When Everything Changes: Using Critical Family History to Deconstruct Keesing and Fitzpatrick Surnames

Esther Fitzpatrick [1,*] and Mike Fitzpatrick [2]

1 Faculty of Education, University of Auckland, Auckland 1023, New Zealand
2 Independent Scholar, Auckland 0604, New Zealand; mike@feedbackresearch.co.nz
* Correspondence: e.fitzpatrick@auckland.ac.nz; Tel.: +64-2722011493

Abstract: DNA analysis has enabled a much deeper interrogation of our surnames, Keesing and Fitzpatrick, than was possible via traditional genealogical research. This can inform us regarding the potential 'hidden' complexities of some surnames. Through juxtaposing the narratives of our family histories and DNA findings we demonstrate, using collaborative autoethnography, how surnames can be haunted by ghosts both real and imagined. The DNA-enabled critical exploration of the history of our surnames, in the context of the social and political factors that shaped them, generates a deeper and more complex understanding of how our surnames were taken/given. In this paper we investigate and deconstruct our Irish and Jewish ancestry. Fitzpatrick and Keesing are anglicised/normanised/colonised surnames that exemplify attempts to dis/member our identities. Here we re/member them, but with that comes a realisation that 'everything has changed' and with that come new dis/memberings and re/memberings.

1. Introduction

This paper explores and deconstructs two family surnames as a step toward decolonisation. Trying to make sense of us through our surname/s is a complicated process. You will need to have a sound understanding of the origin of surnames, how language and transcribing of language shifts over time and, importantly for this story, how surnames have been impacted by political and social movements such as colonisation. For this paper, as descendants of immigrants with diasporic European histories, we are exploring, specifically, two surnames: Fitzpatrick and Keesing. Fitzpatrick is Mike's paternal line and is a surname steeped in rich Irish narratives and mythologies back to when Celts first set foot on the Emerald Isle. Keesing is a Jewish surname that belongs to Esther, and it has changed several times over many generations through ongoing diaspora, immigration, marriage. It marks her direct maternal line, and it takes her back through her mtDNA to an Ashkenazi Jewish mother (Costa et al. 2013).

Like Hart's (2018) participants, we too have been adopting the role of detectives and have become the storytellers for our families. And we are a family, a husband and wife—Mike and Esther. Family narratives, historically, involve a researcher attempting to identify an 'idealized progenitor' and create a narrative of 'long-term heroism' (Gardner 2003). Often, these narratives exclude ancestral stories that do not support the 'right' pedigree; rather, they work to maintain 'officially sanctioned' stories of colonisation (Norquay 1998). Our genealogical research, instead, involves conversations between both historical data and DNA analysis and has become embedded into many aspects of our life, including academic work, administration of a DNA surname project, and co-leadership of a Clan Society. This

exploration also resonates with (Scholar 2020; Roberts 2012) 'ghost work', where interrogating the stories of our ancestors helps us to speak with the ghosts (Derrida 1994) about "social realities and structures, beyond the confines of linear time" (Scholar 2020, p. 1).

We are genealogists. We write this paper as a critical collaborative autoethnography (see Fitzpatrick and Farquhar 2018), juxtaposing and exploring our family histories alongside each other, and critically analysing our stories with theory. It is a critical family history (Sleeter 2015) and much more than a hobby (Hart 2018). We have been happily poring over historical records for 30+ years, following a variety of paper trails to understand better who our ancestors *are*, where they came from, and their life stories. These research journeys have been both personal and professional. For example, Esther's research explores the history of colonial ancestors to disrupt notions of homogenous Pākehā identity in New Zealand (Fitzpatrick 2017; Fitzpatrick and Bell 2016). Understanding the complexity of emerging identities in our multicultural/multiethnic societies is a crucial focus of her work. We agree with Hart (2018), who describes genealogy as

> both personal and private; . . . [that] brings a wealth of understanding about life in general, whether it is past or present, and opens a chance for deeper knowing of the self as it relates to the world . . . [and] has become more important to people who are searching for a sense of belonging. (p. 1)

2. Background

Surnames have stories. For many of us, surnames carry with them a hi/story that is haunted by the political and social crises experienced by our forebears. Our becoming identities are likewise haunted by our surnames.

