

Introduction: New Perspectives on Brian Moore Sinéad Moynihan

2021 marked the centenary of the birth of the Belfast-born writer Brian Moore. Widely acknowledged as an outstanding novelist of his generation – he was the recipient of the James Tait Black Memorial Prize (1975); the Governor General’s Literary Award (1960, 1975); the Royal Society of Literature Award (1986); the Canadian Authors Association Award for Fiction (1988); and shortlisted three times for the Booker Prize (1976, 1987, 1990) – Moore’s work and career invite re-examination in the context of the emergence of a number of scholarly trends in the two decades since his death. A prolific novelist and screenwriter, Moore was a transnational subject who lived most of his adult life in Canada and the U.S. This special issue arises from a programme of research and public engagement carried out in 2021 and 2022, which was generously funded by a British Academy/Leverhulme Trust Small Research Grant and by a Research Fellowship awarded by the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin (HRC), home to some 35 boxes of Moore’s papers. The co-editors are proud to present “New Perspectives on Brian Moore” in the *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies (CJIS)* which has long demonstrated a scholarly appreciation for and critical interest in Moore’s work. Indeed, Moore’s essay “The Writer as Exile” appeared in *CJIS* in 1976.¹ Notable scholarly articles on Moore’s work by Patrick Hicks and Michael Kenneally were published in *CJIS* and Moore looms large in Spring 2005’s special issue on “Irish-Canadian Connections,” edited by Kevin James and Jason King.² Moreover, the *CJIS* is home to Michael Crowley’s “A Brian Moore Bibliography” which, while not quite complete, remains an invaluable resource to any scholar (including ourselves) studying Moore’s work.³

Born at Clifton Street in Belfast in August 1921, Moore grew up in a large middle-class Catholic family. The fourth of nine children, he was the son of James B. Moore and Eileen McFadden, a doctor and nurse respectively. Moore’s birth coincides with the partition of Ireland, “just at the end of the Irish Civil War, at the time Ulster became a state within a state,” as Moore recounts in “Bloody Ulster: An Irishman’s Lament” (1970). In the same essay, he describes his mother giving birth to him after hearing a burst of gunfire unleashed by British soldiers sent to Belfast to protect Catholic residents from their Protestant neighbours: “My mother, abed, thought a bomb had dropped. She dropped

me.”⁴ (This anecdote has, Stephen O’Neill argues in this special issue, “provided a misleading framework for interpretations of Moore’s novels”). Moore’s connections to the nascent Irish Free State are enhanced by his father’s friendship with Eoin MacNeill, a key figure in Irish nationalist politics who had been a member of the Boundary Commission (1924-25) set up to determine the border between the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland. MacNeill was married to James B.’s sister, Taddie. Moore attended St. Malachy’s College but left in 1940, having “failed his Senior Certificate Examination for the second time” due to an inability to pass the maths paper.⁵ Ineligible for admission to Queen’s University Belfast, he joined the Air Raid Precautions, a period of his life thinly fictionalised in *The Emperor of Ice-Cream* (1965). From 1942 to 1947, he travelled extensively, working first for Britain’s Ministry of War Transport and then for the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA).

After migrating to Canada, hoping (vainly) to be reunited with his girlfriend, Margaret Swanson, Moore settled in Montreal in 1948, working initially for the *Montreal Gazette* before embarking on a full-time career as a writer in 1952. Moore married Jacqueline Sirois (née Scully) in February 1951 and the couple had a son, Michael, who was born not long after Moore became a Canadian citizen in November 1953. In 1959, Moore and his family moved to New York with the help of a \$5000 Guggenheim Fellowship. Moore’s marriage to Jackie ended in 1964 and, in October 1967, he married Jean Russell (née Denney). The Moores’ principal home from 1966 on was at 33958 Pacific Coast Highway in Malibu, California, an unusual choice for a writer, as Moore acknowledged in a 1987 essay for *House & Garden*: “Los Angeles has always been *terra non grata* in literary circles and Malibu then, as now, is considered a particularly pejorative address.”⁶ From 1973 to 1990, Moore taught Creative Writing at UCLA. During his writing life, Moore produced a substantial body of work: twenty-six novels in diverse genres (an additional work, *The Revolution Script* [1971], resists easy classification), numerous screenplays, short stories, travel writing, reviews and other works of nonfiction.

In what follows, I outline some of the reasons for Moore’s critical neglect and suggest particularly fruitful avenues for exploration, some of which are explicitly addressed in this special issue. At the outset, it must be noted that one of the obstacles facing contemporary scholars is the difficulty of sourcing some of Moore’s works. At time of writing, ten of Moore’s novels are out of print. This is in spite of the recent efforts of

Turnpike Books, based in Belfast, which published the first and only collection of Moore's short stories, *The Dear Departed* in 2020 and has recently reissued *The Feast of Lupercal* (1957), *The Emperor of Ice-Cream* (1965), *The Revolution Script* (all in 2021) and *Cold Heaven* (1983) in 2022.⁷ While many of Moore's novels – including those currently out of print – are readily available second hand, the seven “pulp” novels Moore published between 1951 and 1957, five of them under the pseudonyms Michael Bryan and Bernard Mara, are almost impossible to get hold of and have become collector's items. Moore's first “pulp” novel, *Wreath for a Redhead* (1951), is commanding upwards of CAD1000 on Bookfinder.com. Of course, the unavailability of the pulp novels is the result of Moore's desire to suppress these works, a move endorsed by some of his early critics.⁸ A second challenge is how to capitalise on the potential of archival materials to shed light on Moore's work given how geographically dispersed these materials are. Much of the research and writing of this special issue was undertaken under pandemic conditions, during which international travel was severely restricted. The bulk of Moore's papers are held at the University of Calgary (Michele Holmgren briefly surveys their holdings in this special issue) and at the HRC. Janet Friskney, Tim Groenland and Sinéad Moynihan also cite relevant unpublished materials held (elsewhere) at Calgary, the University of Michigan and NUI, Galway.

