



Arsht Ethics Initiatives

Arsht Research on Ethics and Community Grant

The Good Life: Comparative Studies in Rural Writing

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Abstract

This project pursues a comparative study of an age-old tension between country and city as presented in two modern discourses: working-class narratives exploring rural, agrarian life in early twentieth-century Ireland, and non-fiction accounts of rural and wilderness living produced in mid-twentieth century America. The study interrogates how the first discourse presents the “real” Ireland of the pastoral and the past by turns romantic and critical, while the second discourse explores and challenges the emergent “Good Life” of post-war suburban, consumer culture in the U.S. in ways implicit and sometimes explicit and critical. Drawing on classical social theory, such as Veblen, and Empson’s critique of the pastoral, the investigators will also make use of contemporary work in the social psychology of nostalgia, and the history of emotion as each applicant produces a substantial piece of writing for professional presentation and publication.

Noddings, one which we believe is consistent with the vision of the Ethics Center and the grants supported by Arsht program.

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