> Identities matter, and the words we put on things are part of how we make them real. There's a power in naming that feminists and social justice activists have long highlighted. . . . Your name is your identity. The term for you is what situates you in the world. . . . Part of how our brains function and make sense of a vast and confusing universe is by naming and categorizing. (Filipovic 2013)

Importantly this paper demonstrates how "markers of identity are fluid and contingent . . . not to forget this fundamental truth that such things can be manipulated, are contestable, and are ultimately contingent" (Story and Walker 2016, p. 140). We speculate that for Mike to change his name from Fitzpatrick to MacGilpatrick, would be a strategy of decolonisation, a marker of rejecting, or at least 'speaking back to' (Salman Rushdie; Ashcroft et al. 1989) the colonised history of his Irish ancestors.

Cognizant of the range of genealogical data available, Darlu et al. (2012) argued for its potential to answer questions about the social, political, and economic factors from the past that haunt our identities today. Sleeter's (2015) critical family history framework involves an approach where the researcher includes particular family details, describes the historical context, and considers the social context, such as what other social groups were impacted in the same space (geographical and chronological). Layering these stories alongside each other, the researcher, and later the reader, gets a sense of the power dynamics at play. By peeling back the layers of who we are, how we have learnt to identify ourselves, and how we relate to those whose backgrounds are unlike ours, we ultimately engage in a conversation about cultural diversity and social justice that includes everyone (Sleeter 2015).

2.1. Re/Membering: Deconstruction of a Surname

To explore our surname histories, we use Derrida's notion of deconstruction and hauntology, recognising the importance of critiquing dominant narratives of both literary and philosophical texts, political institutions, with an ongoing attempt to render justice (Lawlor 2019). In deconstructing history, (Munslow 2002) highlights the importance of interrogating the "history narrative", arguing history is not equivalent to the past, and recognising society reifies particular narratives that work to perpetuate

the standard narrative through acts of "remembering" (Connerton 1989). McQuiad (2017) describes how "collective memories are not just the property of the individual but also of the group" (p. 28). She further articulates how groups reinforce memory through specific "emotional acts of identification and commemoration" arguing . . .

> Cognitive psychologists have long stressed that both the content and the process of remembering are social, that conversational and ritual behavioural processes are important aspects of remembering, as is membership of social or ethnic groups where memory is (per)formed against the backdrop of social norms, institutions and networks of communication. (p. 28)

It is important, then, to ask why some stories are deliberately remembered while others are forgotten. Connerton (1989, 2008, 2009) describes several forgetting strategies employed by society and individuals relevant to this work: prescriptive forgetting, repressive erasure, forgetting in order to form a new identity, and humiliated silence. Deconstructing the history of our surnames, we suggest, works as a decolonising strategy, re/membering and re/telling our stories to disrupt the political processes of forgetting, where society has reified particular stories that work to perpetuate the standard narrative through acts of "remembering" and "forgetting" (Connerton 2009). Further, critical autoethnography as method enables the researcher to interrogate narrative inheritance and critically analyse and illuminate how these stories are embedded in a "particular political context and a particular geography" (McKay 2009, p. 1185).

We employ the conceptual model of the forward-slash (/), an accentuating typographic sign or a 'cut', as a strategy of deconstruction with transformative qualities (Steinbock 2019). Dobson (2014) argues the "nature of the slash reveals the ambiguous nature of the relationship 'was it a slash (and thus a severing)? Was it a scar (and hence a healing that acknowledges the inaugurating wound)?'" (p. 14). DNA data can also create severings and healings when intersecting historical narratives—providing a strategy of deconstruction when used in conversation with critical theory.

2.2. The Intersection of Historical and DNA Data

The past few years have seen an explosion in genetic genealogy testing, with 2020 estimates of autosomal-DNA tests numbering 35 million (The DNA Geek 2020)—fuelled recently by reality shows such as *Who do you think you are?* Such shows mostly focus on distant connections with an idealised progenitor, hero, or some scandal. Other narratives, however, *cut* deeper, and one can scarcely imagine the identity upheaval such as Dani Shapiro's, who growing up felt 'other'; the arrival of a DNA report 'changed everything' she had ever understood about herself (Shapiro 2019).