Moore and the Critical Field

As we might expect of a writer well-regarded during his lifetime, Moore's work has attracted some scholarly attention particularly in two literary biographies by Denis Sampson (1998) and Patricia Craig (2002) and single-author studies by Hallvard Dahlie (1969, 1981); Jeanne Flood (1974); Jo O'Donoghue (1991); Robert J. Sullivan (1996); Liam Gearon (2002); and Patrick Hicks (2007).⁹ However, Moore has faded somewhat from scholarly view. Writing in 2002, Gearon asserts three possible reasons for Moore's critical neglect, chief among them that his work “never achieved any permanent primacy within any national literary canon.”¹⁰ In an Irish Studies context, the lack of scholarly attention paid to Moore may be attributed to a number of factors, the first of which is generational. Moore falls between a generation of prominent Irish writers born between 1895 and 1920 (Kate O'Brien, Elizabeth Bowen, Seán O'Faoláin, Samuel Beckett, Frank O'Connor, Flann O'Brien) and those born after 1930, whose groundbreaking first works were published or staged in the 1960s and who are often grouped together for their trenchant critiques of Irish society:

Edna O'Brien (b. 1930), John McGahern (1934-2006) and Tom Murphy (1935-2018). Moore is rarely discussed in relation to these younger writers, though Clair Wills's *The Best are Leaving* is one notable exception to this rule.¹¹ In a Northern Irish context, Moore's early novels set in Belfast (*Judith Hearne* [1955], *The Feast of Lupercal* and *The Emperor of Ice-Cream*) predate the "Troubles," though they are vocal on the knee-jerk sectarianism that would later lead to decades of violence and civil unrest. As such, these works are difficult to place in histories of Northern Irish literature that take the Troubles as an originary historical marker. While the Troubles provide an important backdrop to *The Doctor's Wife* (1976) and *The Temptation of Eileen Hughes* (1981) and are front and centre in *Lies of Silence* (1990), Moore's work does not feature prominently in studies of literary representations of the Troubles by Joe Cleary, Aaron Kelly, Elmer Kennedy-Andrews and others.¹² Moreover, in the 1960s, the "Belfast Group" of poets emerged from Queen's University Belfast, among them Michael Longley and Seamus Heaney. From then on, Northern Ireland has been associated with an exceptionally prolific and energetic poetry scene to which fiction – Moore's preferred mode of writing – has been regarded as something of a "poor relation."¹³ Indeed, Norman Vance explains that, from the outset in 1921, fiction was devalued in Northern Ireland: for many years, the Linen Hall Library in Belfast refused "to purchase anything as frivolous as novels and [. . .] fiction, along with the theatre, was distrusted by conservative churchmen as altogether too worldly and profane for the godly."¹⁴ Neither of Michael Parker's two volumes on *Northern Irish Literature* (Volume 1: 1956-1975; Volume 2: 1975-2006) mentions Moore though he published three Belfast-set novels – and several others in which Northern Ireland is an significant locale – during these four decades.¹⁵

In Canadian Studies, too, Moore emerges as a somewhat anomalous figure. He lived in Canada from 1948 to 1959, and became a Canadian citizen in 1953, but he set very little fiction there (though three of seven pulp thrillers are set in Montreal). It is perhaps for this reason that Canadian literature specialists who discuss Moore invariably focus on his most "Canadian" novel, *The Luck of Ginger Coffey* (1960), which follows the misadventures of a recently migrated Irishman to Montreal. One of most compelling recent explorations of this novel places it in conversation with comic novels by Moore's friends and fellow anglophone Montrealers, Mordecai Richler (*The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* [1959]) and William Weintraub (*Why Rock the Boat?* [1961]). In *Equivocal City*, Patrick Coleman argues that in each of the three novels, "the (male) hero's ambitions are frustrated as much by the comic

naivety of his outlook as by [Montreal] society's culpable resistance to renewal."¹⁶ While Moore won numerous Canadian literary prizes, contributed to Canadian periodicals including *Tamarack Review*, was anthologised in Canadian story collections and wrote about Canada for nonfiction publications such as Life's "World Library" series and the (U.S.) travel magazines *Holiday* and *Travel & Leisure*, his foothold in the canon of Canadian literature appears to be increasingly insecure. *The Luck of Ginger Coffey* is mentioned in Eva-Marie Kröller's prefatory chronology in the 2017 edition of *The Cambridge Companion to Canadian Literature*.¹⁷ In David Staines's *A History of Canadian Fiction* (2021), however, he is not even indexed – despite the fact that the book contains a chapter on "Naturalized Canadian Writers" and that Staines oversaw the re-issuing of two Moore novels in 1988, when he was General Editor of McClelland and Stewart's (M&S) "New Canadian Library."¹⁸ (Janet Friskney outlines in this special issue how Moore's different national affiliations presented difficulties for the publishers of this reprint series that was launched in 1958). Indeed, Moore was profoundly aware of his own anomalous status within a Canadian literary canon. In 1984, he wrote to Jack McClelland about his forthcoming novel *Black Robe* (1985), noting that it is "probably my 'strongest' book in years and I mean not only in its language, but in its potential for sales, especially in Canada. If this doesn't make me a Canadian writer I may as well give up!"¹⁹ One further way of accounting for Moore's invisibility in Canadian Studies is the paucity of scholarship on his cinematic collaborations (of which more below). During his long career, Moore worked with a number of prominent Canadian filmmakers including Jake Eberts, Denis Héroux, Doug Jackson, John Kemeny, Ted Kotcheff, Francis Mankiewicz and Dan Petrie.²⁰ Héroux, the celebrated film director and producer from Montreal, worked with Moore on the Simone de Beauvoir adaptation *The Blood of Others* (dir. Claude Chabrol, 1984), *Control* (dir. Giuliano Montaldo, 1987) and *Black Robe* (dir. Bruce Beresford, 1991), for all of which Moore wrote the screenplays. Further exploration of Moore's screen work would no doubt help to situate him more emphatically as part of a vibrant group of Canadian film practitioners.

