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Bumbling Biddies and Drunken Pats: Anti-Irish Humor in Antebellum New Orleans

Ashley Barckett
University of New Orleans

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Bumbling Biddies and Drunken Pats: Anti-Irish Humor in Antebellum New Orleans

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
History

by

Ashley E. Barckett

B.A., University of Arizona, 2005

December, 2008

DEDICATION

To my mother, for giving me her great laugh. And for my father, who always gets my jokes.

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ABSTRACT

The Irish in New Orleans have been a notoriously understudied group. With the third largest Irish population in the country by 1860, New Orleans is crucial when trying to understand the Irish immigrant experience. Viewing the Irish from the public perspective, this study explores the *Daily Picayune*, New Orleans' largest newspaper, from its inception in 1837 to 1857, to decipher the city's attitudes towards the Irish. Jokes in particular are explored, their function being multifaceted. First, jokes grouped Irish women into three types in an effort to maintain control of a large and unfamiliar group of white women who did not fit into the preexisting framework for southern ladies. Second, jokes emasculated Irish men by accusing them of having insufficient qualities to become gentlemen. By doing this, jokes were able to release social tensions, become non-physical confrontations, and create lasting stereotypes about Irish immigrants.

History—United States—Louisiana—New Orleans—Irish—Humor—Daily Picayune—Irish stereotypes

We have never opposed the emigration of industrious Irishmen or their right to citizenship...and we still contend it is the duty of all men who love this country to oppose fresh cargoes from Europe of decrepit, sick and degraded paupers....From Irish *gentlemen* we have nothing to fear – from those who abuse their country and its high and ennobling traits of character, we ask neither praise, friendship, or patronage.¹

Appearing in an 1837 editorial letter from the New Orleans *Daily Picayune*, the above sentiments echoed many Americans' thoughts on the influx of Irish Catholic immigrants. To defend the paper from attacks by the *Louisiana Advertiser*, another New Orleans paper, the *Daily Picayune* editors attempted to justify the anti-Irish sentiments that had frequented their eight-month-old newspaper. Stressing that it was not the "Irish *gentleman*" they opposed, the *Daily Picayune* was making a distinction between those who exemplified southern ideas of honor, and those who did not. To the editors of the *Picayune*, the real threat was the Irish immigrant who did not uphold the "high and ennobling traits of character" essential to Americans and more specifically to the southern class framework.

After its January 1837 inception, the *Daily Picayune* quickly became the largest and most widely read New Orleans newspaper. Following the trail of papers such as the New York *Sun* and New York *Herald*, the *Picayune* wanted to put a paper into the hands of everyman, not just businessmen. The *Picayune* was the first newspaper in New Orleans to sell for less than a dime and its editors boasted that every copy they printed that first day, had sold.² From the start the *Picayune* worked to establish its anti-Irish stance, most often through jokes.³ Though humor about the Irish was not limited to New Orleans, and the *Daily Picayune* was not the only newspaper to take an anti-Irish stance, New Orleans and the *Daily Picayune* are crucial when trying to understand the Irish immigrant experience in the antebellum south. By 1860, New Orleans contained the largest Irish population in the south and the third largest in the country,

though little has been done to show how the Irish experience in the south, and particularly at the seat of its largest population, was unique. Additionally, despite other newspapers making anti-Irish jokes, some of which are explored here, the *Daily Picayune* was the city's most influential voice. Though the *Daily Picayune* did not invent Irish jokes, their prevalence in its pages popularized and spread discrimination through the guise of humor. Anti-Irish jokes in New Orleans relied on southern gender roles to exclude Irish immigrants from the rest of white society and in doing so served two functions. First, jokes grouped Irish women into three types in an effort to maintain control of a large and unfamiliar group of white women who did not fit into the preexisting framework for southern ladies. Second, jokes emasculated Irish men by accusing them of having insufficient qualities to become gentlemen. By doing this, jokes were able to release social tensions, become non-physical confrontations, and create lasting stereotypes about Irish immigrants.

According to John Latrobe, lawyer and son of architect Benjamin H. B. Latrobe, New Orleans in the nineteenth century was "one continued stream of people of all ages nations and colors."⁴ Founded in 1718, New Orleans had already experienced extensive growth under both the French and Spanish before it became part of the United States in 1803 with the Louisiana Purchase. Along with the varied cultural backgrounds Latrobe noted, New Orleans would bring to the United States what would become one of the busiest ports in the country. The city would also be an addition to the slave south, adding to the United States a range of profitable crops and ushering in almost one hundred years of pre-existing chattel slavery. On his way into New Orleans Latrobe remarked, "The river is filled with shipping...and among the rest a schooner full of negroes – purchased no doubt where negro slavery is valueless and brought to perish in the South."⁵ What Latrobe saw was not a new sight, as ships carrying African slaves had been

coming into the city since a year after its founding. By 1731 Africans outnumbered whites by more than two to one. By the time Latrobe was sailing up the Mississippi in the 1830s, there were over 14,000 slaves in New Orleans.⁶

While shipping and slavery seemed to go hand in hand, other ethnic groups would begin to arrive in New Orleans, particularly the Irish. In the 1830s, when the cotton boom increased transatlantic commerce, trade ships that carried goods to the British Isles found themselves without return cargo, and they offered cheap fare for those wishing to get to the United States.⁷ New Orleans' status as the second busiest port in the country meant that in the 1830s alone over 50,000 immigrants went through the city. About half of these immigrants were Irish.⁸ A second wave of Irish immigrants began to arrive in the 1840s in response to Ireland's Great Potato Famine which reached its climax in 1845. Potato crop failure caused millions to die and millions more to leave Ireland. Between 1850 and 1860, New Orleans' Irish population grew from 24,000 to 28,000. Though this population was much smaller than that of northern cities, such as New York's approximate 498,000, New Orleans did maintain the largest Irish population in the south by over 12,000 people.⁹

The Irish immigrants who arrived in the city probably saw many of the same things Latrobe noted on his way up the Mississippi river, including the Steam Cotton Press and "tiers of vessels which extend for upwards of a mile along the levee."¹⁰ Indeed, water and cotton would play a role in the lives of many Irish men, who would take employment as cotton screwmen, crews for the steamboats, and canal diggers. Cotton screwmen would in fact be the strongest union in the city, prior to the Civil War, and by 1850 forty percent of the deck crews on steamboats were Irish. As "turf-diggers," New Orleans Irish would become infamously associated with the New Basin Canal, as an unknown number, ranging from 3,000 to 30,000,

would die digging the new waterway.¹¹ Irish women would take less public work, though they would comprise a massive workforce in the city. As domestics, Irish women would become so synonymous with the home, that “biddy,” the nickname for the popular Irish name “Bridget,” became a general term for maid.

Employed in some of the toughest labor in the city, the Irish would settle in some of the poorest areas of town, in the Third Municipality’s third and fourth wards. Though some would settle in the First Municipality as well, most would be relegated to what was dubbed, the “poor third.”¹² This large southern population of Irish immigrants was held to different standards than their northern counterparts. While anti-Irish sentiment abounded in the north, and various historians, such as David Roediger, who will be explored later, have looked at the arena of labor for expressions of discrimination, the south was particular in the way it viewed Irish immigrants and the lower classes. This particularity stemmed from the south’s distinctive code of honor and strict gender conventions. As Bertram Wyatt-Brown has argued, the idea of honor was not unique to the south, but it developed and functioned differently there. The industrialization of the north, as well as its dense population, changed more rapidly and its ideas of honor changed with it. The south, in contrast, adhered to older, more traditional rules of honor that had been instilled early on. These older notions sprang from Indo-European ideals that had grown and transferred through areas such as Great Britain, Italy, Spain and Gaul. New Orleans, with its early European influences, was an ideal city for the execution of southern honor. As well, the smaller, more widely spread communities in the south meant that change came more slowly, and older ideals were maintained for longer periods of time.¹³

At the root of these ideals were notions regarding white supremacy and the idea that appearance and community perception were everything. As Elizabeth Fox-Genovese states,

“Above all, southern ladies and gentleman represented their genders’ specific contributions to civility and honor in society. These public roles carried serious responsibilities for the expression and reinforcement of social order.”¹⁴ In a society where black labor was key to a community’s survival, justification came in many forms. Skin color was only one way to separate those who controlled and those who were controlled. As well, in a society like New Orleans, where free people of color and Creoles were a significant part of the city’s population, other designations were needed.¹⁵ By claiming that enslaved blacks were incapable of honor, society, slave owning or not, could place them lower on the social and moral scale.¹⁶ Wyatt-Brown states, “It followed that those who lacked honor also lacked reputation.”¹⁷ Blacks were enslaved not only because of their skin, but also because they were accused of existing without honor. Justification of slavery also led into the idea of appearance and community acceptance of one’s projected self. As Wyatt-Brown goes on to argue, “The internal man and the external realities of his existence are united in such a way that he knows no other good or evil except that which the collective group designates. He reflects society as society reflects him.” For Wyatt-Brown, the man without a community to reflect his image is incomplete.¹⁸

Neither planter gentry nor slave, since their white skin afforded them some honor, Irish men were trapped in the middle. Historians such as Noel Ignatiev have argued that the Irish knowingly made choices for themselves that would advance their social status as whites and move them from their intermediary status to members of the ruling community. Whether or not the Irish consciously attempted to break into the upper classes, however, is not the focus of this study, but rather that the public perceived them as doing so. In a society based on appearances, community perception was all-important, and the public’s reaction to Irish attempts at upward mobility, whether real or imagined, were hotly remarked upon. As Elliott Gorn states, “Men of

honor shared freedom and equality; those denied honor were implicitly less than equal – perilously close to a slave-like condition.”¹⁹ In a society where a white worker’s status of honor was close to that of a slave’s, it seems likely that poor whites would attempt to rise in status. Jokes suggested that the Irish attempted to project the image of the southern gentleman, and since this attempted projection was untrue, Irish men were accused of “giving the lie,” a term Kenneth Greenburg has utilized in his work. To “give the lie” was to project an inaccurate image of oneself, and if Wyatt-Brown is applied, to literally misrepresent the community and its standards. In a world based on appearances, to construct a false mask was the ultimate deception one could engage in. Accordingly, to accuse someone of lying, or “giving the lie,” was to publicly shame them, to insinuate that their projected mask was not their true nature.²⁰ Humor functioned as a public way to shame and create spectacle, much as the duel did, but it was subtle and gentlemen were in no danger of being challenged since Irish men were lower on the social scale.