It is through tellings of family history that we highlight how each of us is implicated and connected to an historical past, providing a counter-story to the sanctioned, dominant stories of our shared histories. Remembering too that

> DNA is often perceived as innate, immutable, and given, but is in fact subject to highly selective readings that contribute to the active construction of the identity both of individuals and of 'imagined communities' of individuals whose identity can be recalibrated following genomic exploration and the revelation of some form of shared ancestry. (Story and Walker 2016, p. 138)

Research into surnames is not new. Surnames have provided rich sites for geographic, ethnic, and even genetic origin exploration, such as in-breeding, bibliometrics with respect to collaboration and mobility studies, analysis of particular name group formations, and authorship impact of scientific papers (Robinson-Garcia et al. 2015). There has been a significant upsurge in surname studies that focus on extending knowledge on population structure, isonymy, and migration and, to date, surname methodologies have been applied to about thirty societies all around the world with a geographic scale that ranges from a household or village, to a whole continent. (Darlu et al. 2012, pp. 169–70)

Importantly recent surname research has begun to disrupt prejudiced and biased approaches to individuals and people groups based on assumptions made about surnames. Cheshire (2014) argues, "[w]e frequently make judgment[s]—either consciously or subconsciously—about a person's ancestry or origin based on their surname" (p. 99). Darlu et al. (2012) describe the potential of 'increasingly exhaustive surname databases' and how "analyzing Y-chromosome DNA polymorphisms provides further examination of the degree of co-segregation of family names and Y-chromosome haplotypes" (p. 170). Caution is also given regarding problems of homogenisation and repetitiveness, and long-distance comparisons between stock surnames with very different historical and linguistic origins (p. 170). Important, they contend, is recognising how surname studies can offer social and economic information that is not available in molecular data (p. 172). Cheshire (2014) furthers this argument stating, "[s]urnames and geography dynamically intersect through the potential of genealogical data to enrich geographic research with regard to migration patterns, and through the construction of personal identity around ethnic origins or ancestral homes" (pp. 99–100).

Likewise, this paper demonstrates the complex political, social, and cultural histories of naming through intersecting and analysing historical archival data and DNA data of the surnames Keesing and Fitzpatrick. As posited by Darlu et al. (2012), the future of surname studies lies more in the "rich information provided by the set of data preserved through the generations . . . and in well-defined communities, than in the accumulation of surnames on a wider geographical scale" (p. 172).

3. Findings

3.1. Keesing, Kesche, Kezi or Käsher

Catherine (Kate) Keesing was born in 1856 in the new and bustling city of Auckland, New Zealand. She was my 2× great grandmother. I know this first because of family stories throughout my childhood; second because I connected with a Keesing family historian who shared photos, archival records, and family stories; thirdly because my DNA analysis (in 2013) matched me with the family historian. It was my 'changed everything' moment. I am a Keesing. To understand the Keesing surname history, I focus on Kate's grandfather, who settled in Auckland in 1843 with his large family: Henry Keesing, as described in official records such as the 1853 New Zealand Electoral Roll and his obituary in 1879.

Henry was born Hartog ben Tobias on 31 December 1791 in Amsterdam, Netherlands. Serving as a conscripted soldier in the Napoleonic army, he officially adopted the name Hartog Tobias Keesing in 1811. In 1813 he shifted to England and would use the name Henry Keesing on official documents—having anglicised Hartog to Henry. Jewish Synagogue records in London describe him as Tsevi Hirsh/Henry Kising, when he married Rose Kamer Barand in 1816. His father went by the names—Tebi/Tobias/Tuvia Hartog/Hirsch Keesing. Exploring these many names of Henry provides a snapshot into how Jewish immigrants in London, and then early Auckland, used particular names for particular purposes.

The Hebrew name of Tsevi, meaning "gazelle, roebuck", was used in Jewish records for Henry. Translations for this name occur on several documentations for both Henry and his father: Hersh (Yiddish), Hirsch (German), and Hartog/Hertog (Dutch/Jewish). Hence, when searching family records for Jewish ancestors, the use of different names on different documents creates many difficulties. However, it also illuminates the impacts of diaspora, ongoing persecution, and settler stories such as in New Zealand. Historically naming practices of many Jewish families have been an attempt to 'fit' into the societies they resided in while secretly continuing naming practices aligned with their religious culture. As argued by (Mateos et al. 2011), "[p]ersonal naming practices exist in all human groups and are far from random. Rather, they continue to reflect social norms and ethno-cultural customs that have developed over generations" (p. 1).