If Moore is difficult to place within nation-based literary histories, the second reason Gearon offers for Moore's critical neglect is that his work "often consciously straddles that curiously ill-defined border between popular and literary fiction."²¹ Moore regarded the seven pulp thrillers he published between 1951 and 1957 as trivial and, according to Weintraub, "vainly hoped that no one would unearth these ephemeral works and decipher

the pseudonyms.”²² However, his “literary” fiction also presents difficulties in terms of classification. He wrote novels and short fiction in heterogeneous genres (historical fiction; thriller; romance; gothic) and styles (naturalism; magic realism). The historical and geographical locations of his work are also diverse: two of his novels (*Catholics* [1972] and *No Other Life* [1993]) are set in an imagined future. Moore was conscious of the negative impact such a heterogeneous output might have on his readership. When *The Great Victorian Collection* (1975) was published, Moore noted in his diary that his friend and fellow writer, Bruce Cook, had read the book and would review it: “he liked it (I thought with reservations) said ‘old audience will have to readjust.’”²³ In December 1978, Moore recorded in his diary the views of his long-time U.S. editor, Aaron Asher, upon reading *The Mangan Inheritance* (1979): “reviewers unpredictable as with last book [*The Doctor’s Wife*] may think of it as ‘popular’ while I’m a serious writer. Very.”²⁴ As late as 1995, Moore was asserting a distinction between the “popular” and the “serious.” In a letter about *The Statement* (1995) to Liz Calder, his editor at Bloomsbury, Moore objected to the proposed front flap copy, specifically “‘brings profound literary intelligence [sic] to the art of suspense writing.’ I said and Billy Abrahams also commented on this, that it links me to people like Le Carre. Je suis foutremont [sic] snob on this point.”²⁵ The copy was duly changed to “combines profound literary intelligence with the most compelling story-telling.”

Related to his disavowal of some early novels and short stories was Moore’s investment in literary prizes and his keen awareness of the prestige winning such prizes – particularly the Booker Prize – would confer on him. When *The Colour of Blood* was shortlisted for the Booker Prize in 1987, Moore noted in his diary bookmakers’ odds on him winning. At one point, he was 7/4 favourite. When Penelope Lively won for *Moon Tiger* instead, he wrote in his diary on 30 October that “Tom M[aschler] & Polly [Samson] called. Said I was winner until one judge (P.D. James?) turned the tide in last 20 minutes.” (On 10 December, he received a letter from Alan Massie, one of the Booker judges, explaining how the decision in Lively’s favour was reached).²⁶ When *Lies of Silence* lost out to A.S. Byatt’s *Possession* in 1990, he wrote to Calder: “I hope [Arrow] get their advance back. They certainly would have (and in spades) had we won the Booker. *Possession*’s fate here (and there!) seems to prove that the Booker is bankable no matter the book.”²⁷

If what Robert Sullivan calls Moore’s “protean fictive production” makes his work difficult to classify, Moore also does not fit easily into the pantheon of writers associated

with postmodernism (John Barth, Thomas Pynchon, Robert Coover, Don DeLillo, Umberto Eco, Jorge Luis Borges and others), a fact that may account, to an extent, for the lack of attention paid to Moore's work in scholarship on post-1945 literature, where – at least in chronological terms – is exactly where Moore sits.²⁸ In reviews of works by John Fowles and Robertson Davies, Moore expressed bewilderment at (and sometimes even scorn for) deconstructionist and metafictional tendencies in the contemporary novel. In a review tellingly titled "Too Much Hocus in the Pocus," Moore finds that Fowles's *The Magus* (1965) begins as "one kind of novel" – realist, character driven – but descends into a novel of "masques," a "world of vulgar trickery."²⁹ In what is perhaps a conscious echo of Henry James's 1908 Preface to *The Portrait of a Lady*, Moore wrote in a review of Davies's *The Manticore* (1972): "The Novel House is empty. Its tenants have wandered about witlessly into Barthian byways, through Borgesian mazes, to squat disconsolate at Beckett's crossroads, waiting for some faceless God. Send for the wreckers. Tear the old mansion down." *The Manticore*, by contrast, attracts Moore's praise because it "brooks no Barthesian transpositions."³⁰ Deploying an omniscient narrator and strategies familiar from the Victorian novel, Davies is a trusty "custodian" of the "Old Novel house." While Moore himself deployed postmodern tropes – most notably in "Preliminary Pages for a Work of Revenge" (1961), *Fergus* (1970) and *The Great Victorian Collection* – his novels did not consistently feature the metafictional devices so beloved of many of his contemporaries.

In subtler ways, though, Moore's work *is* engaged with the postmodern turn. Several novels are concerned with the heightened role played by television in post-war life. (David Foster Wallace famously argued that the critical edge of postmodernism was fatally blunted once its most effective tools, particularly irony, were co-opted by television).³¹ In *An Answer from Limbo* (1962), Eileen Tierney, having migrated from Belfast to New York to take care of her grandchildren, finds that the television set is her one companion. Staying alone at a cousin's apartment, Eileen suffers a fall and, in her semi-conscious state, the background noise from the television provides the only means of registering the passage of time: the morning weatherman, an afternoon gameshow, the evening news, the television's "bluish-grey light" and silence in the middle of the night.³² In her dazed condition, Eileen imagines herself "lying here and the people on the telly looking at me, talking away, smiling at me, the telly is like the world, people looking at you but not seeing you."³³ It is not difficult to draw a connection between these musings on television in *An Answer from Limbo* and the

more overtly postmodern conflation of television, surveillance and the hyperreal in *The Great Victorian Collection*. In a disturbing recurring dream, Anthony Moloney imagines that the huge collection of Victoriana that suddenly appeared in the parking lot of his California motel is under surveillance by a television screen that resembles “one of those surveillance monitors one sees in supermarkets.” Where, in a previous dream, the Collection appeared to him “in all its wonderment of shades and colors,” it is now mediated through “the fuzzy blue-gray hues of black-and-white television.”³⁴

