entrepreneurship (e.g. Baker and Nelson 2005), though leveraging un-owned

identity resources has not been discussed. In Gerard's case he was most interested in one particular resource we could provide: leveraging our Irishness for performative purposes. He believed this gave an enhanced sense of Irishness that was a necessary quality in his still Irish themed pub, but more specifically it was so we would contribute to the pub's atmosphere through our conversational abilities, which he believed to be the aspect of Irishness that is most conducive to cultivating Fullness:

> People who used come to the pub are coming back and there are other people who are coming in and they enjoy the pub for an atmosphere where they can talk … When people come in they basically want to talk, so you have to employ somebody with interesting conversation. People sitting at the table basically they are probably in a group. Very few people will come in and sit alone at a table. Most people who do come in if they are one or two they sit at the bar and they will talk to the bartender (Gerard).

Allied to his hiring practices, Gerard deliberately chose Ned, an Irish-born individual, to be his partner. When I asked why he decided to go with Ned as a partner he unhesitatingly answered, "Because he's Irish." And Gerard's efforts to imbue the pub with Irishness by leveraging the identities of others did meet with some success. While the generally friendly nature of the Irish staff seemed to be regarded as a positive by most customers and created a more friendly and comfortable place than had been the case under Rose's more transactional ownership, it was not a Full space as had been the case under Breda and did not bring sustained success. Close relations to place through close relations to employees seemed not to happen to the same degree as when people formed close relations to Breda as owner and thus relations to *her* place through her. In this case, employee-customer relationships as surrogates for lead marketer-customer relationships may have been insufficient to yield success. Alternatively, the size of the market that

desired such Fullness might have been too limited to afford Gerard and partner Ned the profits they sought.

Ultimately, Gerard and Ned decided to move away from the Irish theme to instead re-launch as a high-end craft brew pub with all traces of Irishness removed. They clearly identified who they perceived the target market in their catchment area to be, and set about redesigning their business to suit. As I was working in the pub before this period of transition I was witness to many of these meetings and listened to and discussed with them their reasoning behind their proposed changes. As Gerard explained, he considered the part of the city in which their pub was located was populated by mostly well-heeled middle-class to upper-middle class white people. In the now ethnically very diverse Toronto, their conceived traditional, "WASPish" (as Ned described it) catchment area and target-market was almost anachronistic. In their minds, few were below 35 with most in their fifties and older, and they did not believe that an Irish pub experience was one these consumers actively sought, especially not one that retained something of a dive bar aesthetic. Rather, they believed quality food and presentation on every level counts to these customers –and implicitly that Fullness was less central to making the space profitable. Gerard and Ned's overarching goal was therefore to markedly raise the pub's quality through a complete overhaul of virtually every facet of the business – décor, theme, food, drinks, staff, name, and layout. Eventually however they made a clean break with Irishness in opening their high-end brewpub.

The cases of Gerard/Ned and of Breda can be further contrasted with that of Rose who owned the pub after Breda and before Gerard. Compared with both, Rose was far

less adept at understanding that identity was a resource that could and perhaps should be leveraged, and in particular she showed little insight into the possibility that leveraging a sociable Irish identity might fit well with the pub she had purchased. During our first interview she recounted how she came to buy the pub almost on a whim. She was an accountant working fulltime for a large multinational organization, with a sideline in buying and selling real estate for both clients for her-self. Looking to expand her horizons even further, she heard from a friend that the Hibernian Inn was for sale, visited it once and decided to bid. Indeed, so sudden was her choice and limited her knowledge that it was only a month afterwards, on St Patrick's Day, that she actually realized that she had acquired an Irish pub! In an interview we were discussing St Patrick's Day and the status of the Irish pub and she recounted just how little she knew when she purchased:

> Rose: I heard a little bit about [St Patrick's Day] – the Irish holiday, and the people celebrate, and all I heard is people drink a lot on that day and it is good for the business (laughs). So I don't know.
>
> Interviewer: Did you know it was an Irish pub when you bought it?
>
> Rose: Not really – I didn't know until that day. At the end of the day because they were talking about how quiet it is in the English pub across the street on that day, because, oh, this is an Irish Pub. That day I found out. I saw the Irish flag and I still didn't realize it was an Irish pub. Because it didn't look like an Irish pub to me – it just looked like a cute little pub.
>
> Interviewer: What does an Irish pub look like do you think?
>
> Rose: Maybe more green… [pause] ... because I don't go to pubs and I don't know. I don't go to pubs. The only other Irish pub I went to is called James Joyce – it's on Bloor and Spadina. I know a Chinese couple bought it. And they have lots of green outside, they decorate it with green. And this pub, it doesn't look like an Irish pub

In the course of my research I occasionally visited other Irish pubs with lead marketer informants. One such instance was with Rose who wanted to visit a small Irish pub – Tessie McDaid's – located about a mile from the Hibernian Inn. Even from the outside alone one is in no doubt that Tessie McDaid's is an Irish pub. As you approach, you see on the gable wall a one and a half-story sign that displays a large image of a Celtic broach flanked by the words "Tessie McDaid's" and "Irish pub and patio." Passing underneath an Irish flag and a Canadian one you open the door to a heavily themed, cluttered little Irish pub (approx. 45 person capacity). The pub's mise-en-scene is that of small, local Irish pub with walls and shelves alike overflowing with Irish paraphernalia: pictures, flags, photographs, various Irish bric-a-brac and sport-related materials including team jerseys and team pictures. While all are generally representative of Ireland many of the items also reveal themselves as being very personal to the identities of the husband and wife owners, including a number of flags, pictures, sports shirts from Donegal and Louth, the two regions of Ireland from whence each respectively hails. The pub is designed to fulfill distinct narrative functions: to give the place the sense of being an Irish pub, and also a place tied to the personality the eponymous wife Tessie, and to a lesser extent her less frequently present husband.

Sitting with Rose it became evident that her means of analysing Irish elements of the mise-en-scene were virtually non-existent. She understood certain functional elements of the set but little beyond. Even when I explained many of the pub's Irish elements to her but she demonstrated no sense of understanding how and why this was an Irish pub beyond the fact it was small and had some props with the word 'Ireland' on it. It was

clear that she didn't have the vocabulary to understand the pub's Irish element, even though this was her expressed intention for our visit. Instead, she focused on figuring out the seating capacity, assessing the drink selection, comparing food menu options and prices to her own, mentally calculating how many days the year the patio might be in use, and passing comment on the "rude and impersonal service" delivery. In terms of seeing this as an Irish pub mise-en-scene, she appeared to understand certain functional elements of the set but little beyond.

The evening spent in Tessie's was one of many interactions with Rose where her basic failure to understand how a persona might be imbued in a pub in general, and in a Irish pub specifically, came to the fore. Though she claimed to want to preserve the Hibernian's positioning as an Irish pub, she never managed to create an attractive, coherent story that tapped into any facets of Irishness in how she performed her role, nor did she draw on other of her own identity resources in a manner that contributed positively to the pub's sociality (Down 2006).

It is significant to note that Rose assumed the existing décor and other material elements she purchased when she bought the Hibernian were sufficient to sustaining its attractiveness to patrons. When I asked her if she planned to change much of the pub, she told me, "the only thing I want to change is the sales number (laughs). I am happy with the look, the layout, the feeling. So I don't think I will change it." Her efforts to enhance the appeal to clientele was limited to hiring one Irish staff member (but then giving him limited leeway to be anything beyond a server of drinks) and acquiring, at no cost to her, from consumers (myself included), Irish music to play on the stereo. Rose was of the

opinion that because the Hibernian Inn was an Irish pub under Breda that by altering it as little as possible in terms of the name, drinks, and small number of theme elements that it contained, the pub would sustain itself indefinitely as a welcoming Irish one in consumers' eyes. She assumed "Irish pub" was a relatively stable category and failed to recognize that sociality is part of what is expected of an Irish pub by many, much less that cultivating sociality required work on her part.

Leveraging Market-Place Mythologies

While Irish identity in general, and the sociable element of in particular, are resources on which lead marketers may draw, additional options exist. In particular, lead marketers may leverage particular marketplace mythologies in the creation of their retail experience. A marketplace mythology is a cultural storyline with forms of archetypical characters and plotlines that connect them (Thompson 2004). One used by some informants relates to the marketplace mythology of the "third place" Oldenburg (1999; 2001). In this, the lead marketer seeks to play the role of welcoming host, while consumers may respond by playing the part of "welcome guest in a home away from home." In the marketplace mythology of pub as hospitable place, with its resultant series of performances, we see hospitality as a social practice that involves symbolic and material exchanges, in the aid of establishing new relations or consolidating existing ones (Sobh and Belk 2012; Selwyn 2000). In traditional conceptions of the term, hospitality happened in the form of gestures of engagement or social propositions that served non-commercial, social exchanges; however, hospitality is frequently enmeshed in the

management of commercial properties and is value-creating (Lugosi 2007; 2009). In the case of pubs I studied, I observed that the identity of the welcoming host, when invoked effectively, can make actual economic transactions incidental, almost comfortable. However, as my analysis shows, poor marketer performances in enacting this identity can detract from Fullness and ultimately from financial performance.

In the case of the Hibernian Inn it was Breda again who was best able to effectively deploy this myth to contribute to the pub's Fullness. Consider the following quote from a customer at the Hibernian:

> I've been coming here for years, as long as it's been open almost. It feels like home to me. I can relax and have some drinks, Breda is here, I can talk to her or good people like you ... It's like my home really (Brian, Hibernian Inn customer, Canadian, 56M).

As Brian's quote demonstrates, Breda enacted her role in the Hibernian Inn in a manner that created just this sense of personal welcome and of 'home away from home.' My interviews with Breda suggest she was ever conscious of her role expectations and those of her customers, and how to perform and elicit them. She tells of what customers look for and find in her pub, referencing how a now-regular customer started to come to her pub after falling out with the owner of his former Irish local over a contested bill. She says:

> Now he comes here every week. We chat, I know he pays all the time and he loves it here. That's what I try and create for people here. People like to come to their local pub to escape, drink, have good time, to meet people and chat. I try to make it so they do that here.

In the paragraphs that follow I elaborate on this myth making and role performances. I first show how Breda's efforts are structured around qualifying (Callon, Méadel and

Rabeharisoa 2002) the pub with various characteristics of hospitality and community and how she engages in a number of different techniques to facilitate the interpersonal interactions that constitute the hospitable space.

One of the primary ways Breda invokes the myth of hospitable host is by taking a personal interest in the lives of many of her customers and granting them access into many aspects of her own. As evidenced in her quote above, she took an interest in people and recognized what they sought from their pub experience, and how she could better facilitate these. It was not uncommon to enter the pub and find Breda deep in conversation with her customers, at times seated at their table as they talked. To the casual observer, or academic eavesdropper, they might have the appearance of being longstanding friends, yet often may have only just met. One of the striking facets of the Hibernian Inn when Breda ran it was how little she separated the personal from the professional. Indeed, Breda and many customers have in fact become firm friends, often stretching far beyond previously detailed commercial friendships (Price and Arnould 1999), and extending well after Breda sold the Hibernian. For instance, customers were regularly invited to her house for parties and family gatherings, even including the family Christmas dinner. At one of the house parties I attended, 12 of 30 attendees were people she first got to know through serving them in a pub. Moreover, to emphasize that these invites did not simply represent the astute management of a commercial relationship being played out in a different location, the party in question took place more than two years after she sold the pub.

One of the comments shared by Gino (Canadian, 34M) about Breda at that very party spoke to this level of friendship and what she brought to the pub:

> Come on, you know yourself – she's amazing. She's great to talk to, always made me feel right at home there … I started going to the Hibernian because of her and now I know half the people here because of the Hibernian Inn.

Not only does this comment point to Gino and Breda's friendship forged in the pub, but it also speaks to something else that Breda made a point of doing in the Hibernian Inn – introducing her different customers to one another. During my field site visits I was regularly introduced as "Aron from Cork [home county], who's doing Marketing at York." Breda would then provide at least one or two personal details about them, and I would often find myself in a full-blown conversation with Breda and the customer. This was routinely enacted by Breda and felt neither scripted nor forced. Customer conversations often flow between newly introduced parties even as Breda moved on to other job duties. As well as simply facilitating conversation this practice essentially helped propagate the sense of hospitality to a greater degree by encouraging customers to co-create a convivial service environment. Consumers were essentially invited to take a (partially marketer-supplied) resource (introductions, points of connection) and to create extra value for themselves and others through ongoing interactions (e.g., Zwick, Bonsu and Darmody 2008). Breda's initial lead marketer role enactment facilitated a series of interactions between consumers, all of which served to make the pub an ever more Full space. Hospitality is thus an emergent set of social practices in the pub space, many of the conditions for which have been created by the lead marketer Breda, but ultimately co-created by customers consuming the co-presence of others.