The surname Keesing is intriguing. A letter written in 1963 details the historical archival research of Elizabeth Van Tricht Keesing in Amsterdam. Documents retrieved provided a range of spellings, and early circumcision records show Keesje or Käsche, which in Yiddish means "little cheese". From

1756, Käsche became popular in documentation; however, in Amsterdam Käsche when vocalised sounded childish, like an affectionate boy's name or nickname (Cornelis = Kees). Elizabeth suggests the addition of -ing was in response to the Napoleonic Decree of 1811. People who did not have a regular family or first name were required to adopt one and register this name at the register of the civil town, where they are living (Tozzi 2014). Elizabeth further stated, "there [wa]s a tradition that Keesing means the son of Kees". The origins of Käsche are most probably linked to a place the family came from, before Amsterdam. Researching family names in Amsterdam, I found the name Kesch, which locates back to the village of Chyše (Chiesch in German) in the present-day Czech Republic. Historical records show a small but thriving Jewish community from the 1500s until the 1930s, but all that remains today is the cemetery and ruins of a synagogue. Other family names associated with this village survive in my DNA results, such as Henry's Grandmother, Carla Jacob de Jong/Charlevil (b. 1760). According to birth records, we know the Charlevil family arrived in Amsterdam ca. 1637.

The Charlevil name is also a marker of my identity. It is likely the Charlevil family took their name from Charleville France after they were invited there by Charles Gonzaga, who founded the village in 1606. Records show he permitted Jews to settle in 1609, granting a plot of land to build a synagogue in 1630, only to expel them in 1633 (Berenbaum and Skolnik 2007)! European Jews were often at the mercy of social, political, and economic climates and were sometimes welcome, but at other times un/welcome.

3.2. What This Means

Interrogating the naming stories of Henry Keesing provides an unfolding of the many layers of historical, political, and social impacts on one family's identity over time through ongoing diaspora. The term diaspora was initially used to describe the dispersal of the Jewish people following the destruction of the First Temple in Israel (Story and Walker 2016); however, it is useful today as a term "extended to a limited number of peoples dispersed beyond their homeland, traumatically or otherwise" (p. 135). Through investigating connections with a distant place, through traces of language, artefacts, and DNA, provides a way of analysing past migrations to make sense of the complexity of identity constructs. Henry Keesing's story is not unique, but it highlights how Jewish people throughout their diasporic experiences, and then through their 'settling' in new societies, changed and used several names. Fermaglich (2015) argues, "[h]istorians have not seriously studied the significance of name changing in American Jewish life . . . they have tended to take name changing for granted and to refer to its existence casually, as a simple index for assimilation" (p. 35). Dreyfuss (2019) further argues Jews in Central and Eastern Europe had a history of changing both their first names and surnames, somewhat in response to their history of migration due to varying levels of anti-Semitism (Dreyfuss 2019). The act of *doing* critical family research helps to understand the context that caused all these multiple names, such as those of Henry Keesing, to exist (Dreyfuss 2019).

Historical naming practices, particularly in Europe, were used as markers, so "Jewish names" became identifiable for both Jews and anti-Semites (Fermaglich 2015). Historically in Europe, Jews were required to take official surnames so the government could apply taxes, so Jews could be drafted, and also for access to education. The approval and documenting of names was sometimes up to the official who "gave the best names to those who could pay, or conversely giving the worst names to those who did not pay, as punishment" (Dreyfuss 2019, p. 4).

Name changing was a common practice when Jewish identity historically meant belonging as a temporary migrant, always under the threat of expulsion with changing political and social climates. Beider (2018) describes how a "new surname [was] often adapted to the linguistic culture of the destination country" (p. 189). Most Jews were multilingual with first names "using both Yiddish and Hebrew names, and also a familial name in the local language" (Dreyfuss 2019, p. 4). A further complication is the different alphabets used (Hebrew, Cyrillic, Latin), ongoing translations, and interpretation in the documentation of names. Dreyfuss (2019) argues, due to the high levels of discrimination experienced by Jews, name changing was a common practice. Further, the historical