Finally, it should be acknowledged that Moore’s visibility has faded perhaps in part because some of his works feature outdated language and problematic attitudes in relation to race and sexuality. In a forthcoming book, Gillian Roberts considers the novel and film versions of *Black Robe* in relation to the thorny issue of cultural appropriation. While Moore’s novel “attempts to offer an opposition between Indigenous and European settler-colonial worldviews,” Roberts finds that it “never fundamentally destabilises Western epistemology,” not least because of its reliance on the seventeenth-century *Jesuit Relations* as a source text.³⁵ In 1985, Moore received a letter from Catherine Verrall of the Canadian Alliance in Solidarity with the Native Peoples (CASNP), who wrote that “[e]lements in your book” would contribute to the ongoing pain and humiliation experienced by Native peoples as a consequence of “White non-understanding.”³⁶ Meanwhile, *The Emperor of Ice-Cream’s* references to “pansies,” “fruits” and “effeminate twerps” would no doubt cause offense to some today, even if they are used in the context of artists and intellectuals dissenting from the social norms from which Gavin, too, wishes to escape.³⁷ On the other hand, other Moore works feel remarkably fresh today, particularly his insights into sectarian attitudes in Northern Ireland.

“New Perspectives on Brian Moore” and Beyond

If the heterogeneity of Moore’s fictional oeuvre, his complex national affiliations and his own pronouncements on literary value and trends have arguably contributed to his critical neglect, Moore was far from an iconoclastic figure, as this special issue demonstrates. “New Perspectives on Brian Moore” reads Moore’s work in relation to that of his peers and successors in Ireland, Canada, the U.S. and beyond as well as a wide range of literary and publishing contexts. The wider context for Stephen O’Neill’s essay is “a communal fatalism shared by Catholics from the six counties” after the partition of the island of Ireland.

Drawing on the two early Belfast novels, *Judith Hearne* and *The Feast of Lupercal*, O'Neill argues that "Moore's work evinces a reflexive fatalism common to northern Catholic culture after partition, a fatalism that is both complicated, but by no means neutralised, by his upper middle-class upbringing." Alison Garden considers Moore's autobiographical *The Emperor of Ice-Cream* (the third of his Belfast novels) alongside Lucy Caldwell's *These Days* (2022), both of which dramatise the Belfast Blitz of April and May 1941. Arguing that the Bildungsroman form of these novels suggests that World War II constituted a change and a "coming of age" of sorts for the Northern Irish statelet, Garden highlights how the novels "galvanise an intertextual language of change in their novels" which, "for Moore is violent but for Caldwell, [. . .] is figured as a generative process of restitution."

Sinéad Moynihan turns away from Moore's fiction to consider the substantive and heterogeneous body of travel writing that appeared in magazines such as *Holiday* and *Travel & Leisure*. She explores the ways in which "Moore fashions a 'travel writing' self that is just as fictitious as any of the characters in his novels, enabling him to simultaneously meet the expectations of his U.S. editors and readers and satisfy his own urge to inform, educate and subtly critique some of the clichés of travel writing about Ireland." In another sense, Brian Busby is also preoccupied with Moore's literary travels. He examines Moore's seven "pulp" novels, tracing "a fascinating history of the origins of Moore's paperback-writing career at Harlequin Books in Canada and his subsequent migration to larger publishing houses" in the U.S. (Fawcett and Dell), a move reflected in a shift away from Canadian protagonists in the works that succeeded *Wreath for a Redhead* (1951) and *The Executioners* (1951). Busby contextualises Harlequin as part of a thriving group of Canadian pulp publishers that capitalised on the associations of post-war Montreal with the seedier aspects of life to market its thrillers to a readership titillated by tales of graft, gambling, prostitution and violent crime.

In addition, we are delighted to present a roundtable that, broadly, takes "book history" approaches to Moore's work. Traditionally, book history has been the preserve of literary biographers and, indeed, Craig's biography provides details of Moore's relationship with editors such as Diana Athill (Andre Deutsch), Jack McClelland (M&S), Aaron Asher (Viking; Holt, Rinehart; Farrar, Straus and Giroux) and Billy Abrahams (Holt, Rinehart; E.P. Dutton). The Brian Moore Papers at the HRC contain voluminous correspondence with various editors in Britain, Canada and the U.S., including Tom Maschler (Jonathan Cape),

Tom Rosenthal (Secker and Warburg; later Deutsch), Liz Calder (Cape; later Bloomsbury), Nan Talese (Doubleday), Linda McKnight and Doug Gibson (both M&S). The roundtable brings together perspectives from Canada, the U.S. and Ireland to consider the opportunities and limitations of the wider world of publishing (including censorship) in which Moore participated, the diverse publishing venues in which his work appeared and the markers of prestige his contributions to the literary marketplace conferred. In Moynihan's discussion of the Belfast "little magazine" *Threshold* (1957-87), she notes that the fact that Moore himself published in its pages – "A Vocation" (1958 and 1967, fiction) and "Now and Then" (1970, nonfiction) – suggests that his representations of Belfast as culturally stagnant in works such as *The Feast of Lupercal* were rhetorical rather than earnest.³⁸ Aoife Bhreatnach analyses Moore's autobiographical statements on reading and writing to situate his experiences within wider "mechanisms of social control," including official forms of censorship and informal censure in his Catholic schools and at home. Janet Friskney focuses on Moore's Canadian publishers, noting that his multiple national affiliations "created challenges around unequivocally identifying Moore as a Canadian writer, particularly given that only certain of his works contained a Canadian setting or character." Tim Groenland uncovers the pre-history of *Catholics* and how it eventually came to be published in the *New American Review* in 1972. For Groenland, *Catholics* "might be viewed paradoxically as a product of [Moore's] 'Americanization' even as its narrative focus centres on the confined space of a remote Irish monastery."

While we offer these essays as "New Perspectives on Brian Moore," we acknowledge that this special issue is far from exhaustive. The final section maps out some directions for future research.

