

Sarah Duncan

Creative Writing, MFA Candidate

SJRC Spring 2017 Scholar & Grant Recipient

I wish to provide a brief account of how the Social Justice Research Center supported my curiosities and research questions for my project about how my Irish family (ancestors) became “white” upon migration to what’s known as the United States. The SJRC gave me approximately 1500 dollars in grant money, which allowed me to travel to the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, travel all over both areas, and experience Irish culture, ideologies, history, and exchanges. As someone wishing to experience things first hand in order to write about what happened through a first person creative lens, it was crucial for me to be able to have a myriad of interesting and exciting experiences overseas, and the grant money allowed me to do just that.

Additionally, the SJRC paired me with a researcher at the American Heritage Center, who helped me plan how to contact research librarians in Omagh, Northern Ireland ahead of time. The researcher at AHC gave me excellent tips on how to do research in libraries and archives. As a creative writer, I have not done extensive academic research, so this advice was valuable.

Finally, the SJRC has been enthusiastic and supportive the whole step of the way. They have showed earnest enthusiasm for my work, and they have given me ample opportunities to present my work to the public, which I very much appreciate.

Without the SJRC, I would not have been able to complete my creative travel essay project on the constructions of whiteness in Irish people who migrated to what’s known as the

U.S. I am deeply honored and grateful for their support and encouragement from the beginning to the end. Thank you!