fluidity of naming indicates that, perhaps, the stability of surnames was not considered as important in the past as it is today (p. 16). Researching the surname Keesing, investigating historical data and intersecting with DNA connections, provides an example of what Beider (2018) describes as the "geographic mobility of Jews [being] particularly visible via the migrated surnames found in many regions" (p. 196). Using the information available currently, we can speculate Kees is a derivation from a place where the family originated before Amsterdam, possibly Chyše. The morphological addition of 'ing' fits with the local languaging and is considered hybrid from a linguistic point of view (Beider 2018, p. 197). Further, it means Keesing is considered a monogenetic surname, as the few numbers of Keesings all trace back to the same ancestor who first adopted the surname—our uniqueness "is related to the unusual semantics" (p. 201) in the making of Keesing.

Henry Keesing and related Jewish families settled in New Zealand in 1843—many of their descendants are now part of what is known in New Zealand as the Pākehā population; the descendants of European settlers. The surnames of this population group often do not mark their Jewish heritage. Similar to Jewish families in America, the vast majority of name ... filed petitions to abandon "foreign" names that were "difficult to pronounce and spell" ... hoping to shed the ethnic markers that disadvantaged them in American society and culture and to take on names that were unmarked and ordinary, that would go unnoticed. (Fermaglich 2015, p. 37)

Keesing, a surname originating in Amsterdam in 1811, became a large Dutch-Ashkenazi Jewish family, but by 2007 there were just six people with the surname remaining in The Netherlands. Researching family stories, I found most of them ended in Nazi death camps. I re/member them here. For my family, among those who had *left*, the name Keesing enabled a quick assimilation into life in a colonial settler society, and was hugely beneficial (Fitzpatrick and Bell 2016)—the -ing became a beautiful *thing*; male grandchildren of Henry Keesing, numbering 24, continued the name in New Zealand, Australia and the USA, with 466 descendants today on the Keesing Facebook page.

4. Fitzpatrick

4.1. Narrative-Personal

My Fitzpatrick identity was forged in the blast-furnace that was post-WWII Liverpool. My father's family were 'bombed-out', and that stroke of luck meant a move to tranquil Wavertree. The line of dockers, which started when John 'The Giant' Fitzpatrick landed post-famine, was broken—away from a childhood with other scallywags along the Mersey waterfront my father took to reading, and grammar school beckoned. Such a narrative is nothing new and is told by many Scouse-Irish of my father's era. The same can be said of his identity mantra: 'we know who we are, and we know where we come from'. Yet there was more, something about our name, best summed up by his response when I complained I felt too unwell to go to school. 'Son, you're a Fitzpatrick. We don't get sick—we make people sick'.

My haunted Fitzpatrick identity is based on more than modern mythology. Its roots go back a millennium, the overarching narrative being that Fitzpatricks descend from the Mac GiollaPhádraig dynasts—the Kings of Ossory, a former kingdom of Ireland sandwiched between Munster and Leinster. Many Fitzpatricks I speak to are haunted by our surname and the deeds of the Mac GiollaPhádraigs, recorded by Annalists, repeated by historians and embedded into our psyche. Genealogists have a reputation for being chasers of ancestors of note (Nash 2009), and we Fitzpatricks strike gold having a cast of heroes and villains so lengthy that historians even seemed to set us apart, referring to us as the 'terrible' and 'turbulent' Mac GiollaPhádraigs (Lawless 1887). So, equipped with our adjectives, Fitzpatricks fully know 'who we are and where we come from'. *Well, at least we used to*.

4.2. Fitzpatrick y-DNA Part I—The Changing of Everything

Although commercially available for more than 20 years, the less televised y-DNA testing makes it possible to uncover patrilineal ancestry within a shared surname group (McEvoy et al. 2008), and if

y-DNA testing can also result in upheavals of an individual's identity (Scholar 2020), what then of its impact on an entire clan? Fitzpatricks have a y-DNA surname study (FamilyTreeDNA 2020), and while questions of ancestry were once along the lines, 'You're a Fitzpatrick! From where?', now a 'How does your y-DNA inform that?' has been added. Crucially then, how does the Fitzpatrick clan negotiate that 'changed everything' moment for those confronted with an identity that is a Fitzpatrick-ness they have not grown up with?