A third way Breda played the role of host in a third space was to tell stories specifically about the pub's history. As mentioned above, many of Breda's stories were about her own life and history, in Ireland or Canada, but she often also told stories about the people, events and objects in the pub that created a historical narrative. This might include the story of the time a uniformed policeman pulled pints behind the bar for almost two hours, or of the various relationships that were formed or failed in the pub over the years. She would also chronicle the stories and history behind many of the objects in the pub. One sometimes told was about the pub clock – a medium-sized plastic clock with a homemade Hibernian Inn livery as its background that hung above the bar. This was made especially for Breda by a Northern Irish-born pub regular and presented to her as a gift. It was not, as she points out, done with any expectation of reciprocity in the form of drinks, food, or discounts, but as a gift founded on friendship, to add to her life and to that of the pub. As far as she is concerned it is a gesture of kindness and friendship that matters, and its display in the pub confirms that. Stories such as these also give some extra resonance to some of the pub props and when told, they help to foster a sense of the pub as a home-from-home that many customers felt it represented. What these stories further created is a real sense of living history to the place, and spoke of connections and friendships between people, as well of connections between customers and the pub itself. When Breda departed, the pub lost not only her love of telling stories, but also a repository of stories about the pub's various characters, objects, and stories that tied objects to people. For instance, the clock remained but now no one told a personally meaningful story to give it any added resonance.

This accounts for some of the reasons why the pub was, for many customers, a fundamentally different place, providing a changed experience, when Rose and then later Gerard took ownership. In each case, the new lead marketers changed little in the look of the pub itself. True, Breda took with her some of the personal effects that decorated the back-bar area as well as a couple of pictures she had recently hung on the walls. But largely, the pub remained physically identical to what had been before. Yet the pub's overall tenor and feel was changed significantly. Breda played host when in the pub and removing her performances from the assemblage also meant that other elements that remained within the assemblage were also changed. What is noteworthy in this instance is the way people's relations with objects in the pub were mediated through her. Even more importantly, however, was the way peoples' relationships with the pub itself were mediated through her. The host narrative in which she so heavily invested had a significant bearing on consumer experiences. Once Breda's persona was missing, the experience was an altered one.

The lead marketer with whom Breda as hostess contrasts most starkly is Rose. Essentially, she was culturally illiterate: about the pub, Ireland and hospitality. Although Rose gave lip service to the notion of active hosting, her actual efforts were sporadic and awkward. She interacted largely in a transactional rather than a friendly, conversational manner, and was insufficiently familiar with, or proactively curious about, her different patrons to facilitate introductions or conversations among them. Moreover, although Rose maintained the majority of the same atmospheric elements that Breda had put in place, they had little if any significance to her and she did not educate herself about them or

give them resonance through stories. Jeff, a regular patron who frequented the pub bi-weekly for more than five years offered the following comparison of Rose with the hosts who preceded and followed her at the Hibernian:

> Whoever's running the place has a huge effect on things – on how the pub feels. With Gerard and Breda you know that you're more than just an eating, drinking cash machine... They're both nice and care about their customers, they know the value in being themselves and taking an interest and sharing stories with us here at the bar … With Rose it was the exact opposite. For her it was all money, money, money, how much, how often. It was purely a business to her, and she didn't understand how a pub is different to other businesses, and that definitely pushed a lot of people away … I think we are more than customers to Gerard and Breda (Jeff, Canadian 24M, customer Hibernian Inn).

Although Rose attempted to run the pub efficiently, her failure to inhabit the role of host in an effective manner led her to seem cold and avaricious to Jeff. Although she said she enjoyed talking to her customers during our interview, her general attitude toward customers' pub-going practices tells a different story. On the topic of interacting with and getting to know her customers she had the following to say:

> Rose: When people get drunk they tell the truth. … Like people start by saying how they are in love with their wife and after a couple of drinks, "she's a bitch." Yeah like that is what he [customer about whom she was speaking] said – came out of his mouth.
>
> Interviewer: What do you say to that?
>
> Rose: I was like "OK" … And I just walk away. I don't want to be involved in that. You can only be involved in so much.
>
> Interviewer: You don't kind of act as a counsellor no?
>
> Rose: No! I can't… It would be my fourth job (laughs).
>
> Interviewer: Sometimes people do use the bar people for that.

> Rose: Yeah but at that time I do just cut them off … Most people who come to the bar they either drink a lot or their life has some problems … or they have a difficult life, or they are going through a difficult problem. So they just want to come here to relax, have a couple of drinks. They can either talk to you or not talk to you. To me it doesn't matter. I rather talk to them about something else – like more funny. To distract.

While Breda conversed and got to know many of her customers to the level of deep friendship, Rose instead often avoided discussing many of the personal issues that they might bring up and invested little emotional labour into the role (Hochschild 1983). Indeed, as the quote above demonstrates, in seeking to deflect conversation away from customers' problems and issues Rose was far more focused on herself than she was on her customers, and their needs within the pub. This is in spite of her conscious effort to become a more active presence in the pub that would connect with customers, and in so doing overcome some of her expressed shyness.

> But most of the time I like to come up and talk to my customers. It's nice; I like to talk to people; I like to connect with my customers … Being an accountant, the entire career as an accountant, or financial analyst is numbers, numbers – sitting at my computer. I don't need to interact with people, talk to people. Nothing personal in the office – I don't like to bring up my personal things. Nobody talks to me. In the bar people talk about personal things, talk about everything. I think at the beginning I was so used to the office I was a little bit shy to come up to the customers and say hi and talk to them. But after maybe a week or two it was different. I think my personality is outgoing but I've been doing one thing for too long so I've kind of become so quiet. But you know in a way I'm still very outgoing so the bar business kind of brought my personality back.

Although the pub might have brought it "back," it seems that Rose's returning personality and general hosting style were not popular with the customers. Among the numerous negative comments, one of the most pithy came from pub regular Gino (34M, Canadian)

who called her "a great cure for happiness." Other once-loyal customers were even more vitriolic once they felt they "got to know her":

> I went there a few times after Breda sold it but I just couldn't handle her. I thought I'd go mad if I had to hear her god-awful fake laugh one more f--king time. I'll never go back as long as she's running the place (Michelle, English, 47F).

This was a statement ripe with aggression and distaste but not born of any one particular negative incident. Other customers stopped coming for other reasons:

> I came in and ordered some sweet potato fries. And you know me, I'm not someone who's going to look for the world's biggest portions, but this was ridiculous. Tiny. There were about five fries in the bowl. She knows nothing about customer service and catering to people ... I've been coming here years and to get that service?! And of course I told Rose but she was her usual unhelpful self (Mattius, Canadian 42M).

Clearly, Rose's efforts at hosting were never readily accepted as genuine. Her unwillingness, and regular inability, to connect with customers resulted in the pub becoming a far less social and Full space than it had been. Customers no longer felt a bond with her in the way they did with Breda, and nor could Rose enact Breda's role of facilitating bonds between customers (unless one counts coming together in shared distrust, dislike, and disavowal). Nor could she tie people and place together over time with stories in the way Breda liked to do.

Rose broke many of the elements of the hospitality myth that were put in place and actively cultivated by Breda. Consumers felt less welcome, less attached to her, and in many cases, less attached to the pub (with customer numbers falling during her tenure). To many, the relationship also became a far more explicitly commercial one than it had been under Breda. Jeff articulated this point above with his view that Rose saw

consumers purely as "ATM machines," while Breda and Gerard after her were seen as more caring and genuinely interested in their customers beyond their spending potential. Not only did customers believe Breda "cared" about them in a way Rose did not, but also a frequent comment from customers was that they liked to spend money in the pub as they were "helping Breda out" when they were giving her their money. The ideology of the pub as hospitable space is founded in large part on consumers believing the exchange is a partially social one, and is about them, so the idea that is it a commercial, economic exchange is repressed. Since she failed to draw effectively on of the myth of hospitality, Rose's customers tended to view their interactions with her solely as part of the economic exchange relationship. Those who had felt a connection to Breda as host were disillusioned when their experiences at the pub became less social.

Indeed, this personal side of the myth was not solely from the side of the consumer. One of the interesting features I noted in reading my transcripts from my sit-down interview with Breda is that she never once used the word "customer," or synonyms such as consumer, client, patron or other similar words, throughout the entire interview. While at times she used pub parlance by talking of "regulars" and non-regulars, Breda generally tended towards the far more personal in her descriptions; she more frequently used the word "people," might mention someone by name, and often describe them in very personal terms to present a multi-dimensional portrait.

This was very much in keeping with forms of free-flowing and immersive personal conversations common between and about friends. Consider the following unprompted customer description:

> That chap over there – with the beard – is from Newfoundland, and he came back from Newfoundland and brought me back a bottle of rum … He doesn't live that close by and he comes in here because he likes the fact that his ancestors are Irish. Newfoundland he loves to talk about and he talks about the Irish soda bread and the homemade jam his mother used to make from Ireland so it's lovely."

Having been given such a rich description I not only know something of his relationship with Breda, but am also better able to converse with him if ever the occasion presents itself. These detailed verbal renderings occur throughout our interactions (even to this day) where she will offer a person's name, where they are from, what they do professionally, some context pertaining to how well or how long she has known the person, and other details she deems pertinent. Indeed, on becoming a more of a regular customer myself, I would often be informed as to how the person she would be describing relates to other people I knew or had been told about from the pub.

Clearly, I am not suggesting that Breda does not consider her customers as just that – paying customers – but there is a distinct difference in tone when compared to the pub's other lead marketers. I have already detailed some of Rose's disjointed relationships with customers, but Gerard's were different. He continually used the word "clients" throughout our interviews and interactions. Having left a career in IT Services, he came to the pub business with a very customer-oriented, corporate approach to service. He talks about his conceptions of what service he is looking to provide and his role within this:

> Gerard: People who are coming … enjoy the pub for an atmosphere, they can talk. So there are also my bartenders, there is also myself … everyone has to be a sales person, I have to be a sales person. I have to be at the crown of the pub: talking to people, inviting them in, making them feel welcome. I want this to have a warm atmosphere, not to have a stifling atmosphere.

Interviewer: Is that something you expected to have to do?

Gerard: Yes, yes, I knew that I would have to introduce this into the pub. I have done this for many years – I have been a consultant for many years. I had to market myself. I have had business relationships, … so that anything that I have had to offer I had to market them. I have to package myself.

By being at the "crown of the pub," or being the "face of the pub" as he often called it, an important role for Gerard was to interact with customers. Although he became friendly with some he was generally more distant and enacted a less personal role than Breda. His understanding of his pub was to primarily be a gathering place for members of the local area to unwind and enjoy one another's company over good quality food, drink and sometime light entertainment, with his own enactment of the role of host as a somewhat more limited than was Breda's. My many observations suggest he conforms more to the role of a pleasant, but not over-friendly, order-taker. He sees his role as setting the conditions for the consumer experiences of hospitality and does not actively cultivate the host persona in the same way Breda did. Interestingly, by the time he had been operating the pub for a year he seemed quite disheartened with the lack of growth and spent gradually less time at the bar comingling, preferring instead to spend more time in the basement office.

Comments about Gerard were rarely as cutting as they were about Rose but many were neutral at best. Often he was damned by faint praise by virtue of being "better than Rose." Some customers respected the efforts when it came to fulfilling his role as host: for example, Jeff (in his earlier quote) expressed appreciation for Gerard's persona relative to Rose's. However, in other cases people were less than impressed with how well he implemented his overall strategy and the running of the pub. A comment

provided by customer Jerome (Irish, 55M) speaks to some of the positive and less than positive elements Gerard brings to the pub. He was sitting at the bar chatting with me as bartender and two other customers close to the end of the night when he said of a pub:

> You want a friendly place where you can leave all of that in the world (gestures a pushing out motion with his hands) out there and enjoy your time in here … This is what it's supposed to be about – staff and customers talking and drinking together like we are. What's all this in Canada with the music and two TVs on at the same time? Should be about the chat and the conversation … But I don't want to sit here and chat with him [Gerard]. I've not much to say.

While he was enjoying the atmosphere and conversation the pub and company were providing, he remained sceptical about the role Gerard as host could play in this milieu. The friendliness and engaging conversation he was enjoying with the customers and me in my role as bartender was not something Gerard could provide. He was a not an active contributor in the way Breda was with customers.

Conclusion: Identity and Assemblages of Fullness

This chapter focuses on the role identity resources can play in an assemblage and can contribute to its Fullness. I show that various facets of identity can be a performative resource. Those with a leveragable individual narrative can leverage it; those with a relevant national identity may do so; and the option of tapping into cultural mythologies to enact an identity seems open to all. While I focus in this chapter on two particular field sites, it should be clear from my earlier descriptions of the lead marketers in both The Céilí Cottage and McArdle's that they also leverage identity resources in a manner that form part of their pubs' assemblages. Consequently, this strategy is a factor contributing

to Fullness. Perhaps the most critical observation arising from this chapter is how a host's failure to leverage identity resources of some kind can undermine a pub assemblage and detract from its Fullness.

CHAPTER NINE: A PUB NEITHER FULL NOR EMPTY

Fibber O'Toole's

In my final field site, Fibber O'Toole's (operated by Premiere Pubs[15]), I will investigate a pub that does not appear to strive for Fullness, despite its positioning as a Irish Pub. I detail the vision behind the Fibber O'Toole's brand, and provide an ethnographic case study of one of its pubs (which closed in Spring 2011). I identify dominant elements of this pub's assemblage and discuss the degree to which these contribute (or more accurately fail to contribute) to the pub's sense of Fullness as compared to how they contribute to a familiar, predictable service setting experience for most patrons. However, I also analyze how an assemblage of patrons within the pub can intermittently draw on elements of the pub's assemblage to foster social relations within their small group.