Short Fiction

In January 1986, Tom Rosenthal at Andre Deutsch wrote to Moore about a rumour he had heard that the author was "currently hawking around London a collection of short stories." Rosenthal expressed surprise that

if you have completed a volume of short stories that the other Tom [Maschler, at Jonathan Cape] has not already grabbed it. So this is simply a form of insurance to prevent my waking up one day and seeing such a volume announced by the XYZ

Press, that if you are not getting from the other Tom for such a book assuming it to exist in the first place (!) what you need then old Barkis here is more than willing...³⁹

No collection of his short fiction was published in Moore's lifetime. This is perhaps partly due, again, to his disavowal of early "hack work." Crowley's bibliography records that Moore published fourteen stories in Montreal's *Weekend Picture Magazine* between 1951 and 1954. Moore also placed early fiction in *American Magazine*, *London Mystery Magazine*, *Bluebook*, *Lilliput* (London), *Everybody's Weekly* (London), *The Montrealer* and *Mayfair*, though I am yet to identify the stories that appeared in the last four magazines.⁴⁰ However, when Andre Deutsch approached Moore in 1960 about the possibility of putting out a collection of short stories in 1961, the list Moore scribbled in his diary to pass on to his agent, Willis Kingsley Wing, was comprised only of: "Uncle T" (1960), "Grieve For the Dear Departed" (1959), "Lion of the Afternoon" (1958), "Sassenach" (1951), "Off the Track" (1961), "Next Thing was Kansas City" (1959) and "A Vocation" (1956).⁴¹ He evidently did not consider any of the other stories worthy of inclusion in a possible collection.

Moore was not a prolific short story writer, his entire published output amounting to perhaps thirty stories in total. Still, there are good reasons why we should pay attention to his short stories. First, they are often works-in-progress for the longer fictions. As Sampson demonstrates, "Grieve for the Dear Departed" was the eventual outcome of drafts for an unrealised novel Moore attempted in the mid-to-late 1950s that alternately focused on Michael Russell, a returned emigrant to Belfast, and the Kellehers, an Irish Canadian family in Montreal.⁴² *An Answer from Limbo* features material produced almost verbatim from "Preliminary Pages for a Work of Revenge."⁴³ "The Sight," a ghost story originally titled "Epimenides and Others" that failed to find a publisher in the early 1960s, was reworked in 1976 for a collection edited by Joseph Hone. An entry in Moore's diary on 29 June 1976 indicates that his nascent ideas for the Gothic-infused *The Mangan Inheritance* were intermingled with "The Sight": "Read over The Sight = + beginning story of man left by famous wife."⁴⁴ Second, some of the early stories provide ample evidence of Moore's extensive engagement with the Cold War (more on this below). Third, Moore's relatively small output of short stories must be seen in the context of his subsequent success as a screenwriter. The diaries at the HRC provide details of the fairly modest financial rewards that might be reaped from publishing short fiction in periodicals in the 1950s. In 1958, "Grieve for the Dear Departed" and "Next Thing Was Kansas City" fetched \$600 and \$500

respectively when they were sold to the *Atlantic*.⁴⁵ In 1960, “Uncle T” was shopped to the *New Yorker*, *Playboy*, *Harper’s* and *Mademoiselle* before eventually being bought by *Gentleman’s Quarterly* for \$300.⁴⁶ By the mid-1960s, Moore no longer needed to focus his energies on the fiction market: in 1965, he worked with Alfred Hitchcock on the screenplay for *Torn Curtain* (1966) and, from that point on, he received numerous approaches to adapt fiction for the screen. What Moore could earn from film work far exceeded his income from either magazine work or novel-writing. On 2 March 1966, Moore wrote in his diary about the terms reached with Hollywood producer Bert Leonard regarding the screenplay for an adaptation of Isaac Bashevis Singer’s *The Slave* (1962): not less than \$50,000 in total for the screenplay.⁴⁷

Moore’s Cold War

Moore’s writing career, from the 1940s to the 1990s, coincides almost exactly with the prolonged global conflict to which Ireland, by virtue of its comparative lack of strategic importance and geopolitical power, has largely been considered peripheral. From the outset, Moore’s work – in both journalism and fiction – is underwritten by a substantial and profound engagement with Cold War politics, anxieties and tropes. In 1947, he published a series of articles in the (Irish) *Sunday Independent* which recounted the rapid and effective suppression of anti-Communist opposition to the Soviet-backed regime in Poland, whether this was the electoral fraud that led to the departure of Stanisław Mikołajczyk from Poland in April 1947;⁴⁸ or clashes between the government and Catholic clergy over the latter’s perceived attempts to delay or disturb “the process of political consolidation in Poland.”⁴⁹ At the Montreal *Gazette*, Moore’s role as shipping correspondent ensured that Cold War concerns were prominent in several of his articles. As Reg Whitaker and Steve Hewitt note, the waterfront was one of the key early battlegrounds in Canada’s Cold War.⁵⁰ Moore reported, for example, on the Canadian Seamen’s Union (C.S.U.) shipping strike of 1949, which led to London dockers coming out in support of their Canadian brethren.⁵¹ The Communist-led C.S.U. was eventually thwarted by the strongarm tactics of the rival Seafarers International Union (S.I.U.), an anti-Communist outfit.

Moore’s earliest works of fiction, too, feature Cold War plotlines. In “Enemies of the People” (1953), set in Warsaw, a watchmaker who has spent twenty-one years in an insane asylum – and, thus, missed World War II and the Soviet takeover of Poland – is released to

find that the paranoid delusions from which he has suffered for many years are now an invaluable resource in the Communist régime. His obsession with “plotters” and “enemies of the people” finds favour with the People’s Security Police.⁵² In “The Ridiculous Proposal” (1954), a British bookseller under orders from the Kremlin to depart Poland and return home, agrees to marry a young Polish woman who wishes to travel to Britain to be reunited with her sick mother. When her application to leave Poland is rejected on the grounds of her specialist work as a chemist, Harper smuggles her out of the country in disguise and the marriage of convenience becomes a love match.⁵³ Moore’s preoccupation with the Cold War resurfaced perhaps most notably in *Torn Curtain* (dir. Alfred Hitchcock, 1966) and *The Colour of Blood* (1987), which is set in an unnamed Communist country in Eastern Europe and dramatises the dilemma faced by Cardinal Stephen Bem, whose desire to remain above politics renders him *persona non grata* by a radical Catholic group who wish to overthrow Communist rule in the country. The sustained attention Moore paid to the conflict begs the question of what intriguing connections might be drawn between Moore and other writers of the Cold War era in Ireland, Canada, the United States and beyond.

