

St. Patty’s Day an American holiday?



Just like Cinco de Mayo, America adds its own non cultural traditions to Ireland’s St. Patrick’s Day | AP

U.S. parades like they own the day

by Elizabeth Johnson

St. Patrick’s Day celebrations in Ireland have evolved in recent years as a result of elaborate celebration in other countries.

The United States’ celebration of St. Patrick’s Day is very different than the celebration in Ireland, though the holiday was brought here by Irish immigrants.

Trademark aspects of the holiday in the United States include bright green clothes, rivers, and foods, as well as heavy drinking of alcohol and Shamrock Shakes from McDonald’s.

In Ireland, the primary focus of the holiday is on culture, home grown talent in the arts, and the global impact Ireland has abroad, according to native and chicao resident Emily Coakley.

In recent years, Ireland has been expanding their celebration. Though the events have not changed, the participation has increased as a result of the global celebration.

“My family and I think it became a bigger deal in Ireland because it was such a huge deal abroad,” said Coakley.

In Ireland, there is a five day festival the week of the holiday. This year, it is taking place from Mar. 15-19. It includes live music performances, a parade, and live shows that discuss Irish culture and history, among other events.

As a child, Coakley and her

family would go to the St. Patrick’s Day parade at the Dublin City Centre. Children in the United States celebrate in a similar way and often go to local parades.

She noted that parades in Ireland differ from those in the United States. In Ireland, they are more focused on floats, music, singing, and dancing.

She has observed more of a focus on bands, and the featuring of the fire department and police in the states.

Many of the high schools in Dublin are single sex. “It’s a great social outlet for those boys and girls starved for the company of the opposite sex,” said Coakley.

Similarly, teenagers in the United States use St. Patrick’s day as a time to be social. Many local students, such as Junior Madison Bianco and Senior Milena Srivastava plan to join a group of friends downtown for the parade.

“We are getting a group together and taking the train down for the parade. It’s a good excuse to get with a group of friends and hang out in the city,” said Bianco.

Another unique aspect of the holiday in Ireland is its emphasis on sports. There is a large European rugby tournament that is held with the final match falling on Mar. 17, so many people plan their day around it. This year, Ireland is playing England. “It’s a huge rivalry and always generates a great atmosphere in the city,” said Coakley.

In the United States, the focus is on stereotypical Irish traits, and features alcohol, leprechauns, and

the color green. Stores are full of green merchandise, and the holiday is very commercialized and treated as an excuse to celebrate without the focus on Irish culture that is present in Ireland.

According to Coakley, though, the differences are not necessarily negative.

“You guys do it bigger and better,” she said. “I remember hearing a few years ago that in Chicago they dyed the river green and I was very impressed.”

She did note that in her opinion the biggest differences are that in the United States St. Patrick’s Day is primarily seen as a drinking holiday and that it is very commercialized.

In Ireland, pubs and liquor stores do not open until noon, so drinking in the morning is not as common as Americans seem to think.

She was also surprised by the St. Patrick’s day merchandise appearing in stores so early. “That would never happen in Ireland,” said Coakley.

She compared St. Patrick’s day in the United States to holidays such as Cinco de Mayo. Americans celebrate despite not knowing the origin of the holidays or their relevance in their respective countries.

Still, Coakley and her family appreciate the holiday in the United States even with the differences. Coakley loves to celebrate in both countries, and it is nice to have St. Patrick’s Day well represented in the United States.

“Everyone jumps on the bandwagon and is Irish for a day,” she said.

The glass slipper always fits with NT dress drive

Prom dresses find new home

by Millie Winter

The juniors planning and organizing the prom have decided to participate in the Glass Slipper Project, a clothing drive that helps gather and give away free prom dresses and accessories to junior and seniors in the Chicagoland and other surrounding areas.

The Glass Slipper Project is the largest charitable prom organization in the U.S. Thousands of dresses are given away each spring. The project has dressed over 20,000 junior and senior girls since it started in 1999.

In conjunction with the Glass Slipper, Zengeler Cleaners picks up the donated dresses, repairs, cleans, and delivers them to the Glass Slipper Project in Chicago. This partnership allows for girls who can’t afford a dress to have the dress they have always dreamed of.

“Advisers have been given resources and materials to address the impact of this work to move students from simple charity to a deeper awareness of the world they live in,” Junior girls’ adviser chair Patricia Sheridan explained.

Junior Alex Dimakos, on the prom committee, said “the project allows every girl to have a complete prom experience regardless of their financial situation.”

It is clear that this project is not only helping those in need, but also shows that NT students realize the importance and the greater impact they can have.

Many girls will wear their prom dress once and never think about it or use it again in their life. This project allows for these dresses to be repurposed and refitted for young women who can’t afford them.

“I think participating in this project helps to bring awareness to our students that not all of their peers are able to afford the expense associated with prom, yet should have the opportunity to attend,”

Sheridan stated.

Sheridan also explained that part of the reason for choosing this project was that, “Junior year is a stressful time for our students and doing a collection on-site allows us to give back to the community without leaving the campus.”