Fibber O'Toole's is the most popular Irish Pub brand within Premiere Pubs' trans-Canadian suite of four Irish pub brands. Premiere Pubs itself is part of the Premiere Restaurant group which states that its "portfolio includes five of Canada's most recognized and successful casual dining brands" (Premiere Pubs, Franchise Info N.D.). For a start-up cost of between $650,000 (CAD) and $900,000 (CAD) depending on the site and size of the pub, a Fibber O'Toole's franchisee receives all she or he need to create a Fibber O'Toole's which will be "A pub in name and Spirit ... that's just a bit more sophisticated" (Premiere Pubs, Franchise Info N.D.). This package includes the use

[15] Please note: Just as the real names of the pubs were replaced with pseudonyms so too Premiere Pubs is a pseudonym for the parent company.

of nationally recognized trademarks, centralized marketing support (including advertising, research, development and quality control), site selection assistance, detailed interior and exterior designs and plans, professional supervision of construction, confidential Premiere Pubs operating manuals, bulk purchase discounts, and up to six-week pre-opening staff training (Premiere Pubs, Franchise Info N.D.). All are considered essential tools in the creation of the very particular corporate hospitality and entertainment vehicle that is a Fibber O'Toole's pub.

The Premiere Pub's franchisee guide includes the following description of its guiding philosophy:

> The spirit of Ireland is the guiding philosophy of Premiere Pubs. Not surprisingly then, a Premiere Pub is renowned for its warm Irish hospitality, inviting surroundings and vibrant atmosphere, a reputation that has been earned by our franchisees through their commitment to deliver a premium Pub experience for their Guests (Premiere Pubs, Franchise Info).

Details of what the company regards as the "spirit of Ireland," "warm Irish hospitality" and "premium pub experience" are reflected in Table 3. The table is taken from the Premiere Pubs marketing literature, and lists some of the qualities meant to differentiate a Fibber O'Toole's from competing Irish pubs, which Premiere Pubs pejoratively characterize as "boozers." Drawing on stylized stereotypes about Irish pubs as sites where men congregate to drink heavily in an insalubrious environment, they craft a contrasting ideal for Fibber O'Toole's as one that is more quality-, food-, family-, and ultimately profit-oriented. Conspicuously absent from the list of attributes that a Fibber O'Toole's strives for is the kind of sociality I have characterized as Fullness. While the pub strives to have a "friendly" atmosphere, it is not a place where neighbours meet, or

where a community congregates, a point reinforced by manager James.

Table 3: THE PREMIERE PUB EXPERIENCE QUALITIES VERSUS THOSE OF LOCAL (IRISH) BAR

PREMIERE PREMIUM IRISH PUB		LOCAL (IRISH) BAR
Premium establishment	vs.	Tavern or "boozer"
Premium drinks	vs.	Commodity alcohol, jugs
Premium pricing	vs.	Price sensitive, deal-focused
Authentic Design	vs.	Non conceptual, "box and bar"
Vintage bric-a-brac	vs.	Flags and shamrocks
Customer Experience	vs.	Away from home place to drink
Knowledgeable, friendly staff	vs.	Order takers
Designed menu, high quality kitchen	vs.	Bar snacks
Family/friendly	vs.	Male-oriented
Broad demographics/ethnicities	vs.	"Locals" bar
Multiple trading hours	vs.	Lunch and after work rush

With repeated emphasis on "premium" food and drinks, and the higher margins these can entail, it appears that the explicit goal of Fibber O'Toole's is to generate profits by creating a space that happens to be Irish-themed, owing to "authentic design" and "vintage bric-a-brac." Some key elements of the assemblage that are engineered to try to put this franchised proposition into action include the built space and artefacts, and the staff. Though not rigidly controlled by the franchisor, customer performances also contribute to making this an assemblage that is indeed often family- and food-oriented, and that features less Fullness than any other site I studied.

The Built Space and Artefacts

When in operation, the Fibber O'Toole's I studied entailed multiple spaces designed to be variations on the Irish Pub theme. Inspiration for the bar and surrounding area is drawn from the august surroundings of a traditional Victorian-era Dublin pub. The bar itself runs half the length of the pub – seating 15 – and is of dark, mahogany-coloured wood with brass panels. Taps pouring a variety of local and international beers are at two points along the bar: the Irish drafts Guinness, Harp and Kilkenny are clustered together, while the others are grouped in no obvious order. On shelves behind the bar sit a three-row display of whisky and whiskey; an extensive selection of scotches is positioned to the left and beside them bourbon, a couple of ryes and the largest of all, a selection of Irish whiskies (this wide selection of scotches and whiskies being essential for any Irish pub according to barman Dave, Canadian, 32). To the right is a collection of other standard pub spirits. Between the two sets of drinks is large Guinness-branded mirror with a dark wooden frame to match the bar. This rises to a height of about four meters with about another six to go to reach the high-lofted ceiling. This is in the style of some roomy Victorian-era Dublin pubs (Irish Pub Company 2012) and gives this section a real sense of space (see Photo 9.1). Indeed, the area directly surrounding the bar is quite open with room for standing patrons as well as those seated at the bar. On busy nights – particularly over the weekend – this space sees groups of people standing around talking to one another, with drinks in hand, and moving to and from the bar. There is sometimes some level of interactivity among various groups of customers in this section when the

number of patrons is large.

As one moves away from the bar area, the pub becomes less 'open' as it gathers itself together in little clusters that seem to give the pub the feeling of "having corners around every corner" (Jeevan, Canadian 36M). At the far back right-hand side of the pub is an area that converts easily into a surface-level stage for regular live music performances. The wall above the stage area houses the pub's largest television. Two more sit above the bar, and another at the front catering to those seated near the window beside the main door. In the area to the right of the stage that stretches all the way to the front window, and in a similar area at the very back of the pub on the other side of the stage, the pub becomes a more disordered array of tables, chairs and slightly mismatched couches set among a collection of all things Irish-themed – pictures, maps, paintings, drink ads, dressers, and bric-a-brac such as books, vintage cigar boxes and other rustic Irish effects. The ceilings are lower here than above the bar, and the surrounding wall colors are warm autumnal hues of yellow and subtle orange. All combine to create a sense of being a cozier local pub space (see Photo 9.2).

Many older pubs in Ireland have a little room called a snug. Partitioned off from the rest of the pub, a snug is at once a part of and separate from the rest of the pub. Essentially small rooms within the pub itself, often with direct access to the bar, snugs afford people a level of personal privacy in an otherwise public space (e.g., Fennell and Bunbury 2008). While Fibber's does not have a dedicated snug, it is clear that the tables are arranged so as to give patrons a sense of privacy at their chosen place – most of the tables are not parallel; they do not face one another and there are large gaps between

them. In some cases there are wood and glass partitions. The overall sense is one that those seated at each table are readily able to feel separate from one, as the following quotes from customers indicate:

> "The way in which the tables are not facing each other and are a fair distance away from each other kind of gives each table its own sense of enclosure, although they are not enclosed, so it's not cramped or anything" (Mimi, Canadian 33F, Fibber O'Toole's customer).

> "Sometimes you want to mingle and you can, but other times it's very easy to just be with your own friends, or with your own thoughts. It all depends. But yeah, it's easy to not to have to talk to anyone around you" (Larry, Canadian 34M, Fibber O'Toole's customer).

In this portion of Fibber O'Toole's customers tend to come and sit with a given group and their interactions are played out within that same group. If they wish to comingle they know the area closer to the bar is a more open one in which this can more readily occur. However, there is often not much interaction between groups, whereas in other sites inter-group interactions were common. Also, unlike in other built spaces, such as Paddy's "gauntlet" in The Céilí Cottage, there is no material element in the space that channels people to be physically close to one another in a manner that might purposely foster interaction. In the more 'boundary open' spaces (Arnould and Price 1993) found in some of my other field sites, the built space can seem a more intrinsic contributor to Fullness.

I turn now to discussing artefacts in the Fibber's space. "Same Ireland. Different Country" is the tagline on the entertainment notice board as you enter Fibber O'Toole's, suggesting to customers that a slice of Ireland awaits those who enter. Menus and other printed materials are replete with Irish proverbs such as 'laughter is brightest where food

is best' and well-worn quotes from Irish literary luminaries including George Bernard Shaw's quip, 'I often quote myself. It adds spice to my conversation.' Other props include the "vintage bric-a-brac" that are an integral part of the "authentic design" (Table 3), along with Ireland-centric inscriptions such as the previously mentioned "Same Ireland. Different Country" slogan, as well some phrases in Gaelic – *Fáilte go dtí* ["Welcome to"] Fibber O'Toole's at the entrance.

The explicit pronouncement of being Irish, coupled with the use of bric-a-brac, is common among many Irish pub creators (Irish Pub Concept 2002), and the lack of authenticity in such pronouncements is a dominant theme in much of the Irish pub discourse (e.g., Grantham 2009; Muñoz et al. 2006; Patterson and Brown 2007). My focus here, however, is not on judging authenticity. Rather I ask here the extent to which, or the ways such artefacts influence the experience of the place when part of a assemblage such as that at Fibber O'Toole's. Conversations heard and interviews conducted with customers from Fibber's show how consumers often barely notice the props in the space. There is no sense that the artefacts speak to them personally, connect them to the place, or connect them to other people in the space. The standardized kit virtually depersonalizes the décor, and this proves to be of little concern to staff or patrons. Manager James states:

> You know at the end of the day. So I think this whole thing that we've kind of created [Irish theme], you can agree or disagree if you want to, but I think it's a whole lot of BS to be honest with you – I think a pub is a place where you gather, that's it. The décor [Irish artefacts etc.] kind of doesn't really matter. That's kind of my way of looking at it.

Fibber O'Toole's is not a retail vehicle for moving consumers out of the 'ordinary state of being' (Urry 1990) into a realm of sociality and interaction. It is place where people can relax and enjoy their food and drink. The following quotation is illustrative of the reaction of people to the built space and décor:

> It is 'Irish' in a very non-threatening way – it is more decorative, more familiar... The Irishness is there on the level of the aesthetic - certain kinds of decorations, fonts on the menu, lighting, booths. It is bright, but with little nooks, furniture that does and doesn't look like it is part of a chain ... like the comfortable familiarity of a chain, but with touches that were supposed to make it seem homey. But I can imagine a dozen Fibber O'Toole's in that style in different cities ... There's no real interactive quality to the experience. The "story" the pub's decor is telling is one that's impersonal – it's about myth and stereotype in the sense of generic 'Irishness' (Laina American, Fibber O'Toole's customer, 37F).

The pub provides a familiar – and valued – venue for eating and drinking with one's colleagues, friends or family. Absent are artefacts that might make the pub a place where people feel they can or should form new bonds with a broader social group, or with the space itself. Instead, artefacts and the built space here allow for whatever degree of anonymity or small group interaction people wish.

Staff Performances

Fibber's is not imbued in any way with a lead marketer's identity like other pubs studied. Moreover, staff do not contribute much to eliciting sociality between customers. To be sure, the barmen are well trained, professional, and friendly when approached, and the floor staff (usually waitresses) are polite, professional and efficient. Staff are rigorously indoctrinated in scripted modes of performance (Ritzer 2010), with little added in the way of dramatic flair. Instead the qualities of being knowledgeable, and family-

friendly staff are sought and reinforced through training (Premiere Pubs, Franchise Info N.D.). The barman's professional dress is all black – shoes, slack pants and shirt. The waitresses' professional dress is a company-logoed t-shirt on top with standard-issue Irish pub kilt – pleated and folded like an accordion at the back, with flat flap at the front. Although this outfit may evoke Catholic School uniforms it is not an overtly sexualized style of dress, as can be the case in some pubs.

Like the service-oriented staff, the lead marketer in the Fibber's I studied – a manager named James – acts as a competent professional. He has nothing of the broad presence of Breda, Mick or Paddy, or Mairéad's matriarchal quality that would mark him as a principal performer. Instead, the role he performs is relatively a restricted one – more producer than auteur, director or choreographer. Manager James does invoke the cultural myth of the pub as hospitable space when he says: "I think a pub is a place where you gather, that's it … To me it's just all about hospitality and hosting and that's basically what this is, right?" However, his own enactment of the role of host is limited. He sees his role as setting the conditions for the consumer experiences through friendly, professional service. My field observations suggest that James conforms more to the role of a pleasant, but relatively anonymous greeter. He oversees the staff in interaction with customers, being on the floor to observe that all is going well, but he interacts relatively little over the course of any given customer's visit to Fibber's. He appears to enact the role of manager rather than host.

Customers

As indicated above, the relative lack of Fullness in this space does not appear to be something that is of any concern to customers. A singularized social space was neither sought nor cultivated by most customers themselves. In interviews and conversation, adjectives used by informants in their pub descriptions instead include, "relaxed," "relaxing," "pleasant," "clean," "fun," "friendly," and "easygoing." Lack of much social stimulation or need to interact beyond one's intimate group might even be part of what makes this place relaxing, pleasant and easygoing. One informant, Paul (Canadian, 37M) detailed his pub experiences when saying,

> I don't go there every night of the week but when we do go you fairly much know what you're going to get – it'll be busy but not too full most times, grab a decent bite to eat – I love their boxty [a traditional Irish potato pancake] – and probably have a couple of Guinness' too … It's hard to say but it's a relaxing place I suppose – fun, but relaxing. We all work in different jobs and here you can relax in fairly comfortable setting and drink or do what you want.