Adapting Brian Moore/Brian Moore Adapting

The first (and most celebrated) of Moore’s collaborations with filmmakers was with Hitchcock on *Torn Curtain*, an unhappy experience in that, after Moore completed work on the screenplay, two additional writers were employed to “tidy up [. . .] infelicities in his script.”⁵⁴ A legal battle ensued, which Moore won, to ensure he was given sole screen credit for the script. Some scholarly work exists on Moore’s adaptations of his own work and that of others; as well as others’ adaptations of Moore’s work. Reid Echols explores Brian Friel’s unfilmed screenplay of *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne* (1972), situating the changes Friel made to the novel “alongside both the charged politics of the 1970s and the political investments of [Friel’s] theatrical work.”⁵⁵ As noted above, Gillian Roberts examines the novel and film versions of *Black Robe* and finds that the film “attempts even less structural counterpoint between Indigenous and European perspective” when compared with the novel. Neil Sinyard has considered the adaptations of *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne* (dir. Jack Clayton, 1987) and *Cold Heaven* (dir. Nicolas Roeg, 1991) in the context of those directors’ oeuvre more broadly.⁵⁶ However, there is more work to be done. The HRC papers demonstrate the extent of Moore’s collaborations with a range of directors and producers,

including Irvin Kershner, Sidney Glazier, Herbert Leonard, Michael Ludmer, Blossom Kahn, Michael Apted and the Canadian filmmakers listed above.

Like his pronouncements on the pulp fiction he considered “hack work,” Moore tended to attribute his work on screenplays to financial necessity rather than creative ambidexterity. In a 1993 interview, Martin Doyle reported that “Moore has had to write screenplays to supplement his income.” He quotes Moore: “Screenplays are not fun to write. People who say that my writing is cinematic have never written a screenplay, for a screenplay is boring to write, shifting angles, points of view, etcetera. You can’t get your own writing into it.”⁵⁷ It is difficult to reconcile such comments with the frenetic film-related activity recorded in Moore’s diaries. If Moore found the process so creatively impoverished, why did he entertain (and, indeed, accept) so many offers to write screenplays? During one particularly busy period in 1985, Moore was taking meetings with Gene Hackman about an adaptation of John Wainwright’s *Brainwash* (1979) to be set in Hong Kong; with Jane Fonda about a project to star herself and her brother, Peter, titled *Old Money*; and with Pat O’Connor about a film based on the life of the Belfast-born footballer George Best. At the same time, he was writing a screenplay based on his own novel, *Black Robe* and beginning work on his “Cardinal” novel, which became *The Colour of Blood*.⁵⁸ Such activity raises interesting questions about the creative process: not only about how the writing of screenplays might have impacted on Moore’s approach to composing narrative fiction; but also how the fiction Moore read (for possible adaptation) might have influenced Moore’s later novels. In the 1980s, Moore read Alan Furst’s espionage novel *Shadow Trade* (1983); Wainwright’s *Brainwash* (a police procedural); Rosie Thomas’s terrorism/romance novel *Strangers* (1986); and Michael Powell’s *A Waiting Game* (1976), a suspense novel about the 1952 murder of three Americans in Ireland, the motivation for which stretches back to the Easter Rising of 1916. Three of Moore’s later novels – *The Colour of Blood*, *Lies of Silence* (1990) and *The Statement* (1995) – are notably (re)invested in the conventions of the thriller and suspense novel and/or preoccupied with the threat of terrorism.

Brian Moore and the Irish Atlantic

In recent years, Irish Studies has been invigorated by approaches which might be broadly terms “Irish Atlanticist” or “Irish Transatlanticist” in orientation. Indeed, the co-editors of this special issue were themselves attracted to Moore’s work because of their shared

interests in Irish Atlantic literatures. As Christopher Cusack noted in a 2011 review essay, despite the fact that Ireland, “an island in the Atlantic ocean, has been a conspicuous presence in the Atlantic world in various ways,” it constitutes a “lacuna” in the field of Atlantic Studies.⁵⁹ Since then, landmark publications (in addition to Cusack’s own review essay) have emerged, including a special issue of *Atlantic Studies* 11.4 (2014), edited by Margu rite Corporaal and Jason King; and a special issue of *Symbiosis* 19.2 (2015), edited by Alison Garden and Muireann Crowley. Of particular interest to scholars is the way in which discourses of Irishness and whiteness have played out in a transatlantic context.⁶⁰ Vibrant as this emerging research is, very little of it has focused on connections between Ireland and Canada. As Ellen McWilliams observes, until recently and compared to the history of the Irish in the United States, “the history of the Irish in Canada and related literature was one marked by relative invisibility,” a situation that McWilliams’s book – which reads works by Mary McCarthy, Maeve Brennan and Alice McDermott alongside those by Alice Munro, Jane Urquhart and Emma Donoghue – goes a long way towards rectifying.⁶¹

Moore’s oeuvre is, of course, rich in Atlanticist provocations. Some works are concerned with the experiences of Irish migrant subjects in Canada or the U.S. (*The Luck of Ginger Coffey*; *An Answer from Limbo*; *Fergus*) while others foreground those who return to Ireland from North America (*Judith Hearne*; “Grieve for the Dear Departed”; *The Mangan Inheritance*). Others emphasise colonial and neo-imperial encounters between France, North America and the Caribbean. The most notable of these is *Black Robe*, which dramatises colonial confrontations between French Jesuit missionary priests and First Nations peoples in seventeenth-century New France. But Moore also had a longstanding interest in Haiti. Embedded in “Off the Track” (1961) is a critique of the cultural chauvinism of “off-the-beaten-path” tourism, which was becoming a trend in the early 1960s.⁶² The story reveals the ignorance and smugness of a white Canadian couple, whose French lessons and self-schooling in Haitian history before their departure on holiday leaves them woefully ill-equipped to prevent a violent incident provoked by their presence in a remote Haitian village. France, too, is an important setting Moore’s work. Joe Cleary has recently examined works by Aidan Higgins and Deirdre Madden that use “the device of an Irish-American relationship conducted in a European milieu [that] serves as a vehicle through which to explore Ireland’s positioning at the crossroads of American and European late modernity.”⁶³ It would be interesting to test Cleary’s claim in relation to *The Doctor’s Wife*, in which an

unfulfilled Belfast housewife, Sheila Redden, travels to Villefranche and begins an affair with Tom Lowry, a 26-year-old American who has just completed a Ph.D. in Anglo-Irish Literature at Trinity College Dublin.