Entwined with southern male honor was the honor of southern women, for whom sexual purity was paramount. As Catherine Clinton has argued, “Without the oppression of *all* women, the planter class could not be assured of absolute authority. In a biracial slave society where ‘racial purity’ was a defining characteristic of the master class, total control of the reproductive females was of paramount concern for elite males.”²¹ While many immigrant groups came over as families, the majority of Irish women who left Ireland for the United States came alone or with other females.²² The single status of many of these Irish women was perhaps one of the reasons they were so frequently subject to ridicule. Additionally, their lack of family left them, as Wyatt-Brown states, “shorn of a major reason to exist.” As it was the southern woman’s role to “fulfill duties commensurate with male prestige,” single Irish women were viewed as unable to

maintain the proper roles.²³ Solitary travel was also an issue as southern women were to be chaperoned, and protected, at all times. The mere fact that so many single Irish women traveled alone was a potential threat to the practices of the patriarchy.²⁴ Seen as outside the southern ideal of family and motherhood, single women posed a threat to sexual morality, social control, and maintaining the racial balance. Additionally, southern women were to fulfill specific gender conventions. Fox-Genovese contends, “The lady was expected to manifest in her character and bearing all that was best in her society. Gracious and delicate, she was to devote herself to charm and nurture within the circle of her own household.”²⁵ As it was with men, appearance was everything to southern women, their social façade rooted in strict behavioral guidelines. Humor was a way to publically criticize and comment on Irish women without fear of recompense, just as it was with Irish men.

Ethnic humor, especially in the form of jokes and melodramas, was immensely popular in the nineteenth century. Though the two genres are dissimilar, both are subgenres of narrative and employ ethnic stereotypes in a humorous way. This humor functions as a socially acceptable tool for people to release anxieties or frustrations regarding a particular group, in a manner far less provocative than a blunt ethnic slur. As Dale T. Knobel has observed with the melodrama, “...[A]udiences could vent even the most explosive sentiments in a socially acceptable way. In fact, so vivid and immediate were its images and so one-sided its message, melodrama might inform public opinion as well as reflect it.”²⁶ The same is true of the joke, melodrama’s diminutive cousin. Further, according to Knobel, another key aspect of the melodrama is its ability to change as public perceptions change. Again, this is equally true of jokes. In this way, popular culture genres like jokes and melodramas not only supply safety valves for social tensions, but also record the changing ethnic perceptions of audiences over time.

Irish jokes in New Orleans newspapers from 1837 to 1857 effectively performed both of these functions. Their persistence throughout the period demonstrates their continuing relevance and appeal to the local non-Irish population. Even more important for historians is the dual nature of the jokes. More specifically, jokes about Irish women would create types in a bid for social organization and control, while jokes about Irish men would be more thematically oriented, mostly concerning the idea that Irish men, due to their inherent Irish traits, were outside the parameters of a true gentleman. Their ungentlemanly status was in effect an effort to emasculate Irish men. By claiming that Irish men tried but failed to attain the qualities of a gentleman, jokes were saying that an incomplete man was no man at all.

Though Irish men were not categorized as Irish women were, jokes for both groups effectively accomplished the same goal; portraying the Irish as a distinct other, devoid of the qualities necessary to the southern way of life. This typing is also important to note as it effectively attributes more power to women. Though Irish men would later be billed as more dangerous, at the fore, Irish women are seen as more of a threat given their generally single status and white skin. As Wyatt-Brown contends, “Antagonisms grew out of...the misogyny that arose from male fear of female power.”²⁷ Perceived and portrayed as oversexed and unsupervised, Irish women were the manifestation of female power in its most dangerous form. A sexually unrestrained white woman could endanger the white purity crucial to southern male dominance by reproducing with black men.²⁸ While jokes never paired Irish women with black men, the fear of what their single, unattended status could produce would lead them to be portrayed in three ways: the drunken troublemaker, the ignorant servant girl, and the unfeeling mother.

Like black women who were often typecast as the Mammy or the Jezebel, Irish women were herded into these three categories in an effort to control them. As Clinton argues, “Southern planters divided women into two classes: ladies, always white and chaste; and whores, comprising all black women (except for the saintly Mammy) and any white woman who defied the established social constraints on her sexual behavior.”²⁹ In a structured society like the south, white women who were not ladies had to be defined to preserve male honor and virility. Clinton continues, “The racist sexual stereotype of the black woman protected the planters’ self image at the expense of the others; they could cultivate a potent, virile stance while blaming all sexual sins on women.... Women bore total sexual accountability; white men enjoyed total sexual control.”³⁰ This sexual control was exerted over all women, black and white, and while all three types of Irish women would be represented, the drunken troublemaker would be the most visible as she posed the worst threat to the southern way of life.

The drunken troublemaker is also interesting because she, unlike the other types, evolves. Though there would be overlapping of types, the drunken troublemaker was the only one who would be attributed new qualities. At first she is merely drunk and promiscuous. As 1837 progresses however, she quickly becomes violent. Violence would in fact be a trait attributed to both Irish men and women, and its implications will be detailed later. However, it is imperative to note the way in which this type in particular becomes more threatening as the country faces various challenges.

The year 1837 would be turbulent for the United States, most notably due to the financial crisis, which would come to a head in May. Not only finance would be affected, but the public would also see a shift in language and humor about the Irish as the Panic of 1837 drew closer. Prior to these events, however, jokes would maintain a basic type, the first representation being

the drunken troublemaker. On January 27, 1837, the *Picayune* reprinted a mock court case from the *New York Herald* about a drunk Irish woman. Stating that she was found “on the ground in a state of dreamy pleasure, which no one knows any thing about, except the frail disciples of our lord and master, Bacchus!” the paper goes on to report that she entered the court like “a bear upon hot wires.”

Justice. – Where have you been getting drunk?

Woman. – Me, your honor? – no where to be sure. Faith, I’m a dacent sort of a women, wot gets my money by right down hard work. I’m no sostitute.

Justice. – Why do you get drunk? do you know what day it is?

Woman. – Yes, an sure an I do. It’s the blessed Sabbath of the Lord, (crossing herself.)

Justice. – Why do you get intoxicated then, if you know this is a day you ought to keep holy?

Woman. – Oh faith sir, I’m really a dacent woman. I wish you’d be after letting me go away about my business – you see how all the folks look at me. Fellow, (to an officer) did you never see a woman before? (laughter.)

Justice. – Yes, do you know why they look at you?

Woman. – Why I suppose it is because they think me a dacent woman; and they like me. (Loud laughter.)

Justice to the Officer. – Is she a prostitute?

Woman. – No, indeed, I’m a fine gal, but I got two or three drops of the crathur more than I ought to have. Will you let me go I say? Sir. I’m not fit to be in company with genimen. (Loud laughter.)³¹

The justice goes on to ask the woman where her husband is and hearing her reply that he has been dead five months, the justice responds, “And you drunk so soon?” This vignette establishes various themes that would carry over into other jokes, most notably the idea of Irish women’s promiscuity.

This story in particular touches upon sexuality multiple times, first when the woman declares herself to be “no sostitute” and again when the justice asks the court officer if she is in fact a prostitute. The officer never answers; it is the accused woman who does so, and the audience is never given an answer to her supposed profession, though the justice does eventually let her go. Additionally, the woman’s status is remarked upon when her appearance is repeatedly

mocked. She misunderstands why men in the court are staring at her and feels that she is “not fit to be in company with genimen.” Physical appearance is something that jokes about Irish women would comment on frequently, their descriptions generally being animalistic or masculine, as it is here when the Irish woman is described as a bear. This animal nature supposedly made Irish women more sexual and in some instances more fertile.

Sexuality was also tied into drinking and honor, for as Wyatt-Brown stipulates, “Female honor had always been the exercise of restraint and abstinence.”³² The Irish woman’s reference to drinking whiskey (“crathur”) and her overall inappropriate actions are well outside the boundaries of southern womanhood. As Clinton has argued, both the physical and behavioral limitations placed on women were, in essence, an effort to desexualize them. As male honor was entwined with female, and in effect racial purity, male family members placed extreme sexual boundaries on the women under their care. Women outside of the family structure, and therefore protection, were dangerous, as they could potentially upset the racial purity of the south. Wyatt-Brown continues, “Like smoking, drinking was a function of masculinity....Consumption of hard liquor signified virility” and virility was a trait southern women could not afford to display.

Another mock court case on February 28th would help to continue the idea of the hard-drinking Irish woman. Entitled “Beauty in Distress,” the anecdote details the trial of Miss Lizzy Fitzgerald. Described as “having passed the days of youth and beauty, [she] did not appear to excite the compassion commonly shown to ladies in distress. She was clamorous in presenting the trials and injuries she had suffered.” Imprisoned for drunkenness, Lizzy’s perils are related:

Watchman. – ...She’s just out of the House of Correction. Only twelve days.

Lizzy. – Ten only, it is.

Watchman. – She was pretty well off the first night she came out.

Lizzy. – Maybe it appeared I’d bin takin’ a dhrap. – The doctor said ‘twas the pleurisy fever I had.

Watchman. – She has been in that condition several times, and injured herself in the face.³³

Lizzy attempts to defend herself further but in the end is sent back to the House of Correction for six months. Though there is no talk of a husband here, the case of Lizzy is glaringly similar to the aforementioned Catherine. Lizzy, like Catherine, is not only displaying the dangerous implications of female virility through her drunkenness, but appearance is once again commented upon. The joke's title, "Beauty in Distress," is ironic as Lizzy is then described as "having passed the days of youth and beauty" and no longer even appears lady-like enough to garner male sympathy.