In analysing my observations of Fibber O'Toole's customers and their experience of the pub, I find them to be comparable to consumer perceptions noted in past Irish pub research (Muñoz et al. 2006). Many of the tangible interior characteristics of the pub, such as the wood paneling and the cozy effect produced by soft colors and lighting, Irish memorabilia, photographs, beer signage that customers tend to enjoy match those commented upon by customers in Muñoz et al. (2006). Much comfort and relaxation comes from the familiarity of the setting, rather than from its sociality.

In Premiere Pubs' channelling of almost all of the Irish Pub Concept guidelines about what constitutes an Irish pub, it has created a place in which this sense of untroubled familiarity pervades. The adherence to what a stereotypical North American

Irish pub should be allows for a familiar set of consumer performances not much different from those they would enact in any other gastro-Irish theme pub. Here we see the category of Irish pub as floating signifier – created less to represent some sense of Irishness and Ireland, and more to represent an established, constructed pub ideal (e.g., Patterson and Brown 2007). In the case of Fibber O'Toole's the Irish pub is a retail category in which customers know the pub is a place where you can be with others, without necessarily having to interact with or relate to them; and where you know you can enjoy the company of your friends without much effort or intrusion.

My observations in Fibber's however, also reveal that while it is not designed to create conditions for Fullness, it is nonetheless an assemblage with elements that can be appropriated to foster sociality by patrons who wished to enact such a script. As I mentioned, the bar space afforded the opportunity for customers to mingle, and sometimes they did.

Even more concretely, over the course of my observations I came to spend a lot of time with a group of regulars who frequented the pub, and who took advantage of what the pub provided to make it a space that supported and fostered relationships between them over the course of almost six years of patronage. I was given something of an insight into the ways in which the pub and their interpersonal relations were intertwined over the course of these years.

The wider group included about 20 people who hailed from Canada, Ireland, Northern Ireland, and England, with most in their early-to-mid-thirties, three in their forties, and one girl in her twenties. While some members of the group had known one

another for more than twenty years, many of the others joined through originally meeting in the pub and became part of a strong friendship network. Over time, some had left the group as well.

One informant Jeevan (Canadian, 36M) detailed some of the history of the group and their relationship with Fibber O'Toole's. They first began to frequent the pub when one of their friends moved in around the corner. Having been to another Fibber O'Toole's outlet in the south of the city they were eager for the same pleasant experiences here. This outlet soon became their "local" though:

> Quiz Night just made it, like we became regulars right away. We're spending a large amount of money because we had 20 people coming. So the wait staff knew us and we were giving good tips. Management, you know, would see us stumbling out late in the hours on a Tuesday. Because, we still had, you know, would have a good time. I think at that point it had already become like, as much of a home pub as it would be in Toronto I'd say … and it just became like a local spot.

He further describes the group as "one big family" as a way to describe the closeness people within it felt for one another, as well as to account for the tensions and conflicts that can also arise within any close familial group. He details the intra-group friendships and romantic relationships that formed, faltered, and died in the pub, explains how some members became closer and others fell out during their time in the pub. He also recalled the night of his surprise 29th birthday party at the pub as the time he got together with his girlfriend of seven years. At another birthday party in-pub two of his friends first got together, and are now married with a child. As he says of his friends and Fibber's, "everyone has a story of the place."

Although many of the group would go to the pub on a number of different nights, and some more than others, Tuesday night, with its Table Quiz, was the most frequently attended by the largest number of the group, although not everyone would attend every week. The structure of the quiz was such that any group of people in the pub could form a team to compete against all other teams in the pub. Over the next two to three hours the teams would compete to answer as many of the compere's trivia questions as they could, with cash prizes awarded to the top three placed teams. As well as being entertaining and competitive, the quiz's slow pace and truncated nature is purposefully designed to allow for plenty of time for conversation amidst plentiful eating and drinking.

While the quiz led to some inter-table interface, as well as interaction with the compere, more than anything else it facilitated socialization over an extended period of time with the same group of people at the table, a different and more limited sociality than often encouraged and facilitated elsewhere. It became the place and time where this group of friends could catch up with one another and enjoy their friendship and one another's company. As with many groups of friends, as they got older it was often became more difficult to meet one another and socialize. Some who once lived together now did so with their wives or girlfriends instead. And work pressures meant social time was at more of a premium than it may have been in college. While they still socialized away from the pub on other occasions, the pub quiz was one of the few consistencies over time. The cash prizes the team often won were kept in trust by one of the group members to be later used by the group as a whole. Everyone from the group was not at the table every night they won, but the monies were for them as much as the successful

team on the night. Plans were discussed about what to do with the money and in 2008 winnings of almost $1,000 were put toward a St Patrick's Day party – at the pub.

Clearly, the pub provided many resources that facilitated the ongoing social relations within this small group. And while such small group bonding is something different than what I have noted elsewhere, it is nonetheless a form of sociality that means that Fibber's, while not Full, is not entirely Empty (Miller 2008). I elaborate on this insight below.

Reflections on Fibber O'Toole's Assemblage

In each pub an assemblage of qualities comes together to create a version of something categorized as an "Irish pub." In the preceding chapters I detail some of the contributing factors most prevalent in the different pub research sites. The contrasting case of Fibber O'Toole's shows that Fullness is a property not necessarily sought or desired by lead marketers or customers. Furthermore, patrons can enjoy that which is called an Irish Pub without experiencing it as a particularly social space. Rather than Fullness, which may have unpredictable elements that arise when people interact in a boisterous fashion, we see that familiarity is the key outcome sought and experienced given the assemblage put in place by Premiere Pubs. This is most clearly articulated by Laina who "can imagine a dozen Fibber O'Toole's in that style in different cities." The goal of a franchise is to create consistency, familiarity, and placelessness in different premises over space and time.

By so closely adhering to these Irish Pub Concept dictums, Premiere Pubs appeals to numerous consumers looking for their own version of a comfortable and familiar pub experience. The Fibber O'Toole's retail experience is one in which the "Guest" is offered a range of rather familiar resources with to craft his or her own experience and realize individuated consumer goals (Arnould 2005; Patterson and Brown 2007). As detailed in their franchise information document:

> Our principal Guest is 25-54, college educated with an above-average income, while our secondary Guest, Adults LDA (legal drinking age) to 34 also feel right at home. A Premiere Pub is ideally suited to meet the demands of today's consumers who are continuously in search of more premium products and experiences, and define themselves by their "taste level" and knowledge of the latest trends (Premiere Pubs, Franchise Info N.D.).

What companies such as the Irish Pub Company seek to offer (and what chain pubs like Fibber O'Toole's often come to embody) is a Fordist-style process of pub construction to create a themed retail environment that offers a consistent service encounter. Predictability and efficiency in providing hospitality are the overarching service goals for Fibber O'Toole's. Staff and managers are rigorously trained (up to six weeks in some cases, for managers and for those in the kitchen) in all modes of Fibber's operations. I compare this to my own three-hour training session when I started working at the Hibernian Inn.

The emphasis at Fibber's on stability and predictability was frequently reinforced in my discussions with manager James. When I asked him about the entertainment programs run on particular nights, he indicated that those choices are mandated by central management and consistent across all Fibber's pubs in Toronto. Similarly, the food and drink choices, signage, menu, and all marketing materials are the same across all of the

pubs. The assemblage is a relatively stable and static one that does not have the same openness to 'on the spot' modification by social interaction among patrons, or by spontaneous input from the lead marketer as in other sites.

However, as my analysis of the extended friendship group who frequented the pub indicated, such standardization can still permit and even foster networks of friends. I would argue that while this place lacks the types of Fullness I found elsewhere, it is not Empty. Although Miller (2008) positions an "Empty" place as a counterpoint to a "Full" one, these polar opposites are not necessarily the case. For some customers, the pub itself becomes a repository of memories and relationships in so far as it can evoke memories of good times had, friendships shared, and rituals enjoyed. Yet these stories and meanings of the place are more individuated than in a site such as McArdle's, with the interactions not reflected in the pub in a broader manner. In effect, the sociality the group members creates among themselves – drawing on factors such as the quiz night as a resource – represents a relatively social "sub-assemblage" within the more anonymizing pub assemblage.

This connection between a network of friends, coupled with a distance between them and other people, suggests a space that fosters Warner's (2002) notion of the "intimate theatre of stranger-relationality" (p.57). It is a place where a level of intimacy with others might be suggested and intermittently achieved, but where there is ever the co-presence of strangers. Moreover, consumers can use the Fibber's stage to create their own stories and enact their own series of performances (Kozinets et al. 2004), but the overall narrativization and meaning making remained the privilege of the Premiere Pubs

scriptwriters. In as clear a manner as Coca-Cola in Hollenbeck et al. (2008), American Girl Place in (Borghini et al. 2009), or Nike in Sherry (1998), Premiere Pubs wrote the themed retail story, inscribed it into the space, and sought tight control over the ongoing narrative to foster familiarity, all the while granting conditions for groups of consumers to engage in social practices and performances on this retail stage.

CHAPTER TEN: CONCLUSION

> I have not been there since they re-opened. I can't. The pub has been such an important part of my life in so many ways – I've spent so much of my life there, met so many people, passed so many landmarks – that to go back, it would … it would ruin it all.

These are the words of Jeff (Canadian 24M), who had been a twice-weekly regular at the Hibernian Inn pub for more than five years before it closed and was remodelled. As lead marketers changed and others all round came and went, Jeff remained as a pub constant. Yet no longer, as the above quote was his answer when asked if he had visited The Trappist's Cask, the Hibernian Inn's replacement, since it opened. His answer touches on the personal significance and meaningfulness of the Hibernian Inn for him. While he clearly felt something akin to Borghini et al.'s (2010) notion of place attachment, the pub was equally important because of the sociality it had afforded him, and the many of the relations he had with others linked to the Hibernian Inn. The Trappist's Cask occupies the same physical space, is still run by two lead marketers in Gerard and Ned whom he finds agreeable, still is a business that sells food and drink, as it had before, but it is an utterly changed proposition for Jeff. He had built a close and enduring relationship with the Hibernian Inn pub, and through it formed and structured many of the important human relations and bonds in his own life. In this paper I look at such consumer relationships with retail places and the ways in which these come about through the experience of Fullness in the retail place. In this section I summarize some of the findings that illustrate this process in action before I expand on my dissertation's theoretical contributions.

In this paper I have detailed the nuanced ways in which relationships are built with a retail place, and with people within it. In seeking to understand how these

relationships have been built I listened to the voices of marketers, service providers, consumers and the place itself to develop an understanding of how Fullness can become a feature of a the retail setting. I looked at five pub cases studies and analyzed the assemblage of components that cohered in each, to create that pub's particular sense of Fullness for at least some period of time. In my account of Fullness I showed the importance of the expressive and the personal alongside material components in the assemblages. The overall focus is on how human and material aspects of retail places can encourage or discourage a variety of interactions and consumer experiences. More specific to the material, close attention is paid to physical elements of the place, how the place is created and why certain elements were imputed therein. From the more personal and expressive side, attention is paid to how people interact with the place, with the objects within and with one another. The variety of components that contribute to Fullness across the different field site is briefly summarized in Table 4, but is described in greater detail throughout the rest of the conclusion.

I show that Fullness can emerge in many different ways, with some components more prevalent in certain assemblages than in others. In one pub an important contributor to Fullness might be how the lead marker imbues his or her pub with a variety of qualities that create a sense for consumers that the pub is a place that welcomes social interaction. This includes how they themselves channel a host of identity resources and conduct personable and entertaining interactions with customers. In another, an important contributor to Fullness might be from the social interactions of consumers that make this pub their "Local," and how they themselves construct narratives that hold that their ties to

others are forged and re-affirmed by the retail place in which they interact. These consumers often give particular meanings to many elements of the retail setting that are derived from these close ties, and then serve to further enhance these very ties. In another, an important contributor to Fullness may emerge primarily from the material elements that comprise the pub's built space and the influence that built space has in how consumers interact with the setting and with others in the setting. My analysis also considers the case of a pub that lacked much Fullness, and considers the elements in the assemblage that contribute to this outcome. Overall, I emphasize how these myriad components are interlinked and intertwined, and demonstrate that any attempt to study any one in isolation, or to remove a component from analysis would give an incomplete picture. Therefore, treating Fullness as the result of an assemblage of components allowed for this study's comprehensive approach.