The Projects itself runs similar to your average boutique would, making dresses and accessories available at pop-up boutiques. Each student will receive personal assistance to find the perfect from a volunteer “personal shopper”.

Sheridan, who helps organize the project, said, “Annually we collect approximately 200-300 dresses, shoes, and accessories.”

For the past four years, the hope is that, as a school, we are able to collect enough dresses so that we are considerably helping provide for the project. “Our goal is for the junior class to collect 500 dresses in one year. This is ambitious but I think it’s doable,” Sheridan said.

Dimakos said, “this week during advisory we are going to talk to all the girls’ advisories and send out our message and goal.”

It is not only NT students who can take a role in donating their old prom dresses, every year staff members donate their used dresses as well.

“Rather than leaving it in a closet, it can be used to make another person feel special,” Sheridan said.

Male students who have friends, sisters, or other family members who have old dresses that are no longer being used are encouraged to donate these dresses to the project.

The prom committee would like students and staff to reach beyond the simple feeling of “feeling good because you donated,” to be a part of the greater effects the Glass Slipper Project is providing.

“The ultimate goal is that we are developing our students’ engagement in social justice and critical consciousness of the world around them,” Sheridan said.

New York Fashion Week: more than just a trend

Designers weave politics into work

by Darcie Kim

The fashion runway has hardly been a stranger to political statements, and this year, brands used Fashion Week as a stage to advocate activism for women’s rights, LGBTQ+ rights, and body diversity.

Designer Prabal Gurung delivered an empowering feminist statement at his debut show during New York Fashion Week, celebrating the strength and grace of women in a collection largely inspired by the Mosuo, a matriarchal tribe in China.

Vibrant hues and textures dominated this line; fuchsia mandala-print scarves, blue sequined skirts with beaded fringe, and dégradé ostrich feathers were just a few of the pieces worn in this show.

Gurung also invited #MeToo founder, Tarana Burke, to sit front in the row.

Addressing the array of colors in his collection, Gurung said, “I respect the solidarity of wearing black, but I don’t want to get to a place where women have to suppress their sense of self. Where I am from [Nepal], color can be a show of strength.”

Italian knitwear brand Missoni also made a bold statement in Milan Fashion Week by sending its models at the end of the show to march down the runway all wearing the iconic pink “pussy hats” as a show of solidarity among women.

The pussy hats feature two pointed ends that resemble cat ears, and though they were initially made to be worn during the Women’s March, they now represent a symbol of resistance to misogyny. Similarly in New York Fashion Week, Tom Ford’s flashy, ‘80s themed collection featured bedazzled “Pussy Power” purses and pumps down the runway.

The political activism in these runways is undeniable. Senior Liam Oh considers fashion a form of art, and believes that to say politics doesn’t have a place in fashion is similar to people saying that politics doesn’t have a place in theater or cinema.

I think that’s a narrow minded view of the world. It’s counter intuitive and non-productive to say that politics doesn’t belong in art, because what’s the point of expressing things if they don’t have a political view?”

While Gurung, Missoni, and Ford focused on the strength of women. Alice + Olivia’s Stacey Bendet had a different take on her



Famed feminist Gloria Steinem was in attendance at NY Fashion Week |AP

message of empowering women.

Her show featured a theme of “Alice + Olivia University” for her Fall 2018 collection, a theme that was unique in that it drew from the early stages of the feminist movement. The show included a “We the Women” Bill of Rights, and images of suffragettes provided the backdrop for many of the looks.

In her show notes, Bendet wrote that, “By looking at the women’s movement past and present, I wanted

this presentation to pay homage to strong women throughout history, to show how far we have come and how far we still need to go.”

Along with feminist messages strutting the runway, Desmond Napoles, a self proclaimed ‘drag kid’ blazed the way for LGBTQ+ models, becoming the youngest drag star to walk New York Fashion Week in Gypsy Sport’s Fall 2018 Collection.

The 10 year old is an inspiring LGBTQ+ advocate, and hit the

runway in a black corseted look and slicked silver hair.

“Gypsy Sport was definitely one of the more talked about shows based on the fashion blogs I read, because this is a brand that takes people from all sizes, identities, and walks of life and uses them as models. They’re sending a message that models aren’t just skinny tall girls, and muscular tall men; they can be people all around the spectrum,” said senior Jack Mosele.

Moreover, diversity in race and body type was also celebrated in Chromat’s show, a brand renowned for advocating for the beauty of all women. Chromate featured several plus sized models and an amputee singer-songwriter who walked the show with a prosthetic leg.

Breast cancer survivor Ericka Hart also exposed her double mastectomy scars while wearing a sheer, neon look.

Fashion has always been more than just runways and models. It’s a microcosm for activism and bold statements, for creativity and bold ideas. It’s more than just a way of dress or appearance. As Mosele put it, “Fashion is a way to express yourself; it’s an art form. Art has always been political by sending messages to people, so why can’t fashion?”