Conclusion

In a special issue devoted to revisiting Moore's work, perhaps it is appropriate to end by noting Moore's influence and legacy – beyond his own published works – as a teacher and informal mentor. From 1973 to 1990, Moore taught Creative Writing at UCLA. Two former students who he continued to mentor years after graduation were the writers Scott Bradfield and Jamie Diamond. He also held a Visiting Professorship at the University of Toronto (1982) and undertook visits to the University of Arkansas in 1968 and 1979. During the first of trip to Arkansas, he encountered the budding writer Barry Hannah (1941-2010) and provided feedback on his work. In 1986, the Scottish-born writer Margot Livesey (b. 1953) wrote to Moore, letting him know that a story called "Secret Places" was "about to see the light of day." When Moore was writer in residence at Toronto in 1982, he "helped [her] once a week to revise" the story. "[I]t seems an appropriate time," she wrote, "to thank you for all your help and encouragement."⁶⁴ Moore was a "chameleon novelist," as Sampson describes him in the subtitle to his biography. As a journalist, as a writer working in diverse forms (novel; short story; screenplays; travel writing) and as a teacher, Moore's capacity for transformation and creative reinvention extended far beyond the novel. We hope that this special issue might play a part in reviving scholarly interest in his extensive contributions to post-1945 literature and culture.

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- ¹ Brian Moore, "The Writer as Exile," *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* 2.2 (1976): 5-17.
- ² See Patrick Hicks, "History and Masculinity in Brian Moore's *The Emperor of Ice-Cream*," *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* 25.1-2 (1999): 400-413 and Michael Kenneally, "Brian Moore's *The Luck of Ginger Coffey*: Transforming Irish Emigrant Identity in Montreal," *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* 35.2 (2009): 67-72.
- ³ Michael Crowley, "A Brian Moore Bibliography," *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* 23.2 (1997): 89-121.
- ⁴ Brian Moore, "Bloody Ulster: An Irishman's Lament," *Atlantic Monthly* 226.3 (1970): 58-62. (62)
- ⁵ Patricia Craig, *Brian Moore: A Biography* (2002; London: Bloomsbury, 2004) 58.
- ⁶ Brian Moore, "Sea-Struck Living," *House & Garden* Sept. 1987: 80. (78-81).
- ⁷ *The Dear Departed* reprints the following stories: "A Vocation," "Grieve for the Dear Departed," "Uncle T," "Lion of the Afternoon," "Fly Away Finger, Fly Away Thumb," "Off the Track," "Hearts and Flowers" and "Preliminary Pages of a Work of Revenge."
- ⁸ For Hallvard Dahlie, writing in 1969, Moore's pulp stories for *Weekend Picture Magazine* are "mercifully out of print, and serve mainly to illustrate how clearly Moore has kept his hack work and his serious writing separate." Hallvard Dahlie, *Brian Moore* (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1969) 7.
- ⁹ Denis Sampson, *Brian Moore: The Chameleon Novelist* (Toronto: Doubleday, 1998); Dahlie's second book on Moore was *Brian Moore* (Boston: Twayne, 1981); Jeanne Flood, *Brian Moore* (Lewisburg: Bucknell UP, 1974); Jo O'Donoghue, *Brian Moore: A Critical Study* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 1991); Robert Sullivan, *A Matter of Faith: The Fiction of Brian Moore* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1996); Liam Gearon, *Landscapes of Encounter: The Portrayal of Catholicism in the Novels of Brian Moore* (Calgary: U of Calgary P, 2002); Patrick Hicks, *Brian Moore and the Meaning of the Past: An Irish Novelist Re-imagines History* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 2007).
- ¹⁰ Gearon ix.
- ¹¹ Wills places *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne* and *The Feast of Lupercal* (albeit very briefly) in the wider context of Irish realism of the 1950s and 1960s, including works by O'Brien, McGahern and Maurice Leitch. See Clair Wills, *The Best Are Leaving: Emigration and Post-War Irish Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2015) 105-108.
- ¹² Joe Cleary, *Literature, Partition and the Nation State: Culture and Conflict in Ireland, Israel and Palestine* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002); Elmer Kennedy-Andrews, *Fiction and the Northern Ireland Troubles Since 1969: (De)Constructing the North* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2003); Aaron Kelly, *The Thriller in Northern Ireland Since 1969: Utterly Resigned Terror* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016).
- ¹³ This perception is changing and Northern Irish fiction enjoys a higher profile and greater prestige thanks, in part, to the award of the Booker Prize to Anna Burns's *Milkman* (2018).
- ¹⁴ Norman Vance, "'Proud of Our Wee Ulster': Writing Region and Identity in Ulster Fiction," *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Irish Fiction*, ed. Liam Harte (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2020) 273. (269-85)
- ¹⁵ Michael Parker, *Northern Irish Literature, 1956-1975*, Vol. 1 and *Northern Irish Literature, 1975-2006*, Vol. 2 (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007).

¹⁶ Patrick Coleman, *Equivocal City: French and English Novels of Postwar Montreal* (Montreal: McGill-Queens UP, 2018) 190.

