English 117B Summer 2017 **Site Visit / Interview Project**

**Overview**: This project could be thought of as an extension of what everyone does when traveling: looking attentively at new sites/sights and talking to people. It can also be seen as an exercise in primary research, which means you get information directly from the world, rather than from books. Field research is a hugely important activity in many professions: marketing, zoology, psychology, botany, and sociology, to name a few.

**Length & Format:** Aim for 1000 words, typed, in MLA format. **Points:** 150

**Procedure/Components:**

* **Description:** Describe where you went and what you saw, using as many details as you can to paint a picture for your readers: sights, sounds, smells, tastes. Organize the data into sections that make sense for your topic. Include physical details of the setting, describe people who were there, their behavior, and what they said.
* **Interview:** There must be a segment that includes dialog from interviewing someone. If you prefer and it’s appropriate to your topic, you might end up with more dialog than site description, especially if you talk to more than one person. Dig for something beyond the obvious, and try to get their exact words, though you can paraphrase some of it in your report. **Do not submit the raw transcript!** Your task is to turn it into an article.
* **Analysis:** What conclusions did you draw from what you saw? What insights into Irish culture and/or human nature did you get? Did it confirm or contradict anything we have read about in class?
* **Audience:** Obviously you’ll be sharing your impressions with this class, but you might think of future tourists/students and/or people who will never visit Ireland but are interested in it, too. Who knows—you could publish this!
* **Multi-modal component**: If you are comfortable with the technology (e.g. the video app on your phone or camera) you can do this as a short film, such as the “50 people, 1 question” films one can find on You Tube. [Sample film from Galway](https://search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?p=50+people+one+question+galway+ireland&ei=UTF-8&hspart=mozilla&hsimp=yhs-001). If not, at least include a photo or two, maybe one of the site, one of someone you interviewed.
* **For shy people:** Feel free to do this work with a classmate or two, just so you interview different people and don’t duplicate each other’s descriptions.
* **Restrictions**: You can’t just write up the tours we are all going on. This has to be off the beaten path. You also can’t interview one of your classmates, though some other student you meet on the road is fair game—more interesting if they’re not American, though.
* **Submission:** submit to Canvas and print out for your portfolio

**\*\*\*\*For Topics, see the other side**

**Topics**: Choose one of the options below, or pitch me another idea. Really anywhere you go on this trip is fair game, though obviously I want to encourage you to be adventurous. Also, I’m hoping you will all choose different topics, though it’s OK to double up if the resulting papers are different. You may *not* interview the same people, though you can accompany each other while gathering quotes.

1. **At the Hostel/Dorms:** At our hostel you are likely to meet people from all over the world. Describe the hostel itself, but talk to as many people as you can about their impressions of Dublin and any insights they’ve had traveling.
2. **Film Festival**: You could chat with someone after a film, get their take on it, and then ask them a bit about themselves, too. Even better, you could chat with the filmmaker, if they are around (as they often are at film festivals).
3. **Artists/musicians**: If you see someone painting the landscape or playing music in public, they might be willing to discuss their work with you. This works especially well if you are an artist or musician yourself.
4. **Irish Icons**: All over Ireland you will see statues, murals, and other memorials to famous people. It might be interesting to interview people who take each other’s picture posing in front of a mural of Bernard Shaw or with an arm over a statue’s shoulder about what he means to them. Any icon would work, too, but some are going to provoke better conversations than others. Hint: The Icon Factory in Dublin is a particularly rich site.
5. **Pubs**: How does a *real* Irish pub differ from an “Irish” pub such as we see in the States? Ask a bartender, other patrons in a pub. This will work best if you can talk to someone who has seen both the US and the Irish versions. Avoid using Temple Bar for this—too touristy.
6. **Airport:** Many who travel a great deal get sick of airports, but personally I found the Dublin airport to be quite nice, and the strategies they use to market the city and country are interesting.
7. **Bus/train/boat/donkey cart:** OK, you aren’t likely to see donkey carts any more, but any form of travel might be a good place to observe and interview someone.
8. **Other options**: Museums, hikes, the Irish Film Institute, NUI Galway campus, Grafton Street (main shopping and busking strip), Silicon Docks, Dublin Castle, a shop selling African goods (as described in the Roddy Doyle story), etc. Just try to be creative and make it interesting.