Early findings of the y-DNA study were not inconsistent with historical Fitzpatrick narratives. Consisting of 25 y-STR markers, data was expertly deciphered by Colleen Fitzpatrick (Fitzpatrick 2005). A descendant of Brian Fitzpatrick, 1st Baron of Upper Ossory, possessed a unique genetic signature also found in several Fitzpatricks on the study. These Fitzpatricks were referred to as the 'noble line' whereas others did not have the Baron's blood, and when it comes to blood-lines an elitist jangle is nothing new—diasporic genealogy is "as much about enacting distinction as it is about making connections" (Nash 2009, p. 106).

Elitism amongst certain Fitzpatricks is understandable. The bold declaration of the Mac GiollaPhádraig Clan Society that, 'the most important branch of the sept is the family whose Chief was known as Lord of Upper Ossory', was not their assessment but that of esteemed Irish historian (MacLysaght 1985). Perhaps it was only natural the 'collaborative aim' of the Society was to, 'Prepare a genealogical register of the male descendants of the 1st Baron of Upper Ossory in order to ultimately identify *The Fitzpatrick*, chief of his name' (Zalewski and Fitzpatrick 2002, p. i). A discussion of Fitzpatrick misogynism must wait for another day, but the goal of determining which Fitzpatricks were members of the 'noble line' became the primary focus of the y-DNA study (Fitzpatrick 2005). What place in the clan, then, for those Fitzpatricks not of the 'noble line'?

4.3. The Ghost of a Surname Past

There is something hauntingly familiar about some Fitzpatricks desiring to elevate themselves above their kin—a clear echo of events which resulted in the birth of the surname Fitzpatrick. In 1541, under the terms of surrender and regrant (when Gaelic Lords forsook their titles and adopted English law), Brian Mac GiollaPhádraig (anglicised MacGilpatrick) became the first Irish chief to abandon his native title (Maginn 2007). As an insight to what the English understood a surname meant to one's identity, the act required "the said MacGilpatricke doth utterly forsake and refuse the name of MacGilpatricke" (State Papers of Henry VIII 1541). Long considered a "traitor to his clan and country" (Carrigan 1905, p. 82), Edwards (1999) has proffered the considered alternative view that Brian's betrayal was a kind of cunning collaboration. Whatever the case, Brian's actions set the surname clock ticking, and it took approximately 150 years for the MacGilpatrick surname to become extinct.

Conflict was not unusual among Irish clans and was often greatest within a lineage group where "rights over the clan property would be a constant ground for dispute" (Nicholls 2003, p. 10) and conflict between Fitzpatricks and MacGilpatricks rumbled on for generations after Brian's submission. Now titled Sir Brian, an English-styled Lord over the entire clan lands, his son Barnaby Fitzpatrick set about the destruction of Gaelic rebels (Calendar State Papers 1578); two of Brian's other sons, MacGilpatricks by name, went into rebellion and were slain (Calendar State Papers 1581). And while several of Brian's MacGilpatrick nephews later joined O'Neill's rebellion (Calendar State Papers 1598), another son, Florence Fitzpatrick (3rd Baron), bore the Queen's standard at the Battle of Yellow Ford (MacDermott et al. 1846). The use of the surname Fitzpatrick in the late 16th and early 17th centuries appears almost exclusively in Ossory, whereas MacGilpatrick is found in several counties, as distant as Antrim and Wicklow, chiefly among allies of O'Neills (Patent Roll James 1967, p. 110) and their associates (Patent Roll James 1967, p. 17). The now contrasting surnames bore witness to where loyalties lay.

The last of the MacGilpatricks are found in Co.Down, listed among leaseholders in the Barony of Newry: 'Ballygowan formerly let to Neece MacGilpatrick the smith and now let to his son Owen

and the rest' (Public Record Office of Northern Ireland 1688). Following the final corruption of Irish surnames in the late 17th and early 18th century (MacLysaght 1999), MacGilpatrick died out.

4.4. A Fitzpatrick Dis/Membering

A surname bestowed by Henry VIII (Carrigan 1905), Fitzpatrick is authoritatively referred to as the only non-Norman Irish Fitz surname (MacLysaght 1985), and among the clan today there almost a tangible pride in our new name—*we are Fitzpatricks, but our name is not Norman*. But just as DNA can *change everything*, in doing so it can lead to narratives being dis/membered, since *everything* comes under fresh scrutiny. The case for Brian's Irish identity remaining intact in spite of his submission (Edwards 2001) does not extend to his name, and an Irish surname was considered a key marker of identity (Booker 2018).