Oftentimes sexuality was more explicit, and not a result of Irish drunkenness, but merely Irish nature. A joke entitled "Elopement Extraordinary" detailed an imported story of a girl in Ireland who is engaged to the brother of a priest. The story claims,

On the night of the marriage, the father of the girl put down three hundred pounds as the portion of his daughter. In about a month after the marriage, during which the bride seemed to evince a decided *penchant* for the priest, she eloped with his reverence, who took good care to take her marriage portion with him.³⁴

Having decided to go through with the marriage, the Irish woman is so debauched as to leave her husband and run off with his brother, who is also a priest. As if her act of abandonment is not enough, she and her new husband also end up with her dowry. Though jokes would often overlap types, "Elopement Extraordinary" is simply an example of the depraved nature of the Irish, especially their women.

While much less visible, the ignorant servant girl and the unfeeling mother would also make showings early on. Often named "Biddy," the ignorant servant was almost always referred to as a girl, implying youth, and was generally bumbling her way through the day and shirking

her duties. A February 15th account joked, “An Irish girl employed in a family at Charlestown, was speaking of her brother in Ireland. Being asked how old he was, she replied, ‘Why, let me see; if he were here now, he would be twenty-five years old next January.’”³⁵ The ignorant servant girl would gain popularity in the 1840s with the influx of immigrants and the *Daily Picayune* would frequently run tales of the bumbling Bidy.

The Great Potato Famine in Ireland would climax in the years 1845 to 1855, and roughly 1.4 million Irish would arrive in the United States during that time. The pre-famine years saw massive immigration as well, however, and after 1838 an average of 567,000 immigrants left Ireland yearly.³⁶ The Bidy would become the more popular type, most likely because she was the most visible in everyday New Orleans at that time. Irish women often looked to domestic work as a way to gain money and respect, something they had been deprived of in Ireland. Given their unusual status as primarily single immigrants, Irish women only had obligations to themselves. Unlike Italian or Jewish women who were often tied to their families, Irish women were able to take on domestic jobs, which required them to be live-in servants, and essentially at the beck and call of their employers.³⁷

Though work in multi-servant households was ideal, as more people meant less chores for each individual, most families hired one servant for all the household chores, which included cooking, cleaning, and running various household errands.³⁸ Despite the myriad of duties they were burdened with, Irish domestics made some of the highest wages available to women. In northern cities like New York, women made anywhere from four to seven dollars a month, though their fee would increase substantially in cities where women were scarce.³⁹ In New Orleans, Irish women, with board, made an average of \$2.57 weekly, compared to Massachusetts’ \$1.48 or Mississippi’s \$1.02.⁴⁰ Domestic service was not the only work women

could find in New Orleans, and many Irish women turned to nursing or hotel work. So prevalent were Irish women in these types of employment that in 1860 every maid at the St. Charles Hotel gave her birthplace as Ireland.⁴¹

One joke told the story of Bidly and Ann, two domestic servants with a knack for getting into trouble. Ann goes out without leave to visit her cousin, and Bidly promises to wait up to let her back in so that their mistress will not know. While waiting, Bidly gets locked in the coal-hole and is forced to spend the night there while Ann waits outside for her. Though Ann eventually gets in and Bidly gets out, the story serves as “an Awful Warning to Nocturnal Adventures.”⁴² This warning stemmed from the popular idea that along with being ignorant, Irish servants were generally bossy and impudent. Despite frequent complaints that the Irish were incapable of accomplishing even the simplest of household tasks, employment records speak differently.⁴³ Hotels, hospitals, and homes would not have employed Irish women in such large numbers if they found them truly incompetent, and despite the contention that Bidly was seen as generally loveable despite her failings, the typing suggests deeper connotations.⁴⁴ Single white women in a home had to be defined specifically as an “other” in an effort to keep them from being associated with the women of the house and associating with the gentlemen. By typing Irish domestics as sneaky, dumb, and troublesome, jokes made Irish women unappealing and removed any notions that an Irish woman would be an acceptable partner.

Popularity of Irish servants also stemmed from their appearance. Though one may expect domestic service in the south to be dominated by slaves, more was at issue than the cost of owning another person. Trust and prestige were associated with light or white servants, so much so that even in the world of slave domestics, light skinned-women were preferred. Walter Johnson argues,

The qualities they [slave owners] projected onto their slaves' bodies served them as public reflections of their own discernment: they were the arbiters of bearing and beauty; their slaves were the show pieces of their pretensions; their own whiteness was made apparent in the proximate whiteness of the people they bought.⁴⁵

While Irish domestics were certainly not owned, their white skin gave employers a certain amount of status. Race was such a factor in domestic work that conflicts between Irish and black workers became the fodder for jokes. Another exploit between the infamous Ann and Biddy relates a story in which the girls resolve to stay awake for Christmas Eve midnight mass, and as they chat, they extol the virtues of New Orleans. Biddy defends the city to the newly arrived Ann, stating,

Faith, Ann, it's the dacentest town I ever was in in my life, and it's the dacentest place I have in it, and the best wages, and them always paid to me too—and it's a religious thruth I'm telling you, there's not a gentler bred people anywhere. It's a fine city, in troth it is.

To which Ann replies, "Barrin' the nagurs."⁴⁶ Jokes assumed tensions between Irish and black domestics existed despite Earl F. Neihaus' observation that, "Feelings between Irish and Negro women were to a large extent merely echoes of the competition and hostility between the two groups of men."⁴⁷ Whether conflicts between the two female groups originated with them or their men, Irish domestics would remain a popular type in humor, becoming more visible in later years than even the drunken troublemaker.

The least common type of the three, the unfeeling mother, was occasionally remarked upon, the joke being that even when they were attempting something that should have been appropriate to their gender and station, Irish women failed. A January 1837 joke entitled "Quite Pathetic" remarked,

At the late fire in Barclay street, a gentleman rushed up stairs, through the crackling flames, and brought down an infant, which he snatched from the burning chamber, and handed to its mother. "May the blessings of St. Patrick light on you for saving the little

crater but won't yer honor be good enough to go up again and save my barrel of flour what's in the pantry?"⁴⁸

Though the unfeeling mother was the least popular type, she would make a notable showing in 1844 and 1849. The 1844 story, "The Emigrants Family," records the recollections of a rich woman who offers to purchase a child from a poor Irish family. Though the family initially agrees to give away one of their children, they later reconsider. In explanation, the father states, "I've been spakin' to Mary. Ye see she couldn't part with Norah, and I didn't like to let Biddy go; but, be me sowl, neither of uz could live a half a day widout little Paudeen."⁴⁹ The humor comes from the fact that each parent could bear to part with one of the older children, but they are far too attached to the youngest to compromise on which one to give away.

A 1849 joke would be much more explicit in showing the unfeeling mother type. The 1849 California gold rush caused fervor in the *Daily Picayune*, and ads ran constantly for travel out to California. The Irish were no exception to those with the lust for gold, and a joke entitled "The California Grippe" tells the story of an Irish woman whose husband contracts gold fever, and in retaliation for his refusing to work, his wife reports him to the courts. As the court recorder tries to determine what the woman wants, she continually complains of her oldest son Tim, who has accompanied her to court.

What do you want? Said the Recorder...

Me husband, sir, the father of my seven blessed childer, barrin' Tim, who's the devil's own spallpeen, savin' yer prisence, which is here – bad luck to ye, didn't I tell ye to stay wid the babby at home and mind yerself, ye dirty blackguard?

Never mind Tim, madam, said the Recorder, what of your husband?

Oh, me husband it was I was talking of when this young blackguard put it all out of my head; bad luck to ye Tim, won't I give ye the sole of my shoe for dinner when I get home—just wait a bit till ye see.

The woman proceeds to burst into tears over her plight, and when Tim joins in, she “cuffs him” and drags him from the court.⁵⁰ While the previous examples were more humorous, this one is somewhat harsher. The mother not only has more children than she can care for, but she pushes her duties onto her oldest child, and seemingly abandons them. As well, her oldest son continually receives the brunt of her criticisms as well as physical violence. Though jokes occasionally put Irish women into the role of mother, it was by no means a glowing image of motherly love.

Some jokes would even overlap types, implying that Irish women could be all things: drunk, promiscuous, ignorant, and unmotherly. A joke titled “Kissing—A New Year’s Custom” was a court sketch in which Mr. Mahoney, Mrs. Biddy Mahoney, and Nancy Donahoe were all present in court for disturbing the peace. Their descriptions are given as, “Miss Donahoe was a good-looking, round, red-faced, blue-eyed girl. Mrs. Mahoney was a hard-featured, sharp-nosed lady, with a tongue which seemed to operate on the principles of perpetual motion; and Mr. Mahoney was a humorous-looking character, with a leer in his eye and a laugh playing about the corners of his mouth.” In each person the audience is given a different type. The young girl: red-faced and round, a presumably sexual adjective. The sharp-tongued wife: hard looking and harsh. And lastly, the leering husband: troublesome and wily. The case goes on explain that while his wife was out of the room, Mr. Mahoney kissed Nancy Donahoe as “a bit of a joke—a New Year’s night frolic.” Mrs. Mahoney has had “a dhrop of punch” and as soon as she sees her husband, “the father of me four children—to be kissin’ that brazen-faced hussey” she becomes outraged. Mr. Mahoney defends himself by saying that Biddy had already kissed another man, and that given the holiday, he should be granted a reprieve. The Recorder agrees and in the end all three return home. In this joke the audience is given various types to explore, the most

multifaceted being Bidy, a mother, drinker, and somewhat promiscuous wife for kissing another man.

Jokes not only overlapped types, but many also carried the unifying theme of Irish women in the public space. Christine Stansell argues,

By the 1820s, men and women of the urban bourgeoisie were coming to see households as more than just lodgings. The 'home,'...had become for them a pillar of civilization, an incubator of morals....The home was based on a particular configuration of family members, woman at home, man at work, children under maternal supervision or school.