¹⁷ Eva-Marie Kröller, "Chronology," *The Cambridge Companion to Canadian Literature*, ed. Eva-Marie Kröller (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2017) xviii-xli.

¹⁸ David Staines, *A History of Canadian Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2021).

¹⁹ Letter from Brian Moore to Jack McClelland, 22 Oct. 1984, Brian Moore Papers, UT-Austin, Box 22, Folder 1.

²⁰ Francis Mankiewicz directed Moore's 25-minute adaptation of his own short story, "The Sight" (1977), as part of a "Canadian Literature" anthology series that aired on Canadian television in 1985. The series was produced by Atlantis Films and the National Film Board of Canada. In the same series, Moore's "Uncle T" (1960) was adapted by Gerald Wexler and directed by Doug Jackson. Bill Weintraub, a close friend of Moore's from his Montreal days, was a producer on the series.

²¹ Gearon ix. The third reason Gearon offers is the "arguably unfashionable theme which permeates Moore's fiction: that of religion, specifically Roman Catholicism" (ix). This preoccupation is the subject of Gearon's book.

²² William Weintraub, *Getting Started: A Memoir of the 1950s* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2001) 34.

²³ Brian Moore, Diary Entry, 22 May 1975, Brian Moore Papers, Box 29, Folder 4, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin.

²⁴ Brian Moore, Diary Entry, 4 Dec. 1978, Brian Moore Papers, Box 30, Folder 2, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin.

²⁵ Fax from Brian Moore to Liz Calder, [n.d., 1995], Brian Moore Papers, UT-Austin, Box 10, Folder 2.

²⁶ Letter from Alan Massie to Brian Moore, 10 Dec. 1987, Brian Moore Papers, UT-Austin, Box 23, Folder 1.

²⁷ Fax from Brian Moore to Liz Calder, 20 Mar. 1990. Brian Moore Papers, UT-Austin, Box 24, Folder 5.

²⁸ Sullivan xiii.

²⁹ Brian Moore, "Too Much Hocus in the Pocus," *New York Herald-Tribune Book Week* 9 Jan. 1966: 4, 12.

³⁰ Brian Moore, "There's Life in the Old Novel House," *Washington Post* 26 Nov. 1972: BW8.

³¹ David Foster Wallace, "E Unibus Pluram: Television and U.S. Fiction," *A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again* (London: Abacus, 1998) 21-82.

³² Brian Moore, *An Answer from Limbo* (1962; London: Flamingo, 1994) 246.

³³ Moore, *An Answer* 255.

³⁴ Brian Moore, *The Great Victorian Collection* (1975; London: Palladin, 1988) 120.

³⁵ Gillian Roberts, *Race, Nation and Cultural Power in Film Adaptation* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2023) forthcoming.

³⁶ Letter from Catherine Verrall to Brian Moore, 25 Jun. 1985, Brian Moore Papers, UT-Austin, Box 22, Folder 2.

³⁷ Brian Moore, *The Emperor of Ice-Cream* (1965; London: Paladin, 1988) 100.

³⁸ Brian Moore, "A Vocation," *Threshold* 2.2 (1958): 21-25; Brian Moore, "Now and Then," *Threshold* 23 (1970): 29-37.

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⁴⁰ See Sampson 75. Stories Moore published that do not appear in Crowley's bibliography include: "The Specialist," *Bluebook* 96.5 (Mar. 1953): 82-83; "Enemies of the People," *Bluebook* 97.1 (May 1953): 13-17; "Fly Away Finger, Fly Away Thumb," *London Mystery Magazine* 17 (1953): 7-13 (listed as having appeared first in 1995); and "The Ridiculous Proposal," *Bluebook* 98.3 (Jan. 1954): 50-54.

⁴¹ Brian Moore, Diary entry, 28 Jan. 1960, Brian Moore Papers, UT-Austin, Box 26, Folder 4.

⁴² Sampson 116.

⁴³ Compare, for example, "Preliminary Pages for a Work of Revenge" (30-31) and *An Answer from Limbo* (8-10). Brian Moore, "Preliminary Pages for a Work of Revenge," 1961, rpt. *Ploughshares* 2.2 (1974): 28-32.

⁴⁴ Brian Moore, Diary entry, 29 June 1976, HRC, Box 29, Folder 5. See Sinéad Moynihan, *Ireland, Migration and Return Migration: The "Returned Yank" in the Cultural Imagination, 1952 to present* (Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 2019) 179.

⁴⁵ Brian Moore, Diary Entry, 8 Dec. 1958, Brian Moore Papers, UT-Austin, Box 26, Folder 2.

⁴⁶ Brian Moore, Diary Entry, 30 Jul. 1960, Brian Moore Papers, UT-Austin, Box 26, Folder 4.

⁴⁷ Brian Moore, Diary Entry, 2 Mar. 1966, Brian Moore Papers, UT-Austin, Box 27, Folder 5.

⁴⁸ Brian Moore, "Campaign that led to Mickolajczk's Flight," *Sunday Independent* 9 Nov. 1947: 1.

⁴⁹ Special Correspondent, "Poland is run by Reds," *Sunday Independent* 23 Nov. 1947: 1.

⁵⁰ Reg Whitaker and Steve Hewitt, *Canada and the Cold War* (Toronto: Lorimer, 2003) 51.

⁵¹ See Brian Moore, "Activities Are Highly Organized At Headquarters of C.S.U. Strike," *Montreal Gazette* 19 May 1949: 3 and "Wonderful to be Back in Canada, Says Beaverbrae's Happy Skipper," *Montreal Gazette* 9 Aug. 1949: 3.

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⁵³ Brian Moore, "The Ridiculous Proposal," *Bluebook* 98.3 (Jan. 1954): 50-54.

⁵⁴ Craig 193.

⁵⁵ Reid Echols, "'Still Another Judith': Protest and Performance in Brian Friel's Film Adaptation of The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne," *Comparative Drama* 51.3 (2017): 254. (252-77).

⁵⁶ See Neil Sinyard, *The Films of Nicolas Roeg* (London: Letts, 1991) and *Jack Clayton* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2000).

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