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“Can you believe they put a man on the Moon?” (3B)

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WITNESSES TO THE SPACE RACE: IRELAND WATCHES THE MOON LANDING

**Abstract**

A long-time member of the European Space Agency, Ireland has never had an astronaut and may perhaps be considered to have had limited impact on the story of space so far. However, from an Irish

perspective, the space race was as real and vital there as anywhere else on this planet. From the pride in John F. Kennedy, a US President of Irish heritage, to the relief that Communism would not be delivered from the sky by the Soviets, Ireland was active in its consideration of everything that happened in space in the 1960s.

The impact of the moon landing on Ireland was profound, as it was elsewhere. Reactions on the streets of the capital, Dublin, varied from pride and excitement to concern over the cost. At the time, Ireland was undergoing near-revolutionary social change, while tension over inequalities in Northern Ireland was about to overflow into violence that would dominate the next three decades of Irish life.

This paper combines archive and online survey research with interviews to be conducted by participants in the humanities department of the International Space University's Space Studies Program taking place in Cork, Ireland, in summer 2017.