Working-class women lived their lives not only in the home, but extended that home into the streets and shops in their neighborhoods. This created an atmosphere of chaos as upper class women saw the home as a safe haven, whereas working-class women existed in the public. In jokes, Irish women were portrayed as stepping outside of their designated sphere and airing their family business to all, rather than maintaining the strictures of the home. As Stansell states, "For their social betters, who were beginning to pride themselves on the ability or women to create a private space in a city they perceived as corrupt and alienating, the domestic disturbance of the working-class neighbors posed a serious threat."⁵¹ For the New Orleans upper-class, that threat took shape in Irish women who brought what should have been private business into the public view, and soiled the home by extending into the streets.

As in the case with women, jokes about Irish men would remark in various ways about their lack of qualities needed to become part of the southern social structure. Jokes about Irish men would initially revolve around their underdeveloped masculine qualities, and they would later go on to show how this deficiency led them to behave in various ungentlemanly ways. As with women, southern men were held to various behavioral standards. Intelligence and speech were key, as outward appearance was the basis on which a man was judged. An article printed in

the *Southern Ladies Book* entitled, “Refinement in manner and Conversation,” began with this idea, stating, “The value of graceful address and refined manners cannot be over-rated. However commanding their intellectual character may be, men are oftentimes judged by their outward appearance.”⁵² The basis for a variety of Irish jokes would be speech and communication, with the Irish portrayed as unable to speak English properly. Though this trait would also appear in jokes about women, oratory skills were seen as more crucial to manly status than female comportment. *The Southern Ladies Book* stressed “The good converser...will soon acquire [sic] many friends. Men will throng about him, entranced with his goodly companionship. His readiness and capacity to afford enjoyment to others will make other delight to do him honor....Even if he is great in nothing else, his conversational powers will secure for him an enviable reputation.”⁵³ Men are not only required to show to use speech to show their intelligence, but to gain manly acceptance and camaraderie. On February 9, 1837, the *Picayune* printed a joke entitled “Strong Metaphor.” The story concerned two brothers, Patrick and Michael, who had just arrived from the “old country” and walking down the railroad tracks had discovered a rail car:

Michael – Och, brother; d’ye see that quare creature a comin’?

Patrick – Troth an I do. What in the divil and his grandmother does it mane?

Michael – Faith, and’ it’s not me that is to tell ye, but an’ ye don’t stand out of the way, ye’ll larn quite satisfactorily, I’m thinking. Don’t ye mind how hard he brathes – he must have been running right tightly for a space. – [The car whizzed by.]

Patrick – Och, Mike, we’re completely lost; for by my mother’s milk, it *is Hell and harness*, and just the sort of coach I once dreamt the ould divil took the morning air in!⁵⁴

Overall, the joke implies ignorance on the part of the newly arrived immigrants. The brothers’ names signal their Irish background (as does the mention that they arrived from the “old country, via Halifax.”) Portrayed as too unworldly or uneducated to know what a railcar is, the brothers are shown to be harmless bumpkins. Their stupidity at being unable to identify a railcar is further

compounded by their improper speech. Though the majority of Irish immigrants spoke English and not Irish Gaelic, the latter became the stereotype. Irish ignorance and lower class was stressed through their supposed inability to learn English and when they did, their failure to speak properly.⁵⁵ Though most jokes gave their Irish characters brogues, this one is particularly exaggerated. In the joke, Michael and Patrick use “quare” instead of “queer,” “divil” in place of “devil,” and “larn” rather than “learn,” to cite a few examples.

Wyatt-Brown has discussed the role of speech in establishing public status, stating, “The stress upon external, public factors in establishing personal worth conferred particular prominence on the spoken word and physical gesture as opposed to interior thinking.” If one could speak eloquently it was assumed that a person was intellectual. In a society based on appearance, what mattered was external action, not internal thought. Wyatt-Brown goes on to state, “To some degree, then, thought was speech; reputation arose in large part from skill in its exercise at gatherings large or small.”⁵⁶ By representing Irish immigrants as unable to speak English well, jokes implied not only ignorance but also lack of skill and status.

Communication in general would be remarked upon frequently, the Irish always being in a state of misunderstanding and confusion. Short, sometimes one-line jokes, called “bulls,” showed the Irish man in various social situations blundering his way through. One joke quipped, “An Irishman writing from Cork to a son of his in the United States, directs his letter simply ‘To my Son in America.’ It will puzzle even Amos to find out this man’s location.” Another related the tale of a man looking for his sister at a customhouse. Upon being told she is unknown, the man remarks, “Sure it is here, where she wrote to me two years ago she would leave word where I could find her when I come till Amerikv – and haven’t I just come? And now you know nothing about her, at all, at all.” Entitled “A Bad Hand,” a bull joked, “It is said of a certain Irish

Peer that he writes so bad a hand that his franks, being generally illegible, are generally mis-sent.”⁵⁷

As it had with Michael and Patrick, these jokes challenged the Irishman’s ability to communicate. The purpose of these jokes was not just to comment on Irish learnedness, though their ignorance is apparent, but rather the combination of Irish obliviousness and their inability to convey ideas. Wyatt-Brown argues, “Acquired virtues were therefore most especially recognizable if a man was an eloquent orator, enchanting storyteller, or witty raconteur.” And he goes on to state, “Learning...marked the possessor as a gentleman.”⁵⁸ Irish men are shown to have the combined problem of being generally obtuse, and consequently, poor speakers. Even an Irish man addressing letters is not sharp enough to write his thoughts properly; so poor is his command of language. In a society that required intelligent thought, and consequently masculinity, to be displayed primarily through speech, Irish men are unlucky enough to lack both a shrewd mind and a quick tongue.

Though Irish men were generally portrayed as doltish, in the few instances they are shown to be clever, it is in their effort to cheat someone or lie. One joke relates the story of an Irishman and his employer. After his employer remonstrates him, saying “the other men were at work an hour before you,” Patrick replies, “Sure and I’ll be even with ‘em tonight, then...I’ll quit an hour before ‘em all, sure.” Similarly, another joke relates the following story:

An Irishman...having accidentally broken a pane of glass in a window of a house in Queen street, attempted, as fast as he could, to get out of the way, when he was followed and seized by the proprietor, who exclaimed, ‘you broke my window, fellow, did you not?’ ‘To be sure I did,’ said Pat, ‘and didn’t you see me running home for money to pay for it?’

Lastly, a March 1837 joke would represent the wily Irishman at the same time showing him to be drunk; a theme not previously seen in the *Picayune*’s jokes about Irish men. “An Irishman,

nearly 'three sheets to the wind,' was asked of what belief he was. He replied, 'Go to the widow Miliken. I owe her twelve shillings. It is her belief that I will never pay her – and, faith, that is my belief too.'⁵⁹ While more clever than their forementioned counterparts, the wit displayed by these Irish men portrays them as scoundrels, as a true gentleman "never resorts to base means in order to achieve his designs."⁶⁰ As well, the last joke introduced the theme of drunkenness one that would thereafter consistently pervade Irish jokes.

Richard Stivers has explored Irish drinking in his work *A Hair of the Dog*, and his contention is that hard drinking began in Ireland due to frustrations over marriage prospects and followed Irish immigrants to the United States. Stivers contends that, for the Irish man, drinking replaced sex in a culture that demanded late marriage to preserve family goods and sexual abstinence to maintain religious devotion. Alcohol was seen as a replacement for women, and Irish men took to hard drinking early in life.⁶¹ Irish drinking mentality transferred over to the United States where it became a way to assimilate into the already established Irish community. Far from home and often in less than favorable conditions, men drank as a way to signal their Irish nationality and gain acceptance.⁶²

Though this may have eased new immigrants into the already existing community, it quickly became a way for others to mock the newly arrived Irish and as Stivers states, "In Ireland drink was largely a sign of male identity; in America it was a symbol of Irish identity."⁶³ The idea of the hard-drinking Irish man became the hard-drinking Irish immigrant in the United States, and drinking became a way to signal Irish identity not only within the Irish community but among outsiders as well. As Stivers argues, "Irish" and "drunkard" became synonymous terms, and the Irish were looked down upon for their lack of restraint.

As well, though Stivers does not explore the idea of honor in his work, when one considers Greenburg's contention that southern men of honor were concerned primarily with superficiality and the mask they presented to the world, drinking takes on deeper connotations. While drinking was tolerated, and often seen as a sign of masculinity in plantation culture, drunkenness was another matter.⁶⁴ To not uphold the mask or to let it slip was to not uphold one's honor and as Greenburg states, "The man of honor was the man who had the power to prevent his being unmasked."⁶⁵ To get drunk, as the Irish were often accused of doing, and to not contain it properly was to let the mask slip and to show the real man, rather than the social facade.

Drinking would not be the only additional theme as 1837 progressed, however. Jokes increasingly placed Irish immigrants in New Orleans rather than other areas of the country, as well as reflecting the issues of the times. Overall, people were feeling the effects of the Panic of 1837. The editors of the *Picayune* remarked at length on the growing economic concerns, and in April claimed, "We are still in the midst of one of the greatest revolutions, in a commercial point of view, which has ever occurred in any country...Business has ceased." One month later, on May 14th, days after specie was suspended in New York and along the eastern seaboard, New Orleans would feel the aftershocks as the price of cotton fell drastically and banks had to call in their loans.⁶⁶ The *Picayune* would remark, "We rejoice...that things *cannot become worse*." Though the *Picayune* stated, "A general dismay pervaded all classes of our community," it was the Irish who would receive the first hostilities in print. Directly below the May 14th editorial was a joke entitled "Scene in a Bank":

An Irishman entered one of our banks yesterday and throwing down a \$5 bill – Will you be kind enough, Mither, jest to give me the spacie for that same bit of a bill?
No sir.
What! Can't you be after paying such a small sum as that, at all, at all?

We have suspended paying specie altogether. Suspended have you! And is this the institution, sure, that cannot pay an honest man five dollars, that you have had a man parading about with a loaded musket, all the long winter through, to keep off thieves? If you had a pig or anything valuable to protect, it would all have been right enough; but such a poor miserable concern this is, sure. Och! botheration to you, and the like of you!⁶⁷

The joke was reprinted twice that month and the humor comes from the fact that the Irish man is unaware that specie has been suspended, as well as from his anger over not getting the coin for a mere five dollars. Additionally, this joke places Irish immigrants in New Orleans rather than reprinting jokes from another city. This is crucial to note as previous jokes had placed immigrants in other cities or unspecified areas. By situating the joke in New Orleans and stating that the Irishman entered one of *our* banks, the paper and the public acknowledge that the Irish immigrant had truly arrived.

