

## **Emasculation and Erasure: Gender and Sexuality in Irish Nationalism**

### **Author's Statement**

Where does history reside in our collective memory? How can that history become distorted? These were the questions that I was able to explore in 79-255 *Modern Ireland: Politics and Culture from the Famine (1847) to Today*, a General Education course taught by Dr. Aidan Beatty. This course was my introduction to the study of history as an academic field, and I welcomed the opportunity to consider the questions of memory and distortion. The following essay was written as the final assignment for the class, and I chose the prompt "Gender and sexuality are the main forces in historical change in modern Ireland; is this a fair assessment?" Through analyzing primary and secondary sources, it became clear to me that there were gaps in historical documentation regarding women's contributions to the Irish nationalist movement. More significantly, I learned that those gaps were due to the deliberate distortion of history by earlier historians who considered nationalism an exclusively-masculine construct. Recognizing this fact of historical omission is crucial to honoring the legacies of the women my essay discusses. Such omissions, however, not only apply to Irish history but to histories across the world. If we cannot be certain of the memory of the past, we must work to recover that history ourselves.

- Tiffany Chang