

CARANTES NEWSLETTER

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Dear Friends,

We hope this new edition of our newsletter finds you all well, resisting oppression wherever you are and retaining the ability to find joy and sustain yourselves through the coming Spring, as the depredations of a corrupt administration continue to pile up, targeting already marginalized groups. Some of us in the Steering Committee are in America currently, or American citizens, and we know just how scary everything feels right now. That fear leads us to isolation, because that seems the best way to protect one's self, but there is true power in community. In light of that, we would like to encourage you to join the discord, where we will start doing regular check-in calls. Email us for the invitation link!

We are still working on our website, but **submissions for short reviews of pop culture artefacts that have to do with anything Celtic** are welcome. These pieces can be between 400 and 1000 words, and examine Celtic aspects of any kind of media. Email us submissions, proposals for submissions, or any questions you might have.

Before we recommend a reading for this month, we would like to make you aware of several Carantes events happening soon.

Reading group

The reading group will meet on April 25th, 4pm (GMT+0). **Please RSVP by replying to this email with the subject line as “reading group.”**

We will be discussing Patrick R. O'Malley's *The Irish and the Imagination of Race: White Supremacy Across the Atlantic in the Nineteenth Century* (2023).

If you have not been able to acquire this book, we recommend this article titled “Irish Whiteness and the 19th Century Construction of Race” that reproduces the book's main argument. All are welcome at the reading group, whether you've read anything in full, in part or not at all.

Your reading group organizers, Elisabeth & Rhys

<https://www.upress.virginia.edu/title/5964/>

https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/C54C22CEC172CF668A45E90E614B056E/S1060150322000067a.pdf/irish_whiteness_and_the_nineteenthcentury_construction_of_race.pdf

Activism training sessions



De-escalation training

We will be holding a de-escalation training on Friday April 11th at 10:00am Pacific Time (UTC-8). If you are interested, **please RSVP by replying to this email with the subject line as “de-escalation training”**.



Cybersecurity training

Finally, we will also be holding a cybersecurity training in the coming days. This is of particular urgency for those of us in America, as long-documented privacy violations have been accelerating at a break-neck pace. However, this should also concern anyone who regularly interacts with any digital space. The Electronic Frontier Foundation is a good place to start, and this training will walk you through the most important ways to protect yourself from online surveillance. Due to the sensitivity of this topic, we will ask people to **commit to attending by signing up first, and then we will find the right date** among attendees in early April or May. In order to sign up, please **RSVP to this email with the subject line “Cybersecurity training” before March 30th**.

Miscellaneous

Finally, you may have heard that the University of Western Brittany (UBO) in Brest, France, has suspended the masters’ degree “Celtic Languages and Cultures in Contact” for the coming year. In order to communicate to university governing bodies the importance of this degree to the field of Celtic Studies, current students have put together a petition calling for the hiring of essential faculty members.

Several of us in the Steering Committee graduated from this masters program, so it is a matter dear to our hearts, but we would like to stress the objective importance of this deliberately interdisciplinary program, which allows students to become acquainted with several Celtic languages through a comparative approach, as well as different methodologies (history, literature, sociology). It is truly one of a kind, and its suspension should be of concern to anyone who cares about Celtic Studies.

Here is the petition, with our thanks to anyone who signs it.

<https://www.counterpunch.org/2025/03/19/the-meaning-of-privacy/>

<https://www.eff.org/issues/privacy>

[https://www.change.org/p/sauvons-les-%C3%A9tudes-celtiques-de-brest-save-the-celtic-studies-in-brest?](https://www.change.org/p/sauvons-les-%C3%A9tudes-celtiques-de-brest-save-the-celtic-studies-in-brest?recruited_by_id=7431b2e0-0016-11f0-9382-0f6fba646f2b&utm_source=share_petition&utm_campaign=psf_combo_share_initial&utm_medium=copylink)

[recruited_by_id=7431b2e0-0016-11f0-9382-0f6fba646f2b&utm_source=share_petition&utm_campaign=psf_combo_share_initial&utm_medium=copylink](https://www.change.org/p/sauvons-les-%C3%A9tudes-celtiques-de-brest-save-the-celtic-studies-in-brest?recruited_by_id=7431b2e0-0016-11f0-9382-0f6fba646f2b&utm_source=share_petition&utm_campaign=psf_combo_share_initial&utm_medium=copylink)

RECOMMENDED READING

This month we are only recommending one piece, but it's a must-read for anyone in the field!



Rodway, Simon. 'The Mabinogi and the Shadow of Celtic Mythology' in *Studia Celtica* no. 52.

<https://docslib.org/doc/13412946/aberystwyth-university-the-mabinogi-and-the-shadow-of-celtic-mythology>

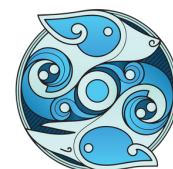
This article combines the historiographical with the autobiographical as Rodway examines the **'cultural frameworks' in which modern translations and adaptations of medieval material exist**, and 'how these frameworks shape the preconceptions of their audience'. In other words, Rodway looks at popular depictions of 'Celtic' material, as well as the roots and consequences of these depictions; he sketches an outline of his own encounters with popular media about the Celts, dissecting these portrayals along the way. One of the key points of comparison that he makes throughout this paper is between the 'Hollywood Indian' and what he coins the 'Home Counties Celt': both are amalgamated, **a stereotyped Others invented for a white, middle-class audience** and shown in media, the former alleging to accurately depict Native Americans, the latter to depict any person from prehistory to the late Middle Ages who would have spoken a Celtic language. Rodway follows the genealogy of the **Home Counties Celt** to the Romantic Celt, invented in the nineteenth century by those with a 'preoccupation with pseudo-scientific racism' who transformed Celtic-speakers into a 'Celtic race' with inherent qualities like resistance to change, appreciation of nature, and love of music. These Romantic writers, of course, got their own notions from Greek and Roman writers, by whom our modern approach to understanding other cultures is still coloured. By giving these numerous examples and explanations, Rodway shows how, even today, **many people view medieval texts from Celtic-speaking peoples not as literature produced in a particular cultural context, but instead as ancient myths from a shared Celtic heritage dating to over a thousand years prior**. This is a more relaxed article, written in an engaging style and offering insight into an established professor and researcher's experience, showing how the pitfalls of Celtic popular media can rope in and mislead anyone.

That is all for us now at the CARANTES steering committee. Please feel free to contact us if you have any reactions, thoughts or concerns, or if you would rather not get any more emails.

Until next time, keep well and safe,
and thanks for doing this work with us.

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