Along with situating the Irish in New Orleans, editorials around this time would serve to show the impact the Irish were having on the city, not only through their content but also their language. A June 27th editorial commented:

A few days since we expressed our unqualified opposition to the influx of paupers with which our country is so rapidly becoming infested. They are a pest, more dreaded than the London plague or the Asiatic cholera....Our country has received thousands of Hibernia's depressed and unfortunate sons, who from their ignorance and poverty, have become the burden of our Alms Houses – the disgrace of our prisons.

The *Picayune* would continue the next day, stating, "It is known that the paupers of Great Britain are generally the most notorious villains....They are an evil to our country, and we have no hope to benefit from them." Due to their remarks, the *Picayune* would quickly become embroiled in an editorial fight with another large New Orleans paper, the *Louisiana Advertiser*. After the *Advertiser* threatened the *Picayune* with mob violence, the *Picayune* responded, "Not content with the glorious privileges guaranteed to every foreigner in this country, the discontented spirits

who write for that paper, yesterday come out and boldly make a plain threat of exciting a band of Irishmen to mob us and our establishment. Is such language as this to be tolerated from foreigners?" That day and the next, the *Picayune* would include two articles, supposedly from readers, defending the *Picayune*. The first, from an Irishman, stated, "I have seen, with mortification, the low resorts of the Louisiana Advertiser, in answering some of your articles; but you have nothing to fear. I know personally several good countrymen of mine who will take your little paper, and who will support it." The other article claimed that the *Picayune* had received eight new subscribers, all of whom were Irishmen, supporting their paper.

While jokes disguised their prejudices in humor, editorials of this nature plainly stated where the *Picayune* stood on the Irish in the United States as well as New Orleans. While the *Picayune* frequently references immigrants in general, these examples go out of their way to draw attention to the Irish. An August editorial even highlights the reasons why German immigrants were better than the Irish, stating, "With the first, [Germans], all things for their new homes are severally arranged before they quit their native country. With Irishmen it is different. We find them too often in large cities without friends, employment, or money."⁶⁸ One sees the basis for various jokes here; the Irish are ignorant, poor, useless, and they are a foreign other. All of these ideas, and more, would be reflected in jokes, and jokes would in turn reflect back on the language used about the Irish. While these editorials would eventually concern themselves with other city matters, they are a direct reflection of the way people thought about and discussed the Irish.

Along with these additions to the *Picayune*, violence in jokes would make a showing once specie had been suspended, and the trait would carry over for both men and women, though somewhat more for men. Exemplified in an 1837 joke entitled, "Mrs. Biddy O'Bruiser," the

main character of the joke, Biddy, is portrayed as drunk, stumbling, and looking for her “greatest favorite (next to St. Patrick),” Irish whiskey. As with earlier examples, Biddy is decidedly outside of the parameters of a lady, foremost because of her appearance. Described as having “face and hands [that] were of a decidedly masculine look” and a “face...red and round as the noon-day sun – no blending of the roses and lilies there,” Biddy lacks any feminine qualities. Biddy’s explicit actions also mark her inappropriate behavior and the joke quips, “We shortly saw her in the vicinity of Mr. Hewlett’s bar room, looking very sweet and amiable and some of the bar keepers...did not altogether relish her insinuating advances.” It is these “insinuating advances” which place Biddy in a sexual category inappropriate for a southern woman. Additionally, Biddy claims to be drinking to “dthrown the thoughts” of her recently deceased husband. While Biddy’s propositions are not accepted, the suggestion is that an Irish woman, upon finding herself without a man, would readily sell herself for a drink, and whiskey no less.

While similar to earlier examples, Biddy’s verbal abusiveness towards the bartender is a new element and well outside the boundaries of southern womanhood. Leaving behind the comportment she is supposed to exhibit, Biddy becomes aggressive after she is unable to coerce free whiskey from one of the bartenders. The joke gives their exchange as follows:

Biddy: ‘Just give us a drop of the crathur [whiskey], will you, by the way of a comfort?’

Bartender: ‘You have got comfort enough on board now...’

Biddy: ‘...isn’t it the natur’ of ye to be afther denying a small dthrop of the whiskey to bury my sorrows for him who was burried but yesterday in the could mud.’

Bartender: ‘Can’t do any such thing. You have drank enough already and must be moving. Come away, hurry off.’

Biddy: ‘The divil take ye, and the like o’ ye for a dirty brute that ye are.’⁶⁹

After cursing the bartender, Biddy wanders off, but her emotional outburst further places her outside of southern feminine boundaries. As Wyatt-Brown states, “Southern male honor required

that women be burdened with a multitude of negatives....Female honor had always been the exercise of restraint and abstinence.”⁷⁰ By succumbing to her emotions and darker appetites, Bidy dishonors not only herself, but male honor as well, by defying convention. Interestingly as well, Bidy’s last name of “O’Bruiser” is her husband’s, and further signals Irish violence.

A mock court case would paint yet another picture of violence, this time without alcohol. The case relates the story of Mary McLaughlin, who is charged with assault against her supposed fiancée, Thomas Kavanagh. Claiming that she had “given him a blow in the face, and thumped and beat him most unmercifully,” Kavanagh sends Mary to jail. Though the story claims that “Mary was only exhibiting the purest love and affection for her future husband, and in the most approved Irish fashion,” Kavanagh is furious. Mary attempts to defend herself by explaining, “Your honor, I was just after getting a gold ring from pawn, that belonged to my mother, and he asked me to lend it to him, and when I asked it back, he gave me a box in the face, and then I gave him a slap in the face, and then, your Honor, he sent me to jail.” Mary is eventually let go, despite the stigma that “the Southern cultural emphasis upon total masculinity, total femininity encouraged male abuse and female submission....”⁷¹ By striking Thomas in retaliation, Mary reverses male and female roles, effectively emasculating him. This reversal is forgiven, however, due to the previous statement that she was expressing her love in the Irish manner. As the Irish are placed in the category of other, well outside southern gender roles, they are not expected to maintain proper male and female standards. Mary and Thomas are allowed the reversal due to their Irish nature.

Ironically, excessive violence would also place Irish men outside of gender norms. A June 8th joke entitled “Thady O’Maly’s Letter” was a mock submission by a newly arrived Irish immigrant. Describing the life he left behind in Ireland, Thady tells the tale of how he arrived in

New Orleans. Upon his parents' death, Thady is told that he owes the church more money than he has, and rather than staying to work it out Thady states, "[I] took my stick in my hand, and throttled all the way to Dublin."⁷² Shown as having a distinct lack of control, Thady defies a gentleman's notion of honor with unnecessary violence. While fighting was regarded by most men of honor as an acceptable spectator sport, direct participation in activities such as boxing were limited to the lower classes. A gentleman could watch a fight, back a fighter, and even revere a fighter for his skill, but he would never stoop to physical confrontation. As well, certain rules such as no hitting below the belt were crucial to maintain the gentlemanliness of fighting.⁷³ Irish immigrants were not only portrayed as unable to adhere to the rules of fighting, but they were often painted as fighting for no reason, and certainly not for sport. As Elliott Gorn stated, "[U]nvarnished violence...sharply contradicted the ways good men were supposed to behave" and many jokes played on this idea of violent Irishmen, depicting them as mindless bruisers.⁷⁴

As well, the cause for Thady's violence, owing money to the church, is not only a dig at religion in general, but also the large number of Irish Catholic immigrants who called New Orleans home.⁷⁵ While New Orleans may have had a greater Catholic population than the rest of the country, there was by no means Catholic unity, and the upper classes made sure to distance themselves from the lower. One can argue that Irish Catholicism became a separate type unto itself, and the Irish were frequently mocked for their perceived excessive devotion, as well as their fickle religious practices. In the joke Thady relates that,

Father Patrick O'Mulihan, was waiting for us – and sure enough 'tis he that made the fine oration, and drank the fine yown to the health of the ould couple in the next world. But says he to me, 'Thady says he, your father and mother were a good old couple, but there is no one perfect you know, says he, and therefore they will be kept a long time in purgatory unless you get masses said for their poor souls; and you know Thady, that can't be done without money'.⁷⁶

Thady goes on to offer the priest all the money he has, but after being told it is not enough to get his parents into heaven, Thady remarks, “Bad luck to the money....[T]here’s nothing to be had without it” and throws his remaining coin at the priest’s feet. It is at this point that Thady bludgeons his way to the city, closely tying together the ideas of violence and religion. Remarking not only on the Catholic Church’s notions of purgatory and the practice of buying one’s way out, the joke also plays on Thady’s weak commitment to the Church. Rather than working to pay for intention masses, Thady curses his remaining money, throws it at the priest, and resorts to violence. As well, the joke mocks the priesthood, portraying Father O’Mulihan as a man willing to drink Thady’s alcohol, then attempt to extort him.

Indeed, drinking is also a theme that is subtly expressed in the Thady O’Maley letter. The first thing Thady buys for his parents’ funeral is whiskey followed by music, tobacco, and then more drinks at the local pub. Spending became another avenue for ridicule, and Irish immigrants were often portrayed as incompetent spendthrifts, more willing to pay for whiskey than anything else.⁷⁷ Similarly, an 1844 joke mocks the Irish view of “what constitutes a gentleman.” The joke relates a story of an Irish man who owes more than double his estates and upon hearing of a peer’s death exclaims, “He a gentleman! He! Why he is no gentleman. Do you know that the fellow never owed a hundred dollars in his life!”⁷⁸

Though slightly different from the aforementioned Thady, the Irish gentleman has a skewed view of money. Not only does he owe more than he can mortgage, but he also sees indebtedness as the obligation of a true gentleman. Instead of maintaining composure and responsibility with money, an Irish man borrowed to the hilt and spent freely. As it was a southern man’s duty to care for his family, dependents, and property, to shirk one’s responsibilities and spend unwisely was to fail one’s duties as a southern gentleman.⁷⁹

Though spending would remain a subtle theme, after 1837 violence would become a stock trait for Irish men. An October, 1842 joke entitled “An Irishman’s Idea of a Debating Society” not only played on the concept of the Irish bruiser, but also stressed more directly just how far Irish men were from the boundaries of southern honor. Upon being invited to a debating society to consider the question of whether or not Venus would have looked more lovely had she worn a bustle, Patrick refreshes his “mim’ry and that wid some of the rare ould Irish sperits (whiskey).” After being told by the doorman that he is not allowed in with a club, Patrick knocks him unconscious with his cane and then “gave a wild ‘Whoop!’ twirled his stick over his head, and asked where there was a member of the Debating Society that was able to beat him, or who dare say a word against bustles.”