Table 4: INDIVIDUAL FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO PUB FULLNESS

	The Céilí Cottage	McArdle's	JP O'Donoghue	Fibber O'Toole's
Material Elements of the Setting	Material elements such as 'The Gauntlet' shape and channel close and intimate interactions	Material elements such as the small size of the pub and open space close to the bar shape and channel close and intimate interactions	Large multi-sited space. Each of the of the three rooms designed to facilitates different forms of interactions in parallel	Multi-purpose space. Nooks designed to foster private interactions. Open area designed to foster widespread interaction
	Many props and staging elements personally relevant to lead marketer	Many props and staging elements personally relevant to lead marketer	Many props and staging elements personally relevant to lead marketer; others selected to fulfill customer expectations of Irishness	Props & staging elements selected from corporate-created pub playbook to match research-driven customer expectations
	Many props and staging elements' narrative properties scripted by pub customers in conjunction with lead marketer	Many props and staging elements' narrative properties scripted by pub customers in conjunction with lead marketer	Few props and staging elements' narrative properties scripted by pub customers	No props or staging elements' narrative properties created by pub customers
Expressive Elements	Active processes of personal mythmaking by social and material means: personal identity resources invested about connections to Ireland, personal investment in pub, oyster shucking celebrity	Active processes of personal mythmaking by social and material means: personal identity resources invested about her Irishness, her position within Irish community,	Active processes of personal mythmaking by social and material means: personal identity resources invested revolved around his roles as Irish community icon and entrepreneurial impresario	No processes of personal mythmaking in action. No personal identity resources invested in pub
	Successfully channels marketplace myth of hospitality: charismatic lead marketer creates conditions for sociality; effective host whose daily presence not required	Successfully channels marketplace myth of hospitality: warm, engaging lead marketer enacts culturally-expected role of consummate hostess. Similar modes of staff performance but her presence preferred	Successfully channels marketplace myth of hospitality: charismatic, friendly and engaging lead marketer an active social presence within pub. Staff trained in modes of friendly & efficient service delivery	Marketplace myth of hospitality studied and all staff trained in mode of performance: delivery efficient and friendly rather than personally engaging
	Pub as "Local": meeting place for geographically-bound local community	Pub as round-the-clock community center: meeting place for expatriate Irish & self-identified Irish-Canadians	Pub as ad-hoc Irish community space: meeting place for Irish & self-identified Irish-Canadians	Pub as meeting place for diffuse array of customers
	Lead marketer offers resources to foster sense of community within its Leslieville neighborhood	Myriad resources formally and informally made available by lead marketer and pub customers to members of the community	Resources formally and informally made available to members of Irish community and other customers	Limited sense of community – not actively fostered by lead marketer or prescribed at corporate level
	Sense of community bounded within pub	Community of consumers extends beyond pub walls	Community of consumers extends beyond pub walls	Limited sense of community bounded within pub

Assemblages and Fullness

From this analysis I first I look at some implications for understanding retail environments, themed and otherwise. As detailed above, I demonstrate how Fullness can be a property of such retail places. This is an important addition to our understanding of retail place as it highlights the personal and sometimes intimate elements that can constitute these places – important qualities that were not always accounted for in extant studies. Research rarely captures the personally significant nature of place from the point of view of its commercial operators, and typically ignores the personal investments that owners and even staff may make therein.

Yet, this Fullness is sometimes subtly manifest. Just because a house might be replete with pictures, personal objects, mementos and more, it does not necessarily guarantee that it is Full. So too, different retail places that contain the same or similar variety of objects from one to the next will not necessarily be equally Full. Rather, it is from the interplay of myriad factors that Fullness emerges – in the "aesthetic" of the place, as Miller (2008) calls it, which conveys something of harmony, balance, and of connections between people, objects and place that are centred on meaning and sociability. These social meanings are transmuted into the holism of the place to reflect much of the person who owns the home and the networks of relations he or she has with others, as well to also serve to influence and structure many of the social relations and interactions this person shares with others in this same place, thereby contributing more to this Fullness. Indeed, as Miller (2008, 21) notes of a Full house, "the connection between this devotion to persons and to things is nothing obvious or intrusive; rather, it

flows so naturally that it may take a certain academic, critical distance just to come to an awareness of its being there at all."

This same subtle yet natural aesthetic is evident in the retail places investigated as the Fullness emerges not simply from the presence of the myriad components, but also from the constant interplay of the relations between them. In showing themed retail spaces as assemblages that may contribute to or detract from Fullness, we find some recurrent pattern and coherence across varieties of components of Fullness in ones that are most Full. This is seen in the case of McArdle's. Many overlapping components make it an attractive place for Irish and Irish-Canadian (among others too) customers. Mairéad and the customers create for one another the sense that this pub is a community space, and construct narratives within the pub that hold that their ties to others are forged and re-affirmed by the retail place in which they interact. Moreover, Mairéad herself is an engaging character and she attracts numerous Irish and Irish-Canadian customers. Also, the pub setting is small and its size facilitates the intimacy between the customers. It is a relatively Spartan place but many of the props are either personally resonant to, and reflective of, Mairéad, or have meaning because they were created by the community of consumers and reflect this sense of sociability. From the coherence of all comes the sense that this is a Full place.

Yet, while the diverse elements of any given assemblage can contribute to Fullness at any given time, the absence of one element need not necessarily undermine Fullness. This is seen in the case of the Hibernian Inn pub under Breda, in which many components of Fullness exist, but without the same sense of strong community as

evidenced in McArdle's. Instead, with Breda there is coherence between the personal identity resources she invests, the marketplace myths she taps into, the personal performances she enacts, and the ways many of the material elements of the place hold meaning for her and for many customers. Breda is very clearly the focal component of this pub and many there cohere around her and get to know one another through her. However, we see that Rose disrupts this coherence, and the pub becomes markedly less Full. She no longer serves as someone who could join people together nor have them cohere around her as a focal character. She was unable to enact engaging personal performances, neither understood nor was able to tap into marketplace myths, and much of the setting held no personally significant meanings for her or could be communicated to consumers, or indeed be co-created by them, so as to become a resonant, Full place. These two lead marketers are almost polar opposites in terms of how they contributed to the Fullness of the pub. What this example also reinforces is that while some elements contribute to Fullness, others may be introduced that detract from it. Thus, an assemblage may be de-stabilized as changes in one key element (e.g. the lead marketer) can be catalysts that disrupt the assemblage and detract from Fullness. Understanding the elements that can serve to stabilize and destabilize assemblages constitutes an important contribution to future studies of retail spaces where Fullness is a desired or attractive feature.

Clearly then, I theorize that not all experiences of Fullness are the same. Just as entities such as communities can be heterogeneous, and marked by difference as much as by similarity (Thomas et al. 2013), so too there can be different forms of Fullness. While

there are some general similarities across cases, Fullness is not a quintessence. That is, my study leads me to believe it is overly simplistic to consider that some places are "more or less" Full than others. I infer from my data analysis that there may be different types or dimensions of Fullness in retail spaces. I elaborate on this key point in the following section.

Fullness in its Many Forms

As my findings reveal, there are different kinds of social sites that are Full with different qualities. In some, this Fullness can be quite fragmented and temporary while in others it can be more pervasive and enduring. Fullness is more continuous in sites such as The Céilí Cottage as the physical detailing of the space itself plays a highly constitutive role. In sites such as the Hibernian Inn under Breda or McArdle's it is less continuous as it is often contingent on the presence of people – Breda in the case of the Hibernian Inn and the co-presence of Irish others in McArdle's. In a site such as the Hibernian Inn under Breda's tenure we see richness in the way she made the pub Full, much a result of her being an active, participatory and interconnecting relational presence within the pub. While the pub may still have felt "cozy," "unpretentious," "homey" or other such positive attributes that consumers ascribe even in her absence, it did not necessarily maintain an enduring Fullness. Similarly, McArdle's can be an utterly changed proposition when devoid of comingling consumers. While Paddy recognizes his role in the Fullness of The Céilí Cottage, he has also created a place that transcends him: he explicitly states that being able to let the day-to-day nature of the business run successfully without his

specific presence in the pub is one of his most satisfying successes. He does not need to be present in his pub for it to have this characteristic of Fullness as he has confected myriad qualities for the pub that serve this function *in lieu* of his performative presence.

Furthermore, Fullness may sometimes be bound to, and confined within a space, while in other cases it may be more diffuse beyond the space: the sociality wrought within some sites extends far beyond the four walls. As outlined earlier, McArdle's is a place in which many people within the diaspora come together but in many cases they are together beyond the pub as well. This togetherness many be through attending some Irish community or cultural events and activities, socializing with one another elsewhere, or at functions such as Christmas dinner at Mairéad's house. Through Breda, this also happened for many at the Hibernian Inn. As I noted earlier for instance, at one party attended at Breda's house she noted that 40% of the guests present were people she got to know through the pub, and many of these also knew and were friendly with one another beyond the pub. In contrast, this same diffuse Fullness was not as evident at The Céilí Cottage. While many of the qualities of the setting facilitated Fullness, the sociality was more often confined to the space. While there were of course people who met and forged friendships in the pub (or even more, as exemplified in the case of the pub wedding) it was not the same encompassing sociality that emerged in a site such as McArdle's. Instead, more often than not, in terms of considering the pub a Full place, what happened within The Céilí Cottage seemed to stay within The Céilí Cottage.

In other instances my observational data points to a sometimes almost kinesthetic quality of Fullness that some consumers experience, achieved without necessarily

creating narratives around their consumption experiences. The term 'kinesthetic' deals with the body and is most frequently considered in terms of kinesthetic learning – a bodily or physical learning style that privileges action and movement over thought (Gardner 1983). In this light, the kinesthetic quality of Fullness is akin to Relph's (1976) instinctive, bodily, and immediate modes of spatial experience, or to Joy and Sherry's (2003) discourse on consumption as somatic processes of experience – consumption as embodied experience (Joy and Sherry 2003).

This kinaesthetic quality of Fullness can occur even within the most richly narrativized of settings. For instance, in The Céilí Cottage multiple layers of rich and textured narratives are imputed into the place to serve as narrative resources that are offered to consumers in the pursuit of their own consumption experiences and the fulfillment of their consumer goals (Arnould 2005). In the owner's pub as 'campfire' metaphor these resources offered to consumers are in the form of stories Paddy carefully considered, crafted and built into the pub. He believes these features of the setting should have the potential for consumers to craft and co-create their own stories. And while we have seen instances of this happening among many consumers – remember for instance the aforementioned customer Jen and her excited reaction on learning the multi-layered story of the limestone bar top – it does not account for the experience of Fullness for all.

To some consumers the Fullness might come less from the narrative layering and instead come from simple elements of the setting such that their actions and movements within the space are to some degree manipulated or structured by the space itself. This

may be from the small front room-like layout of McArdle's or from the encumbrance that can be encountered in The Céilí Cottage's 'Gauntlet.' In each, elements of the setting ensure people come together to not simply co-consume the space, but to do so in a way that does not does occur in the modular fashion as noted in previous themed retail environments (e.g., Borghini et al. 2009; Hollenbeck et al. 2008). Instead the manner in which they are brought together encourages wider interaction from which the sense this is a Full place can emerge for customers.

At other times the nature of the pub's Fullness can come almost exclusively from the people therein and the range of social interactions between them. In a sense, for these customers the pub space may become something akin to a mere delivery device for their social experiences – the prime consumer experience the lead marketer looks to facilitate – with the fact of where they are and what the place seeks to communicate to them sometimes almost extraneous to the experience. Instead, a steady supply of the requisite people with whom they can interact enables the experience. This mélange may comprise any of lead marketer, staff and other customers. In such cases, the elements of the setting need not necessarily enter into the foreground of human interaction in the way Miller conceptualizes Fullness, but connections between people suffices. Indeed, in observing and sharing in these interactions, for these customers the pub's characteristic setting elements often faded into the background, yet the pub experience was an enrichingly Full one.

These two points may can relate again to the wide-ranging literature on servicescapes, which are composed of numerous ambient, social and design elements

including color, lighting, music, scent, material quality, layout and set design (Bitner 1992). Studies of peoples' interactions with their physical settings show that changes to an individual's environment have the effect of causing changes in behaviour in, and experiences of, the setting (Gifford 1987; Goldkuhl, and Styvén 2007; Hultén, Broweus, and van Dijk 2009; Milliman 1982). In this vein, servicescape studies are concerned with ways in which the physical environment can influence consumers' behaviours and how managers can manipulate the environment to enhance or constrict a wide range of consumer actions, towards achievement of a variety of important outcomes of interest relating to customer satisfaction with the overall service, likelihood to patronize, approach or avoidance behaviours, word-of-mouth effects, and many others (Rosenbaum and Massiah 2011). To this, for future studies, we can add experiencing Fullness.

To summarize and distinguish between the types of fullness I observed, I offer the following labels. A pub such as The Céilí Cottage exhibits "Multi-Faceted Fullness": it has a densely populated assemblage with highly complementary material and expressive elements. In contrast, a pub such as the Hibernian Inn when Breda was lead marketer features "Host-Fuelled Fullness": such spaces rely on the material presence of lead marketer for the Fullness; other material and expressive elements are not sufficient to sustain Fullness if his or her absence is prolonged. A third type I discern is "Narrative-Fostered Fullness," which might be found in JP O'Donoghue's. In a setting such as this, the mythologized narratives of the deceased host, and of Irishness, which are encoded in, and reflected by, the material elements of the setting, seem to facilitate Fullness in the space. Of these three types, Host-Fuelled Fullness seems most fragile, depending as it

does one key element of the assemblage. Narrative-Fostered Fullness may be more stable; however, there is always the possibility that narratives can become eroded over time, leading to a breakdown of the assemblage or a depletion of its Fullness. Multi-faceted Fullness seems most robust, because the elements of assemblage are usefully redundant: even if one erodes or is absent, the Fullness of the assemblage is not immediately at risk.

However, although I look at different components and types of Fullness, my paper does not fully address is the variety of retail environments in which Fullness is desirable, and those where it may be less so. Future research can build on my findings to investigate different conditions of retail places that make Fullness attractive versus those in which it is less so. Seeking to create a Full place is not something done by all retailers, and nor should it. As I show in the case of the Trappist's Cask for instance, Fullness is not a quality owners Ned and Gerard specifically seek. The success of the venture instead comes from the Trappist's Cask meeting the needs of a more upmarket set of customers who seek consumption experiences that do not necessitate a Full space. The Fibber O'Toole's pub I study was also a profitable pub without Fullness, and the Premiere Pubs chain of franchised pubs remains so (Irish Pub Company 2012; Premiere Pubs, Franchise Info N.D.). Moreover, I also pointed out some of the ways in which Fullness can be a polarizing concept so further analysis will need to account for reasons for and against Fullness.

Servicescapes and Fullness

Servicescape studies are concerned with ways the physical environment can influence consumers' behaviours, as cues within the environment communicate certain factors to consumers and significantly shape their experiences (Bitner 1992). The dissertation demonstrates how this perspective can be enriched by a study of Fullness. Servicescape perspectives generally take the view that places communicate certain things *to* consumers who primarily derive meanings *from* these communications. Yet, the ways in which people in the pub settings interact with the objects and with the space itself often constitute social meanings for them, contribute to the symbolic (and indeed sometimes physical) makeup of place, and are subject to processes of change over time. In the Hibernian Inn for instance, we see how the physical space of the pub remained relatively constant from one lead marketer to the next; yet, the pub's feel and experiences for customers changed markedly as it became a less meaningfully resonant and less social place. In essence, the pub became less Full. In the assemblage of factors that constituted Fullness within the Hibernian Inn very little changed materially yet the Fullness of the pub decreased markedly, and the ways the physical retail environment influenced customers did also. The focus of many servicescape studies is on which elements constitute the retail space, and what symbolic cues do they provide to consumers (e.g., Rosenbaum and Massiah 2011). It is not focused on the ways in which these servicescape elements have varied significances for different marketers and customers, or how these can change over time as elements of the assemblages such as the lead marketers and

customers change (see Diamond et al. 2009 for a good review of how elements of the retail place have multiple and varying meanings for different customers).

We also see this disconnect between the material makeup and the Fullness of the place in other cases. For instance, the creators of Fibber O'Toole's dipped into the Irish Pub Concept playbook in crafting their pub's theme, and filled the space with Irish iconography and various Irish-theme markers in their efforts – but Fibber's is not a Full site. Even though many of these same material elements are shared across different sites we see that Irish iconography and markers do not a Full place make. Indeed, The Pat Quinlan Lounge in JP O'Donoghue's was constructed by an Irish pub kit company using many of these same Irish markers as in Fibber's. Fibber's is founded on consistency between the atmospheric cues, theme and service delivery (Pine and Gilmore 1999). These three elements are designed to create for consumers the sense that this is an Irish pub in which they can perform the range of consumer performances stereotypically associated with those settings. JP O'Donoghue's is founded on many of these same principles. From a servicescape perspective, to simply conduct a comparative analysis of the physical makeup of each would yield a significant correlation in terms of the objects found (e.g., maps of Ireland, Irish-theme pictures, wooden detailing, a 'warm' color scheme, food and beverage options, and many more besides), yet these material similarities insufficiently capture the differences between the pubs which make one a more Full space than the other. Instead, these differences came about largely from the ways the persona of lead marketer Mick was inscribed in the JP O'Donoghue's space, from the ways many customers connected with him in situ, and the ways they connect

with one another in making this a crucial Irish event space. In contrast, there is little in the way of personal mythmaking in Fibber O'Toole's, through material objects as well as lead marketer performance. Nor is there the sense for consumers that this pub is a transcendent place that serves a community function.

Place and Fullness

I use assemblage theory to extend our understanding of how meaning is given to place. I also identify some of the dynamism within assemblages as the Fullness of places can change over time. Every assemblage is in a process of perpetual change; assemblage is a verb as much as a noun, a process of becoming as much as it is a state of being. Each assemblage emerges from the coming together of myriad material and expressive components, which may have developed quite independently of one another but for a period of time fuse into a temporarily coherent whole. This dynamism is a feature of places, which are always subject to processes of change. As Casey (1976) notes, places happen rather than are. Maclaran and Brown (2005) further highlight retail places' dynamic nature stating, "[p]laces take place, so to speak, they occur as events or enactments (Maclaran and Brown 2005, 317). Through their analysis of a festival shopping mall, the authors highlight various aspects of producer-consumer relations as each invests particular meanings in a space to transform it into place. Maclaran and Brown's particular focus is the spatiotemporal dynamics around the concept of retail "utopias," and their analysis shows the ways some meanings invested by both parties ebb and flow over time, as does the meaning of the retail place.

Assemblage theory captures this dynamism of place and provides a useful conceptual framework. One of the ways an assemblage theory perspective contributes to this paper is to provide a greater level of understanding of the micro-level processes of meaning making and change that occur within such places, and their more macro-level effects on the Fullness of the pubs – how the small details can cohere to produce great effects. Moreover, I demonstrate assemblage theory's usefulness across a variety of field sites to show how different sites are made differentially Full, as well of course showing how as a framework it can account for significant waves of change within one particular site – the Hibernian Inn.

Assemblage theory might also be useful in other contexts of study. Diamond et al. (2009) argue through their study of American Girl Place that brands are "gestalts." In brand gestalts brand meanings are found to reside within complex systems comprised of myriad component parts of brands and the relationships among these parts. Brands are dynamic and emergent phenomena and it is therefore combinations of these components that account for the power of a brand, with the most powerful being ones in which there are synergies between constituent parts that both complement and enhance one another. Can brands also be understood as assemblages of material and nonmaterial elements – as dynamic entities that can be stabilized by some elements, destabilized by others? Similar to brand gestalts, assemblage theory can also incorporate a wide range of material and symbolic brand components. Using the lens of assemblage theory keeps open the opportunity to material elements of brands, as Diamond et al. (2009) do in many respects through the store, theater and cafe, and the dolls themselves, alongside the symbolic and

expressive, but it also facilitates investigating the inherent heterogeneity within brands that they highlight (see Thomas et al. 2013). It complements the gestalt perspective, as not only does it account for the fact that there are different consumers for whom brands will hold different meanings, but also allows for investigations of changes in brand meanings for these various consumers over the course of time. It also facilitates looking at meanings across different brands, accounts for how these brands may at times intersect, and the processes of meaning making and change within.

Mise-en-scenes and Fullness

As I detailed earlier, themed retail environment studies focus almost exclusively on established brands and large 'cathedrals of consumption' (Ritzer 2010) such as Nike Town, ESPN Zone, American Girl Place and the Coca-Cola Museum. The pervasive perspective is one that suggests that current and future success in themed retail environments lies in greater levels of spectacle and consumer immersion through stories and performances (e.g., Diamond et al. 2009; Hollenbeck et al. 2008). In this paper I adopted a different perspective and introduced the concept of the mise-en-scene as a way to explain the present retail places.

In an artfully constructed mise-en-scene, every aspect of the setting has a part to play in the ongoing narrative. Many elements of a mise-en-scene may be small, subtle, and allusive, but they cohere with more palpable elements to help to tell the big story (Bordwell and Thompson 2010). In a mise-en-scene a director builds an *impression* of a story through managing the various elements and creates something for which there are

often different layers of understanding for the many audience members. This multilayered understanding is the result of the diversity of cultural knowledge and understandings that different people bring to their viewing. What often differentiates customers' understanding is the depth and variety of personal resources available to them in assessing the imbricated layers of the setting (Arnould 2005) as they fill in many of the lacunae in the story the mise-en-scene is designed to tell. In the case of the Irish pubs this understanding is founded on customers' own cultural resources as they relate to their understandings of the pub genre, Irishness, and countless overlaps between the two that have been detailed herein.

The mise-en-scene perspective is also suited to analysing Fullness in my retail sites. Miller's description of Fullness notes as an often less than obvious "aesthetic" of a place that tends to emerge over time and through engagement with person and place. Mise-en-scene can provide a new lens through which to study other retail environments – themed and otherwise. It complements the emphasis on retail spectacles by allowing research on less sonorous sites. In The Céilí Cottage, for instance I investigate the many ways the physical structure serves a narrative purpose, including how there are levels of subtle socio-material layering of elements in the pub.

A mise-en-scene perspective can also work in researching other sites. It sees the retail setting as stage (Goffman 1959) and looks at the intentionality behind elements thereon on the part of the retailer as auteur and director. The entirety of a mise-en-scene – from the most minute and subtle to the most prominent and obvious – can be created with intention, to convey particular tone, meaning, and narrative information. At times this

might occur by direct articulation on the part of the marketer in the form of clear and unambiguous setting design and performances, while at other times intention can be in something far more subtle and allusive, as detailed in the example of The Céilí Cottage. At a minimum, my work suggests that less grand retail settings should get the same level of attention afforded the aforementioned "cathedrals of consumption" and mise-en-scene can help to provide this nuanced multilayered analysis.

Lead Marketers and Fullness

A significant contribution of this thesis is the increased insight it offers on how marketers can play contributing roles in retail environments through the ways in which they invest personal identity resources in building their businesses, tap into and channel particular marketplace myths related to elements of their own identities, and perform certain roles to engage consumers. A wealth of research has highlighted some of the different ways in which consumers' identities influence aspects of their consumption such as how they may shape their identities through their engagement with the market and how the socio-cultural patternings that inform these identities impact on how they consume and make consumption decisions (e.g., Arnould and Thompson 2005; Joy and Li 2012), but in marketing research the particulars of marketer identity are rarely considered. In principle, marketers invest their time and energy to learn about consumers, build relationships and friendships with them, develop marketing plans around them and communicate with them personally and through a multiplicity of promotional vehicles. It seems remiss of us to think that what they do in their jobs is based solely on responses to

articulated or assumed consumer needs, wants or desires. Just as consumers' identities shape their engagement with marketing offers, it is likely that lead marketers' identities help to shape that which they offer.

The marketers I focus on in this dissertation are those I dub lead marketers – the owners and operators of small businesses (often entrepreneurs or business owners) who have the authority and influence over all aspects of marketing in their business. ,In many instances, the lead marketers I interviewed did not always identify themselves as marketers. However, in every case, in the course of their everyday activities in running their business, they enact many of the roles we associate with marketers. The focal role played by lead marketers in these settings is something not highlighted in extant themed retail research (e.g., Borghini et al. 2009; Hollenbeck et al. 2008). As introduced above, one of the important factors looked at in this study was as what identity resources marketers draw on or attempt to put aside in their production of their market offering. I also show how resources include mobilizing marketplace myths such as that of hospitable and welcoming host to consumer as guests, as well as how lead marketers leverage identity resources based on Irish heritage, and actively construct certain personas through performances. It is significant that, at times, lead marketers were unable to enact effective performances owing either to a failure to understand the performance requirements, or to some deficiencies in their identities.

One particular mythology that has been discussed here is that of the good host who creates a welcomed and welcoming place. Lead marketers who invoke these tacit cultural scripts of hospitality can engage customers as the pub confirms their sense of

what a welcoming space ought to be; further, they mobilize consumers as co-creators of the conviviality that helps make others feels engaged in the space. I have argued that lack of familiarity with cultural scripts on the part of the lead marketer, and a failure to perform the role as expected, can alienate consumers, especially those who have prior experience with a lead marketer who enacts the role effectively. Of course, since I argue that these scripts are a form of tacit cultural knowledge with which all lead marketers are not equally familiar, it follows that not all customers are equally familiar with the mythology. Some customers might be uncomfortable playing the role of participative member of a temporary pub community. It is important to emphasize that the enactment of the good host/welcomed community of guests mythology requires customers to be familiar with the mythology and amenable to enacting their role within it as well. Indeed, with any of the identity resources invested and marketplace mythologies mobilized by lead marketers in this or in other contexts, a certain level of consumers' cultural understanding is required.

Lead marketers' selective mobilization of personal identity resources as a means to construct a retail setting has not been investigated in extant research. One of the strands of Borghini et al.'s (2010) research is on the role the retailer's identity plays in how consumers build relationships with retail places, but they do not interrogate the ways in which these identities are constructed, nor focus on how they are made manifest in the retail space. There are many small and medium sized businesses run by such lead marketers and the opportunity to expand our knowledge about them is important. Indeed,

small firms are hugely important to the Canadian economy[16] and expanding our knowledge about what factors can better determine their success or otherwise is an important contribution.

I highlight some of the ways in which these marketers can build relationships with customers by means other than financial. This is particularly important in small businesses in which the lead marketer might have fewer economic resources on which to draw relative to larger competitors. Personal elements, which are part of identity resources and not costly per se, can be important building blocks for a business. Also, while in this paper I detail ways in which marketers mobilize certain resources I do not suggest these are exhaustive, nor indeed, are the same identity resources relevant across all types of settings. Rather, the specific nature of the current context means that those identified are the ones more relevant in my particular study. In other retail and marketing environments certain other marketer identity resources may be more relevant and drawn on by marketers as means to differentiate those businesses.