Patrick is finally pacified and the proper way to debate is explained, to which he replies, “Why didn’t you spake to me in plain English, and tell me, like a gintleman and a scholar, that this was a ‘Litererary Institution for the advancement of Useful Knowledge?’”⁸⁰ The joke comes not only from Patrick’s use of the word “gintleman,” as he is clearly not one, but also his enthusiasm as he debates his way. Patrick’s concept of what a debate is, a physical fight, mentally places him outside the parameters of civilized negotiation. To an Irish man, a brutal fight is how problems are solved rather than through the conventional method of talking things out. As with earlier jokes, the proper way to communicate is lost on the Irish man. As well, Patrick’s lack of restraint separates him from the group and places him in a different class.⁸¹

In Elliott Gorn’s study of backcountry fighting he contends that rough-and-tumble fighting was a way for the lower classes to claim their own form of honor. The poor were economically unable to duel properly, and unwilling to ape the upper-class methods of dueling in a detached, strict manner. Instead, the working class inverted the rules and resorted to bloody,

vicious conflicts.⁸² It is not only Patrick's actions, but also his inability to control them, which mark him as an outsider. As was supposedly characteristic of the working class, and Irish men in particular, Patrick is portrayed as aggressive and happy to be so. Shown to be nothing more than a mindless brawler, Patrick epitomizes the over-emotional and aggressive working-class man the upper gentry distanced themselves from.⁸³ Though southern masculinity was closely tied to aggression and encouraged in men from a young age, the primary release for this aggression was the ritualized duel, the ultimate expression of male honor.⁸⁴

Duels were the most common solution when gentleman confronted one another, but dueling was a complex system.⁸⁵ A true man of honor, a man at the top of the southern hierarchy, held more honor than one who was not. If challenged by a peer, a man of honor had to duel to protect his image. If challenged by a man lower than himself, such as a poor white or even a slave, a gentleman could maintain his honor without the duel. As Elliot Gorn states, "A herdsman's insult failed to shame a planter since the two men were not on the same social level. Without a threat to the gentleman's honor, there was no need for a duel; horsewhipping the insolent fellow sufficed."⁸⁶

Irish men fit into the place of the "insolent fellow." In fact, jokes commented on the Irish man's combativeness, as well as his social distance from the duel. A joke titled "An Irish Duel" related the following story:

Mr. O'Connor related an instance where the parties in an "affair of honor" had actually agreed to put the muzzle of their pistols (so inveterate were they) into each other's mouths; and "yet, would you believe it?" said he, "one of them escaped." Just as one second was about to give the signal, the other said to the principal, "Jack, look hither." Jack turned his head, just in time, for the ball passed out through his left cheek, doing him little hurt, while his opponent was killed on the spot.

Another joke related a similar sentiment. "An Irishman received a challenge to fight a duel, but declined. On being asked the reason – 'Och,' said Pat, 'would you have me leave his

mother an orphan?”⁸⁷ In the first joke, the Irishmen are so without the qualities of a gentleman that despite their attempts to adhere to the rules of a duel, they still fail. One could even argue that the second’s action to save his friend’s life dishonors the whole affair. In the second joke, the Irish man is either too dense to understand what a duel is, or he subverts the ritual’s meaning by proposing a preposterous “honorable” excuse for backing out of the conflict.

So common were jokes about the Irishmen’s inability to conduct themselves properly, that even children were mocked for their lack of restraint and upbringing. In southern homes, boys were to be raised with a stern hand and if needed a switch. Once they reached school age, however, social classes often governed behavior. As Wyatt Brown states, “For boys, defiance of school authority had wide implications. Disobedience to the teacher helped to distinguish rich from poor and prepared the young planter’s son to assume command over lesser folk in the social hierarchy, white and black.”⁸⁸ A joke entitled “Irish Genius” plays on this idea of honor in the schoolroom. In explaining the Lord’s Prayer, a Sunday school teacher, himself Irish, tries to encourage Jimmy Dodger, an Irish student, to apply the scriptures lesson to his own life:

Now, Jimmy, by ‘forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us,’ is meant that you must never fly into a passion and take revenge. Thus if Patrick strikes you, forgive him—don’t hit him again.
Couldn’t I knock ‘im down first, and thin forgive im?
No – you must forgive him in your heart, and not think of revenge.
An’ would it be revenge to knock ‘im down first?
You must not only forgive, but likewise learn to forget injuries.
(The youth gave an expressive look.) An’ I may forgive, but I’m damned if ever I forget!⁸⁹

While Jimmy answers with sarcastic comments, the teacher fails to respond appropriately by disciplining him. Though educators were to defer to children of the upper class, the teacher-student relationship showed others in the classroom the status of certain children.⁹⁰ Being from the lower class, Jimmy should be physically reprimanded, but he is not, and his lack of honor

extends to the teacher, who as an Irishman lacks enough honor to scold a child. A cycle of dishonor is suggested here, where improper authority leads to more Irishmen without honor. As well, the teacher's repeated insistence that Jimmy refrain from acting with passion and violence implies that even in youth, Irish men are ingrained with mindless brutality.

A similar joke entitled "Scene in an Irish School Room" recounts the story of Phelim O'Mahoney and his teacher's request to recite the alphabet.

...before you sit down stand up and say your alphabit; so keep your five fingers out of your head for a few minutes, and begin. What letter's that?
I don't know, sir
Arrah! Botheration to you, what was it I said to you last night, when I saw you blacking Pat Mooney's eye?
Faith, sir, you said 'Ah! you big blackguard'
Well, never mind the blackguard, but say, 'ah.'⁹¹

Very similar to the first joke, "Scene in an Irish School Room" again shows the lack of discipline, and the results of the dishonored teaching youth. Phelim is asked to continue his letters, with the teacher repeatedly calling him names. Once he reaches "k" he is relived of any further requirements and is allowed to sit down. In this case it is not only lack of discipline, but the earlier theme of communication at play. Being Irish, the teacher is unable to properly educate, and being Irish, the children are unable to learn. Violence is also suggested here, with the reference to Pat Mooney's black eye, and again the implication is that even in youth the Irish cannot be taught honor.

Though all anti-Irish jokes make use of ethnic typing, many jokes attempted to directly equate the word "Irish" with inadequacy. So prevalent was the idea that the Irish were in some way deficient due to merely being Irish, that jokes would quip about something being "very Irish" or "particularly Irish" such as a joke entitled, "Irish logic." "That's a fine stream for trout friend,' observed a piscatorial acquaintance the other day to a genuine sprig from the Emerald

Isle, who was whipping away at a well known and favorite pool. ‘Faith, and it mist be that same, sure enough,’ returned Pat, ‘for deuce one of ‘em will stir out of it.’” Another joke, “Very Irish,” relates the story of an Irish cook who upon letting some candles fall into a pot of water, put them in the oven to dry. When an Irishman is asked why he is out carrying water when it is threatening to rain, his reply is “[I]t’s me cabbages that I’m after getting watered before it rains. An Irishman buys a horse and when he is told he is mounted wrong, with his face towards the tail, Pat replies, “Ah, my honey, how do you know which way I am going.” An Irish “quack doctor” who invents a medicine for sore eyes starts his advertisement with “[L]et every blind man look at this.” An Irishman is described as “Irish all over...to-day has enough to do, let to-morrow look out for itself” as if his Irish inadequacies are visible qualities. Another joke begins, “Blunders by Irish waiters...are as common as bricks,” and relates the story of an Irish waiter who is told to boil an egg three minutes by the watch, and consequently boils the watch in with the egg.⁹² Though silly, these jokes still relate the idea that through some fault in the Irish, they were incapable of reaching minimal standards of intelligence and function. As well, these jokes serve to equate the word “Irish” with deficiency, in effect adding to the lexicon a new way to describe any number of drawbacks.⁹³

While ethnic typing was the basis for jokes, race was a wholly different issue, almost invisible in the *Picayune* when it came to the Irish. Despite arguments from historians like David R. Roediger that “it was by no means clear that the Irish were white” in the slave south, jokes make it very clear who was white and who was not. While Irish labor in New Orleans, especially for men, points to the popular idea of the disposable Irishman, jokes never compared the Irish and slaves, nor did they often place the two together. In one rare instance, in a joke titled “The Mistake,” a man relates his story of a stage ride to Philadelphia in which he becomes smitten

with a woman, talking with her the entire way and making inquiries into her destination. The stage is traveling at night, and it is not until they make a stop to drop the woman that the man sees that she is not a white woman. The only other passenger, an Irishman, realizes the taboo, and exclaims, “Och! by the pipers of Leinster, she’s a nager!”⁹⁴ The story not only serves as a warning for white men not to make the same “mistake,” but it also makes clear that even a dense Irishman understands such a relationship would not be allowed. Further, it points to a racial boundary between an Irishman and a woman of color that readers of the joke would have recognized.