The notion of seeing elements of a marketer's identity as resources ties clearly to the "CCT-approach to retailing" that Arnould (2005) adopts, in which "firms compete for a role in the culturally constituted projects that consumers pursue by offering certain

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[16] "There are just over one million small businesses in Canada that have employees (excludes self-employed entrepreneurs). Of these, "1,100,779 employer businesses (98 percent) have fewer than 100 employees, 75 percent have fewer than 10 employees and 55 percent have only 1 to 4 employees (Industry Canada 2012). Moreover, "as of 2011, small businesses employed approximately five million individuals in Canada, or 48 percent of the total labour force in the private sector. Small businesses created about 21,000 jobs in 2011. Over the 2001 to 2011 period, small firms accounted for 43 percent of all jobs created, on average, in the private sector" (Industry Canada 2012). Indeed, within the Canadian service sector we see that "small firms account for 96 percent of all service-producing employer firms" and "the activities of services-producers account for more than two-thirds of total industry-based GDP in Canada" (Industry Canada 2012).

resource combinations" and consumers, aided by these retailer resources, deploy their own cultural resources to accomplish the pursuit of their personal identity and communal projects (2005 p. 89). Our view of what resources marketers offer to consumers is now expanded to include myriad elements of their own personal identities. The paper highlights many of the ways in which consumers use these marketer-produced resources and combine them with others in their consumption projects. Indeed, in many cases marketers' personal identity resources were some of the primary means through which consumers built their relationships with the retail environment; their relationships with the retail place were often channelled in significant ways though the lead marketer. Again, this is most evident in the case of Breda and the myriad positive elements she brought for pub customers. When she left, many consumers left with her, and for many of those that remained their relationship with the retail setting was much changed as a result of her absence, as well as the presence of Rose. I traced many of the ways in which the pub became a less Full place for Breda's leaving and Rose's joining. As always, Fullness is a fluid and shifting assemblage.

Final Thoughts

It is my hope that in writing this dissertation my analysis of Fullness in retail settings I broaden our understanding of some important marketing and retailing concepts. I open some new avenues for the ways we can conceptualize retail settings as Full places, understand the breadth of consumer experiences therein, and better appreciate the privileged role of the marketer and of the material aspects of settings, as they interact with narrative elements in creating these consumer experiences.

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PUB PHOTOGRAPHS

PHOTO 2.1: THE LONG HALL PUB, DUBLIN – INTERIOR

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PHOTO 6.1: THE CÉILÍ COTTAGE – OUTSIDE VIEW

PHOTO 6.2: INSIDE THE CÉILÍ COTTAGE – TIMEWORN WALLS AND TABLES FASHIONED FROM DISTILLERY FLOORBOARDS

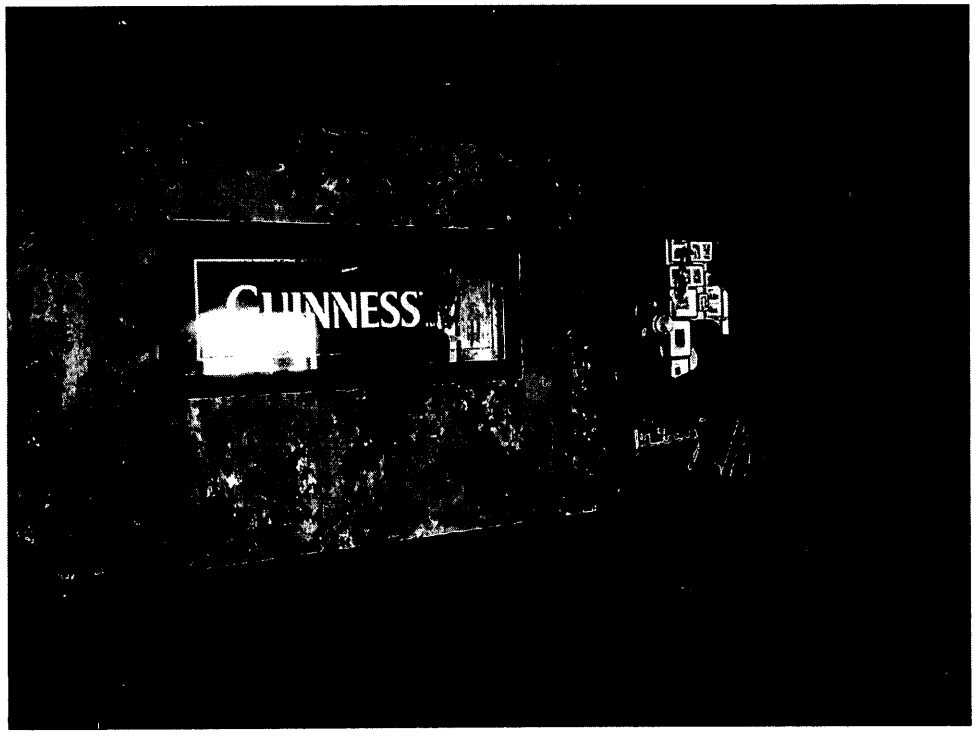

PHOTO 6.3: INSIDE THE CÉILÍ COTTAGE – CLOSE UP OF MOTTLED BARTOP AND OYSTER SHUCKING "STAGE"

PHOTO 6.4: INSIDE THE CÉILÍ COTTAGE – "THE GAUNTLET"

PHOTO 6.5: THE CÉILÍ COTTAGE –ICE CURLING RINK AND OPEN FIRE ON THE CÉILÍ COTTAGE PATIO

PHOTO 6.6: THE CÉILÍ COTTAGE – OLYMPIC CELEBRATIONS

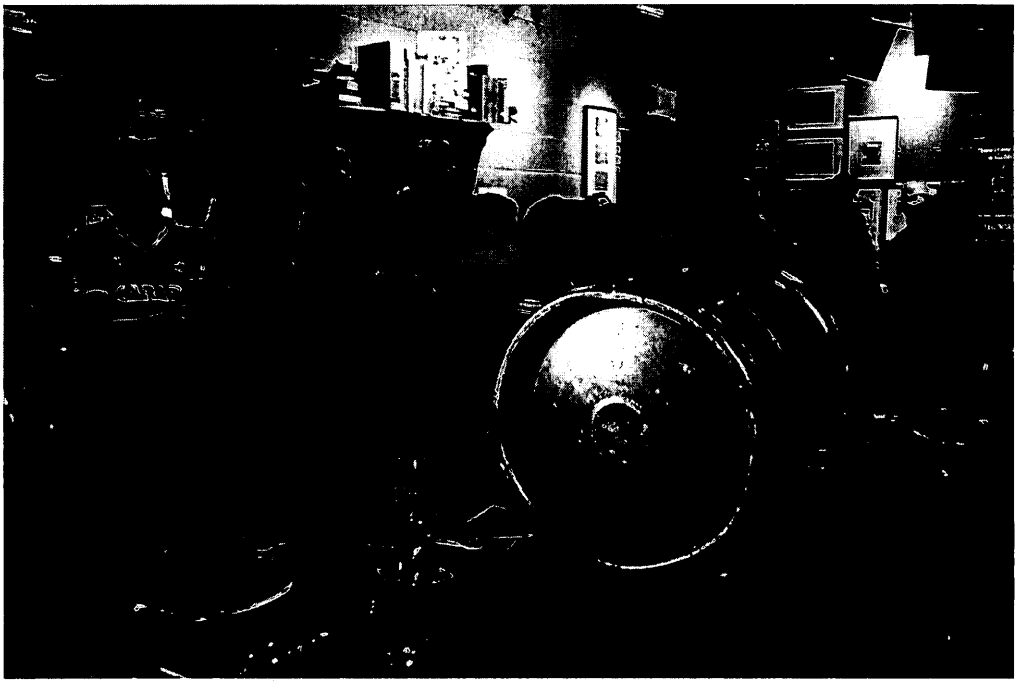

PHOTO 6.7: INSIDE THE CÉILÍ COTTAGE – CUSTOMER-CREATED ARTEFACTS, RETAIL PERFORMER PROPS AND A 'MEMORY WALL'

PHOTO 6.8: THE CÉILÍ COTTAGE STORIES –DINING ROOM BEING PREPARED FOR PUB WEDDING

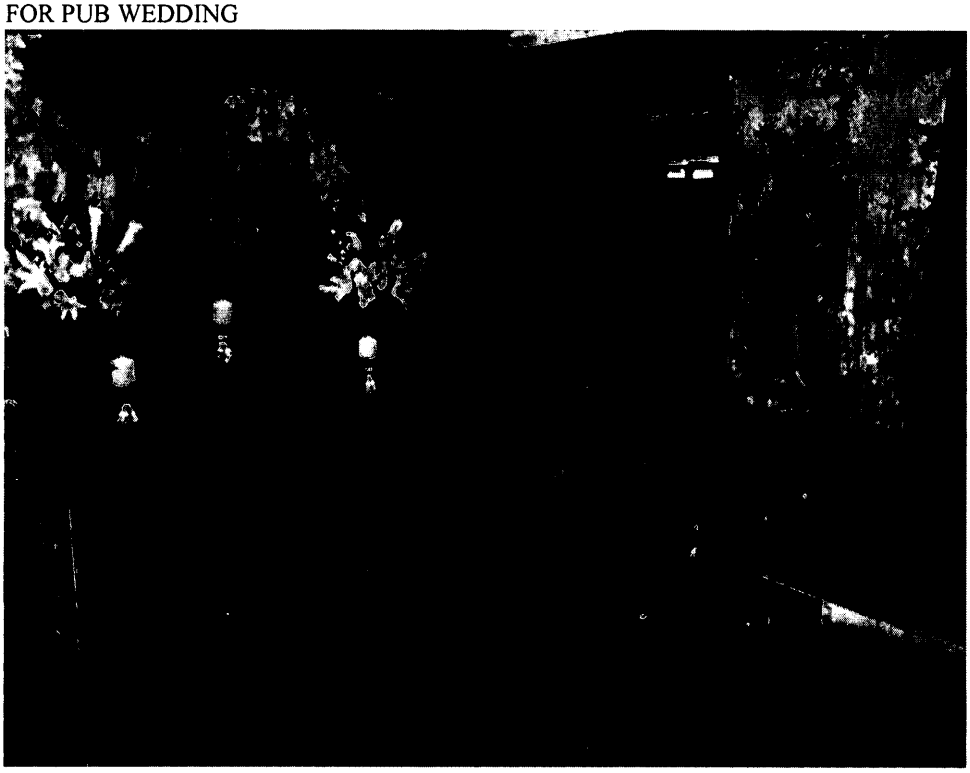

PHOTO 7.1: MAIRÉAD IN MCARDLE'S PUB

PHOTO 7.2: PICTURE TAKEN FROM BACK WALL OF MCARDLE'S PUB

PHOTO 7.3: MARK'S LANDING, MCARDLE'S PUB

PHOTO 8.1: JP O'DONOGHUE'S – FRONT BAR

PHOTO 8.2: JP O'DONOGHUE'S – SELECTION OF IRISH THEMED BRIC-A-BRAC

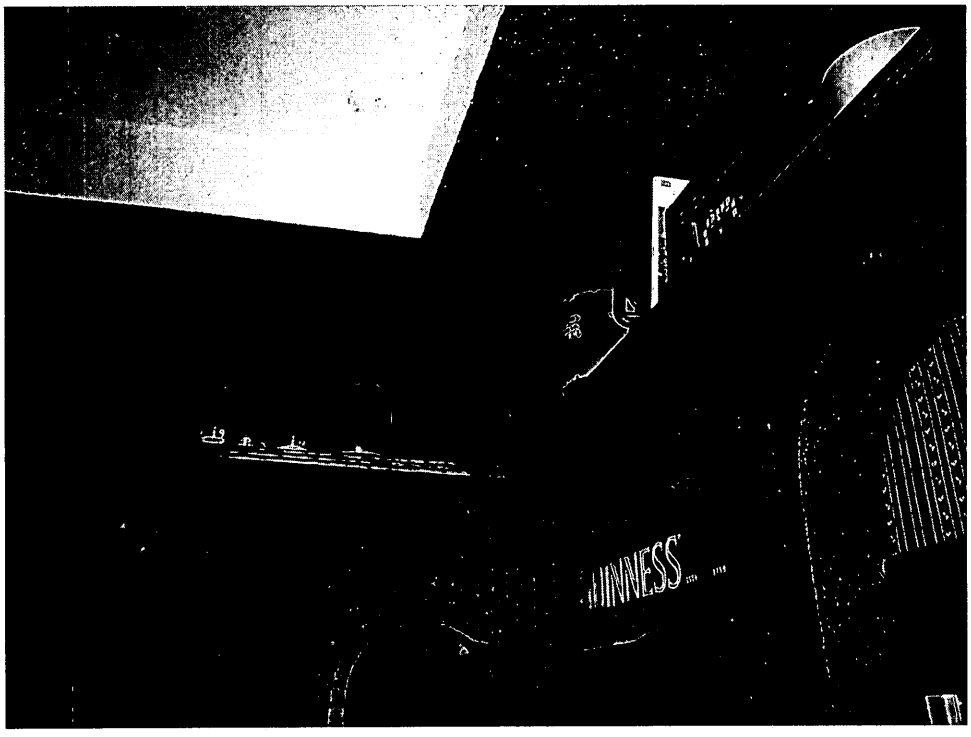

PHOTO 8.3: JP O'DONOGHUE'S – THE MICK QUINLAN LOUNGE

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PHOTO 8.4: JP O'DONOGHUE'S – CREATING THE BRAND PERSONA ONE

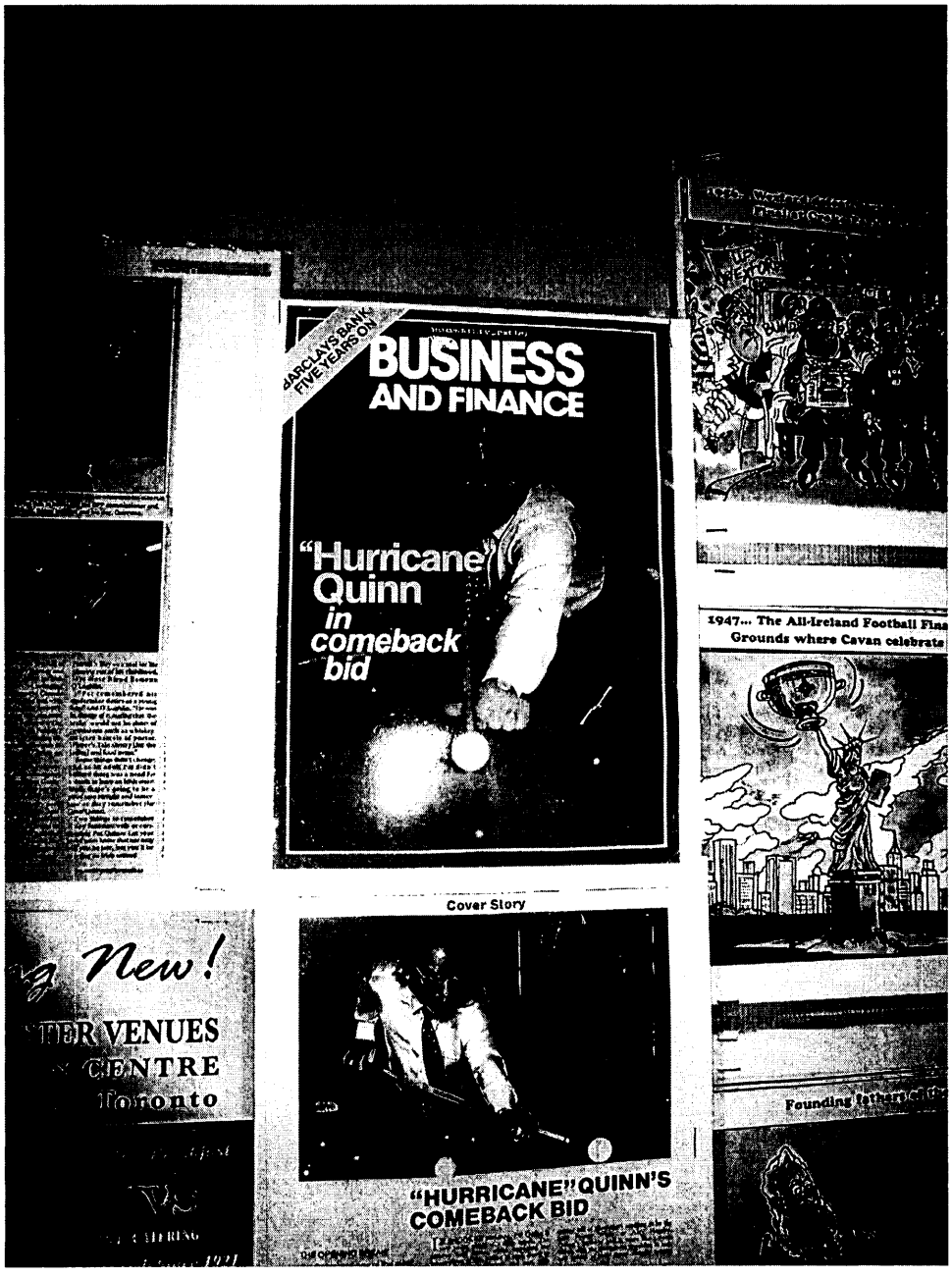

PHOTO 8.5: JP O'DONOGHUE'S – CREATING THE BRAND PERSONA TWO

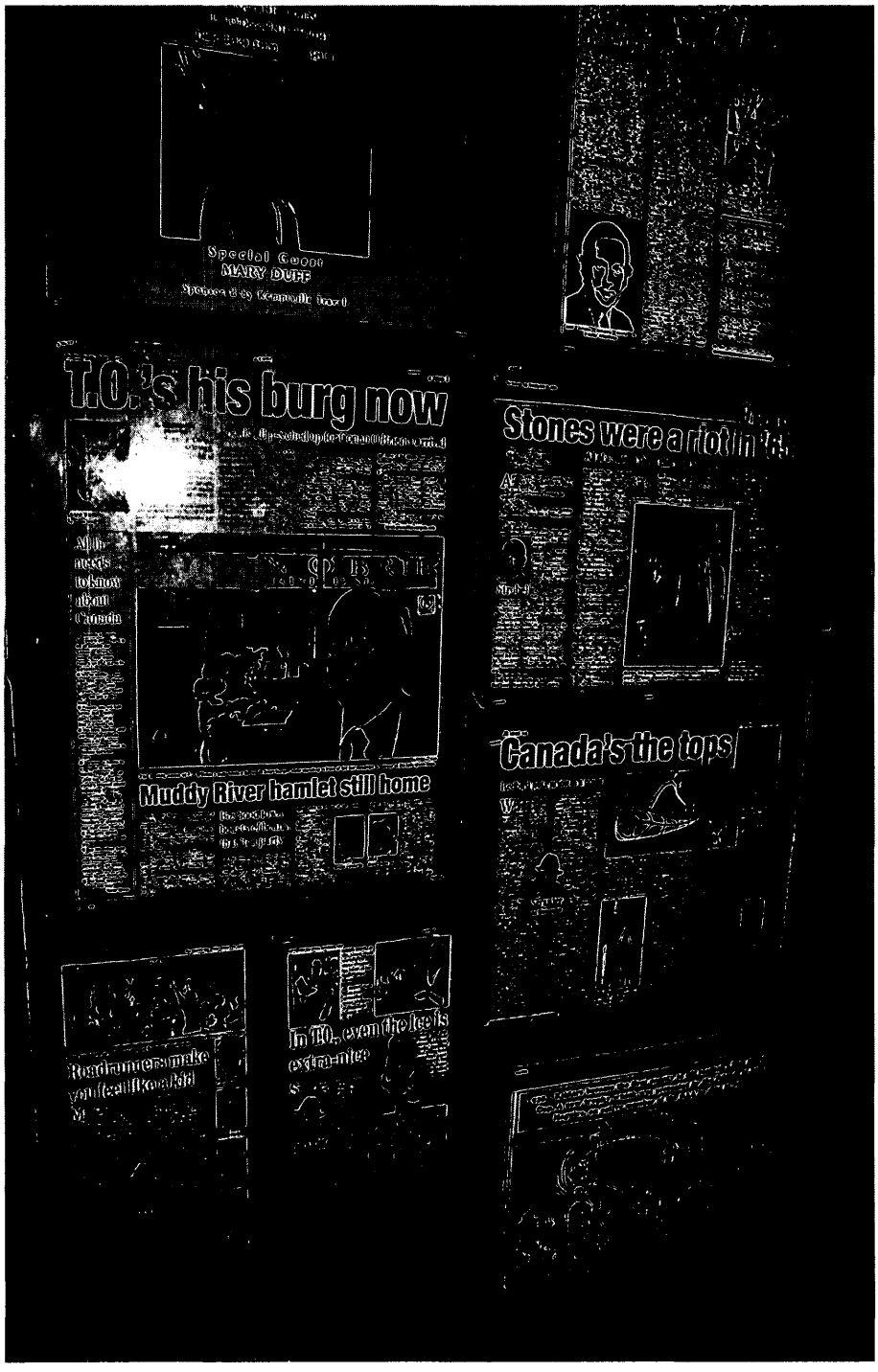

PHOTO 8.6: HIBERNIAN INN – INTERIOR 1, LONG NARROW PUB

PHOTO 8.7: HIBERNIAN INN – INTERIOR 2, WELL-LIT FRONT OF PUB

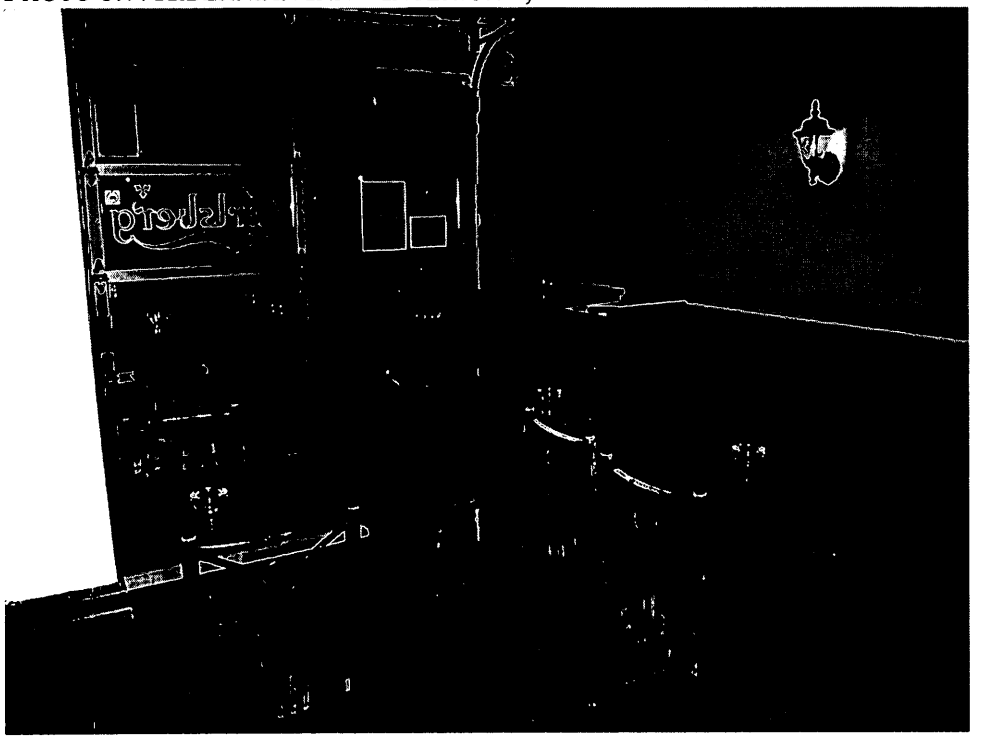

PHOTO 8.8: HIBERNIAN INN – INTERIOR 3, LARGE MAHOGANY-COLORED BAR

PHOTO 8.9: TRAPPIST'S CASK – INTERIOR

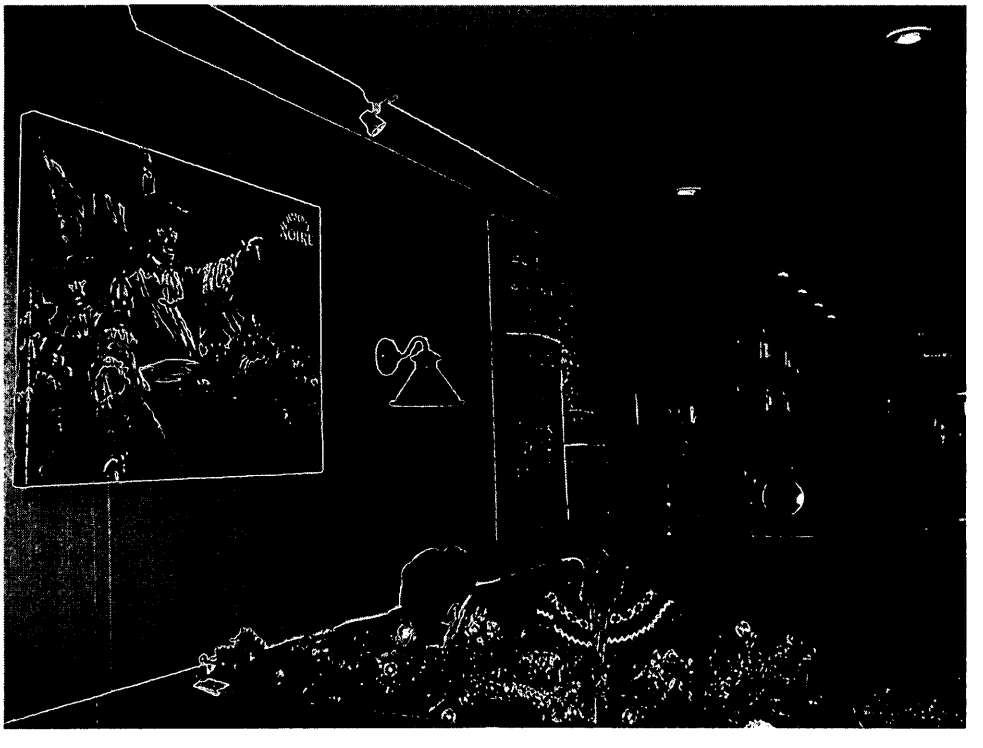

PHOTO 8.10: HIBERNIAN INN, ST PATRICK'S DAY – LEAD MARKETER GERARD SITTING AT END OF BAR (CHIN ON HAND); BREDA (LEFT FOREGROUND IN BLACK), CHATTING WITH CUSTOMERS AS SHE WORKS BEHIND THE BAR

PHOTO 9.1: FIBBER O'TOOLE'S INTERIOR – VIEW LOOKING ACROSS PUB AND INTO BAR AREA

9.2: FIBBER O'TOOLE'S INTERIOR – IRISH THEMED BRIC-A-BRAC, WARM COLORS AND PRIVATE SEATING