Another joke entitled “Yellow Jack” tells of an Irishman just arrived who becomes confused and believes a “mulatto” man named Jack is the yellow jack epidemic. Yellow fever was often a problem in New Orleans given its tropical climate. Spread by mosquitoes, yellow fever would hit New Orleans virtually every year, with the mortality rate generally being 60% of those who contracted the disease. The Irish, unacclimated, and living in the poor sanitary standards of New Orleans in general, would die in disproportionate numbers. As well, in 1844 New Orleans experienced a sharp increase in Yellow Fever deaths and the public often looked to outsiders as scapegoats.⁹⁵ In the joke, after Jack tries to help the Irishman with his trunk, he becomes angry and says, “[D]on’t lay a hand on that trunk, or I won’t leave a bone in your yellow skin that I won’t pound as fine as brick-dust,” after which the Irishman “twirled his shillelagh, and would actually have laid it on to the mulatto, had he not ran off.”⁹⁶ As in other jokes, the Irishman in the Yellow Jack joke uses brutal, mindless violence to solve his problem. Rather than speak to Jack as a gentleman would, the Irishman immediately resorts to irrational violence, dishonoring himself by failing to maintain composure. As well, the characteristic club or shillelagh is the mark of an Irish bruiser, further perpetuating the Irish type. Race plays a

supporting role here, more to create humor and comment on a particular situation than to make a comparison between two groups. In addition to the egregious anger, the comedy springs from the notion that the new Irish immigrant is both confounded by southern racial categories and confused about meaning of “yellow fever.”

Lastly, a joke titled “White-washing” relates the story of a man staying at the St. Charles Hotel, who, upon entering his room, finds three Irish women scrubbing the walls, and asks whether they are going to whitewash the room. One of the women, Bridget, replies, “Now, ain’t that a silly question for such a purty gintleman as ye are to be after axin...Don’t ye see that we are the *white-washers* sure?”⁹⁷ Here, the humor comes from Bridget’s misunderstanding of the phrase “white wash.” Though the gentleman refers to painting, Bridget takes it as a reference to her race, and makes it a point to stress her whiteness. Color is not the issue here, however, but rather place in society. For Bridget it is important to stress her place in the white power structure, as someone who is more than a laborer. Given her status as an immigrant maid, the joke is funny because Bridget is obviously outside of the gentry, and the boundaries of a southern lady. As well, Bridget flirts with the man, recycling the ideas of Irish women as sexually promiscuous.

Despite Roediger’s contention that pre-Civil War descriptions of the Irish frequently used words such as “simian” and portrayed the Irish as “ape-like,” jokes from the *Picayune* did not follow this pattern.⁹⁸ In a society like New Orleans where white supremacy was key, to compare a white man to a slave, no matter how lowly, was inexcusable. No matter their status, the Irish were white, and their typing as an “other” played very differently in the south. Typing happened precisely because the Irish were white, not in an effort to group them with blacks. As Kevin Kenny argues,

If we grant that the Irish in American society were not initially regarded as ‘fully white,’ this does not mean that they were regarded as ‘black’ or ‘yellow.’...On both sides of the

Atlantic, to be sure, the Irish were subject to vicious racial caricatures and stereotypes. But in neither Britain nor America did prejudice translate into a system of racial discrimination or subordination enshrined in law.⁹⁹

In fact, so detached were the Irish from the black community in public thought, that even slaves felt comfortable making jokes about Irish immigrants. Pat and Mike were stock characters in slave jokes, focusing on traits such as ignorance and dishonesty. As Lawrence Levine argues, “Perhaps more importantly, they [jokes] allowed Negroes to openly ridicule and express contempt for white people. The Irish characters of black jokelore became surrogates for all the other whites against whom it could be dangerous to speak openly.”¹⁰⁰ Blacks felt alleviated from any danger precisely because the Irish were not part of the normal white power structure. Jokes still functioned as a way for slaves to release tensions, however, as the Irish were viewed as white, albeit a white other.

Even the establishment of the Know-Nothing Party in the mid-1850s, a notoriously anti-Irish group, did not prompt the *Picayune* to reflect any racially charged sentiments. Ironically, in fact, the *Daily Picayune* seemed to stray away from Irish jokes in the mid 1850s, perhaps in an effort to disassociate themselves from the Know-Nothings. The *Picayune* even joked about the party, saying, in an effort to not to let them have all the fun, they had been joined by the “Say-nothings” and “Do-nothings” as well.¹⁰¹ An editorial also lends some insight, stating, “We may here remark that it is lamentable, and yet a most familiar fact, that this predisposition of the immigrant has been too often made such a use of as it has, by designing men, in our country, for the advancement of party, and political ends.”¹⁰² Though the editorial criticized these “designing men” for their means and not necessarily their ends, the *Picayune* clearly wanted to remove itself from any political association.

Not only Irish anecdotes, but jokes of virtually every sort disappeared from the *Picayune* in the 1850s. This may have been due to the sheer volume of events that the newspaper was attempting to cover in that decade. The *Picayune* had experienced massive growth, tripling the size of the paper by 1840, and by 1848 printing an afternoon edition with decreased type size, and oftentimes with supplements. By 1850 the *Picayune* was receiving over three thousand words a day over their telegraph.¹⁰³ Prosperity and increased communication meant more news, and logistically there was not room for jokes of any kind.

While anti-Irish jokes in northern and southern antebellum newspapers were often shared and had the same themes, jokes carried a different connotation in the slave south. Based on strict gender roles and rooted in notions of honor, southern society was forced to deal with a white “other” in ways that northern society was not. Humor was one way in which this other could be typed and treated accordingly. For Irish women, typing meant that they were placed into three roles: the drunken troublemaker, the ignorant servant girl, and the unfeeling mother. Though they would overlap, these roles would make Irish women seem unsuitable and unable to adhere to gender conventions.

Irish men were also typed, but their role was more broad, that of the emasculated man. By being unable to fulfill the proper role of gentleman, Irish men were without honor and consequently not full men at all. Ignorance, drinking, and violence were some of the traits which excluded Irish men from the upper-class idea of the gentleman. As Bronwen Walter has stated, “Thus in Britain the Irish have been racialised as different, while in the United States they have been racialised as the same, but ethnicised as different.” Her argument supports the idea that although the Irish were white, they were not part of the power structure.¹⁰⁴ More important to southerners were the fulfillment of gender roles and the maintenance of racial purity. Without all

groups acting according to their place, anarchy would reign and the tenuous hold whites had could be compromised. Language would continue to propagate Irish types, and “Irish” became a way to describe something generally unpleasant or opposite from the norm.¹⁰⁵ Though Irish discrimination would present itself in various ways as the population continued to grow and exert its influence, this early humor set the standard for the ideas of the Irish type, a type that would follow Irish immigrants into the decades to come.

More locally, however, the *Picayune* had been successful in spreading its brand of humor, and in 1857 two New Orleans newspapers, the *Daily True Delta* and the *Daily Orleanian*, both printed the following joke: “An Irish servant girl was requested by a lady to go to one of our dry goods stores and obtain a “bed comforter” for her. About an hour afterwards she returned with one of the clerks.”¹⁰⁶

Notes:

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- ¹ “Irishmen and the Louisiana Advertiser,” *Daily Picayune*, 3 August 1837.
- ² Thomas Ewing Dabney, *One Hundred Great Years: The Story of the Times-Picayune From its Founding to 1940* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1944), 15-17. For more on the men who started the Picayune, Francis Lumsden and George Kendall, see Dabney, chapter 2.
- ³ Dabney, *One Hundred Great Years*, 22. For the first Irish joke the Picayune printed see, *Daily Picayune*, 25 January 1837.
- ⁴ John Latrobe, *Southern Travels: Journal of John H. B. Latrobe 1834*, ed. Samuel Wilson Jr. (New Orleans: Historic New Orleans Collection, 1986), 45.
- ⁵ Latrobe, *Southern Travels*, 39.
- ⁶ Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, “The Formation of Afro-Creole Culture,” in *Creole New Orleans: Race and Americanization*, ed. Arnold R. Hirsch and Joseph Logsdon (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992), 66. Also, Paul F. Lachance, “The Foreign French,” in *Creole New Orleans: Race and Americanization*, ed. Arnold R. Hirsch and Joseph Logsdon (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992), 118.
- ⁷ Kerby A. Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 193-6.
- ⁸ Earl F. Niehaus, *The Irish in New Orleans* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965), 25.
- ⁹ David T. Gleeson, *The Irish in the South: 1800-1860* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 26-29.
- ¹⁰ Latrobe, *Southern Travels*, 40.
- ¹¹ Niehaus, *The Irish in New Orleans*, 44-48.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, 29-30.
- ¹³ Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 17-19.
- ¹⁴ Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 197.
- ¹⁵ Lachance, “The Foreign French,” 118. See also more generally, chapters 1-4.
- ¹⁶ Kenneth S. Greenburg, *Honor and Slavery: Lies, Duels, Noses, Masks, Dressing as a Woman, Gifts, Strangers, Humanitarianism, Death, Slave Rebellions, The Proslavery Argument, Baseball, Hunting, Gambling in the Old South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), preface xiii.
- ¹⁷ Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 46.
- ¹⁸ Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 33, 15.
- ¹⁹ Elliott J. Gorn, “‘Gouge and Bite, Pull Hair and Scratch’: The Social Significance of Fighting in the Southern Backcountry,” *American Historical Review* 90, no. 1 (1985): 41.
- ²⁰ Greenburg, *Honor and Slavery*, 8-9.
- ²¹ Catherine Clinton, *The Plantation Mistress: Women’s World in the Old South* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982), 6.
- ²² Hasia R. Diner, *Erin’s Daughter’s in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 30-34.
- ²³ Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 43, 51.
- ²⁴ Clinton, *The Plantation Mistress*, 102.
- ²⁵ Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household*, 196.
- ²⁶ Dale T. Knobel, “A Vocabulary of Ethnic Perception: Content Analysis of the American Stage Irishman, 1820-1860,” *Journal of American Studies* 15, no. 1 (1981): 47.
- ²⁷ Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 226.
- ²⁸ Victoria Bynum, *Unruly Women: The Politics of Social and Sexual Control in the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 9.
- ²⁹ Clinton, *The Plantation Mistress*, 204.
- ³⁰ Clinton, *The Plantation Mistress*, 204.
- ³¹ “Police –Sunday,” *Daily Picayune*, 27 January 1837. See also, “*Mental Reservation*,” *Daily Picayune*, 31 May 1837.
- ³² Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 227.
- ³³ “Beauty in Distress,” *Daily Picayune*, 28 February 1837.
- ³⁴ “Elopement Extraordinary,” *Daily Picayune*, 1 April 1837.
- ³⁵ “Facts,” *Daily Picayune*, 15 February 1837.

- ³⁶ Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 291, 199.
- ³⁷ Diner, *Erin's Daughters in America*, 71, 82-83.
- ³⁸ Margaret Lynch Brennan, "Ubiquitous Bridget: Irish Immigrant Women in Domestic Service in America, 1840-1930" in *Making the Irish American: History and Heritage of the Irish in the United States*, ed. J.J. Lee and Marion R. Casey (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 337-338.
- ³⁹ Diner, *Erin's Daughters in America*, 90.
- ⁴⁰ Laura D. Kelley, "Erin's Enterprise: Immigration by Appropriation The Irish in Antebellum New Orleans" (PhD diss., Tulane University, 2004), 134-135.
- ⁴¹ Hirsch, *Creole New Orleans*, 163.
- ⁴² "Biddy in the Coal-Hole," *Daily Picayune*, 21 January 1844.
- ⁴³ Lynch-Brennan, "Ubiquitous Bridget," 334-336.
- ⁴⁴ Diner, *Erin's Daughters in America*, 71-72.
- ⁴⁵ Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 155.
- ⁴⁶ "A Christmas Anecdote. The Expedition of Bridget and Ann to Early Mass on Christmas Morning," *Daily Picayune*, 7 January 1844.
- ⁴⁷ Niehaus, *The Irish in New Orleans*, 53.
- ⁴⁸ "Quite Pathetic," *Daily Picayune*, 28 January 1837.
- ⁴⁹ "The Emigrant's Family," *Daily Picayune*, 27 March 1844.
- ⁵⁰ "The California Grippe," *Daily Picayune*, 8 February 1849.
- ⁵¹ Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789-1860* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 41, 62.
- ⁵² T. Bibb Bradley, "Refinement in Manner and Conversation," *Southern Ladies Book* 1, no. 4 (1853): 201-210.
- ⁵³ Bradley, "Refinement in Manner and Conversation," 208.
- ⁵⁴ "Strong Metaphor," *Daily Picayune*, 9 February 1837.
- ⁵⁵ Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 38-39.
- ⁵⁶ Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 46-47.
- ⁵⁷ "The Last," *Daily Picayune*, 1 March 1837. "An Original," *Daily Picayune*, 17 May 1837. "A Bad Hand," *Daily Picayune*, 7 February 1837. See also, "Othello in Irish," *Daily Picayune*, 9 March 1844.
- ⁵⁸ Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 47, 94.
- ⁵⁹ *Daily Picayune*, 2 April 1837. "Quick Witted," *Daily Picayune*, 26 August 1837. *Daily Picayune*, 7 March 1837. See also, "The Opaque Goose," *Daily Picayune*, 3 February 1837.
- ⁶⁰ Bradley, "Refinement in Manner and Conversation," 202.
- ⁶¹ Richard Stivers, *A Hair of the Dog: Irish Drinking and American Stereotype* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976), 90.
- ⁶² Stivers, *A Hair of the Dog*, 127-128.
- ⁶³ Stivers, *A Hair of the Dog*, 129.
- ⁶⁴ Clinton, *The Plantation Mistress*, 105.
- ⁶⁵ Greenburg, *Honor and Slavery*, 25.
- ⁶⁶ Davis Rich Dewey, *Financial History of The United States* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1903), 230.
- ⁶⁷ "The Times-At Home," *Daily Picayune*, 16 April 1837. "Suspension of Specie Payments," *Daily Picayune*, 14 May 1837. "Scene in a Bank," *Daily Picayune*, 14 May 1837.
- ⁶⁸ "Foreign Paupers," *Daily Picayune*, 27 July 1837. "Foreign Paupers," *Daily Picayune*, 28 July 1837. "The Louisiana Advertiser," *Daily Picayune*, 10 August 1837. "For the Picayune," *Daily Picayune*, 10 August 1837. "Irishmen," *Daily Picayune*, 11 August 1837. "Paupers and Emigrants again!," *Daily Picayune*, 13 August 1837. See also, "Fighting – Riots, &c.," *Daily Picayune*, 6 May 1837. *Daily Picayune*, 9 May 1837. "Foreign Paupers," *Daily Picayune*, 20 June 1837. "Grand Row in Boston—Sunday June 11," *Daily Picayune*, 22 July 1837. "The Boston Riot," *Daily Picayune*, 23 July 1837. *Daily Picayune*, 10 August 1837.
- ⁶⁹ "New Orleans City Worthies – No. X," *Daily Picayune*, 27 June 1837.
- ⁷⁰ Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 227.
- ⁷¹ "A Laughable Concern," *Daily Picayune*, 8 April 1837. Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 283.
- ⁷² "Thady O'Maly's Letter," *Daily Picayune*, 8 June 1837.
- ⁷³ Elliott J. Gorn, *The Manly Art: Bare-Knuckle Prize Fighting in America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 129-139, 24.
- ⁷⁴ Gorn, *The Manly Art*, 139.

- ⁷⁵ Kerby A. Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles* (New York: Oxford University Press: 1985), 172.
- ⁷⁶ "Thady O'Maly's Letter," *Daily Picayune*, 8 June 1837.
- ⁷⁷ Stiver, *A Hair of the Dog*, 143.
- ⁷⁸ "What Constitutes a Gentleman?" *Daily Picayune*, 30 August 1844.
- ⁷⁹ Greenburg, *Honor and Slavery*, 86. See Also Stephanie McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds: Yeoman Households, Gender Relations, and the Political Culture of the Antebellum South Carolina Low Country* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 13-19.
- ⁸⁰ "An Irishman's Idea of a Debating Society," *Daily Picayune*, 16 October 1841. See also, "Police Report," *Daily Picayune*, 31 March 1837. "Daniel O'Daly vs. Murphy O'Gorman," *Daily Picayune*, 29 September 1837. "The English, Scotch, and Irish," *Daily Picayune*, 25 October 1837. "A 'tight' Rule," *Daily Picayune*, 19 March 1844. "Timothy O'Higgin's Manner of Avoiding the Pledge," *Daily Picayune*, 27 October 1846.
- ⁸¹ Stivers, *A Hair of the Dog*, 150.
- ⁸² Gorn, 'Gouge and Bite, Pull Hair and Scratch,' 41.
- ⁸³ Gorn, 'Gouge and Bite, Pull Hair and Scratch,' 22.
- ⁸⁴ Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 154-155.
- ⁸⁵ Greenburg, *Honor and Slavery*, 8-9.
- ⁸⁶ Elliott J. Gorn, "'Gouge and bite, Pull Hair and Scratch': The Social Significance of Fighting in the Southern Backcountry," *The American Historical Review* 90, no. 1 (1985): 41.
- ⁸⁷ "An Irish Duel," *Daily Picayune*, 23 February 1837. *Daily Picayune*, 21 October 1837.
- ⁸⁸ Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 149-162, 162.
- ⁸⁹ "Irish Genius," *Daily Picayune*, 26 April 1837.
- ⁹⁰ Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 162.
- ⁹¹ "Scene in an Irish School Room," *Daily Picayune*, 31 May 1837.
- ⁹² "Irish Logic," *Daily Picayune*, 27 April 1837. "Very Irish," *Daily Picayune*, 12 December 1845. "A New One," *Daily Picayune*, 26 August 1837. "About Right," *Daily Picayune*, 18 February 1837. "A Bull," *Daily Picayune*, 8 August 1837. "The Emigrant Family," *Daily Picayune*, 27 March 1844. "Three Minutes by the Watch," *Daily Picayune*, 5 March 1847. See also, "Irish Bull," *Daily Picayune*, 26 January 1837. "An Irish Sentry," *Daily Picayune*, 2 February 1837. "Sweets of Liberty," *Daily Picayune*, 12 February 1837. *Daily Picayune*, 12 February 1837. "Handy Andy-An Irish Page," *Daily Picayune*, 28 March 1837. "A Sea Bull," *Daily Picayune*, 29 March 1837. *Daily Picayune*, 25 May 1837. *Daily Picayune*, 11 July 1837. *Daily Picayune*, 20 July 1837. "Rabbit Shooting," *Daily Picayune*, 13 July 1837. "Ride and Tie," *Daily Picayune*, 5 September 1837. "Irishmen," *Daily Picayune*, 12 October 1837. "An Irish Murder," *Daily Picayune*, 17 March 1838. "Irish Soldier," *Daily Picayune*, 26 December 1843. "Striking a Balance," *Daily Picayune*, 4 February 1844. "Don't be too Particular," *Daily Picayune*, 15 October 1846. "Conspiracy to Kill," *Daily Picayune*, 10 November 1846. *Daily Picayune*, 21 August 1852.
- ⁹³ For more on this idea see Stivers, *A Hair of the Dog*, pages 142-150.
- ⁹⁴ "The Mistake," *Daily Picayune*, 26 September 1837.
- ⁹⁵ Niehaus, *The Irish in New Orleans*, 31. New Orleans Public Library, "Yellow Fever Deaths in New Orleans, 1817-1905," taken from George Augustin's, *History of Yellow Fever* (1909), New Orleans Public Library, <http://www.nutrias.org/facts/feverdeaths.htm> (accessed may 2, 2008).
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- ⁹⁸ David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (New York: Verso, 1991), 135-136.
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- ¹⁰⁰ Lawrence W. Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 302-303
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- ¹⁰³ Dabney, *One Hundred Great Years*, 57, 83.
- ¹⁰⁴ Browen Walter, *Outsiders Inside: Whiteness, Place, and Irish Women* (London: Routledge, 2001), 61.
- ¹⁰⁵ Stivers, *Hair of the Dog*, 143.
- ¹⁰⁶ *Daily True Delta*, 23 April 1857. *Daily Orleanian*, 11 September 1857.

VITA

Ashley Barckett was born in Fall River Massachusetts and received her B.A. from the University of Arizona.