There is nothing indigenous Irish about Fitzpatrick—in the 16th century it was an entirely new surname in Ireland. The anglicisation of Mac GiollaPhádraig (meaning son of the servant of Patrick) is MacGilpatrick, and any subsequent normanisation/Fitz-prefixation should render the name FitzGilpatrick. In contrast, Fitzpatrick, being the combination of Fitz-with Patrick, could only ever originate from MacPatrick. And right there lies a Norman double-whammy because, along with Fitz-, the surname Patrick is not indigenous either, having arrived in Ireland with the Normans (Woulfe 1923); mere Irish considered Pátraic (Patrick) too sacred to use directly (Withycombe 1978). Now dis/membered, Fitzpatrick can be seen stamped with an indelible Norman mark, and with the y-DNA study Part II came a ghostly twist to both the surname and the clan narratives.

4.5. Fitzpatrick y-DNA Part II—A Chance to Re/Member

Hosted by Family Tree DNA, the Fitzpatrick y-DNA study has 195 members (February 2020) with Fitzpatrick or related surnames who have taken at least a 37-marker test. There are a remarkable 54 distinct STR-haplogroups: three haplogroups (28% of members) show evidence of shared ancestry with other Fitzpatricks from ca. 850–950 AD, i.e., at the dawn of the age of surnames in Ireland (Ó Murchadha 1999); 13 haplogroups (7% of members) have no shared ancestry with any surname group from ca. 850 AD; 12 haplogroups (46% of members) from ca. 1300–1600 AD and 12 haplogroups (12% of members) from ca. 1600–1900 AD share ancestry with those having Pátraic surnames; and, 14 haplogroups (7% of members) are strongly associated with non-Pátraic surnames.

As expected for a surname that arose in Ireland, the majority of Fitzpatrick haplotypes are associated with those classified as Gaelic or Norse. The most common are R-M269 and I-haplotypes (185 members). Also represented are haplotypes D-PH43, E-M2, J-M172, and Q-M252, associated with East Asian, Sub-Saharan African, Caucasus/Levantine, and indigenous American origins, respectively.

A few of the larger haplogroups have now been further identified by Next Generation Sequencing (NGS), affording the definition of several sub-groups. Hence, much is understood about these haplogroups: both R-FGC11134 … BY12234 and R-Z255 … BY2849 are large, exercise surname singularity and possess well-defined sub-structure, breadth, and depth, i.e., y-DNA reveals their ancient clan structure. The largest haplogroup in the study is R-FGC5494 … A1488, which is associated with Ossory and also has structure, but is neither exclusively Fitzpatrick nor as old in its origin as the R-BY12234 or R-BY2849 groups, having arisen ca. 1300 AD. Other large haplogroups include two distinct types of R-FGC11134 … CTS4466, but there are insufficient NGS data to more accurately posit an accurate age for the origin of the patronym. Their y-STR data suggests homelands in the kingdom of Munster, but no clear pattern has yet emerged to who their closest non-Fitzpatrick genetic cousins are.

What does such genetic diversity mean for the identities of individual Fitzpatricks and the identity of the Fitzpatrick clan as a whole? Having been dis/membered in DNA Part I, the DNA sequel provides an opportunity to re/member. For many in a small number of the large haplogroups, a patrilineal descent from an ancient Mac GiollaPhádraig appears feasible. Also, for many in a large number of small haplogroups, a patrilineal descent from ancient Mac GiollaPhádraigs cannot be discounted.

It seems Mac GiollaPhádraigs may have been a confederation of male lineages, and probably fe/male ones as well.

There are also large numbers of Fitzpatricks among just a few haplogroups, identified alongside Munster, Bréifne, and Ossory, who show patrilineal descent from a Pátraic surname during the Late Middle Ages (ca. 1300–1500 AD), at least several generations after the appearance of the Mac GiollaPhádraigs. Munster and Bréifne Fitzpatricks have long confounded scholars, but a simplistic blanket association with Ossory (Shearman 1879) no longer fits. What has become clear is Bréifne has more diverse patrilineal associations with Pátraic surnames than any other kingdom of Ireland, most notably those Ó MaolPhádraig (O'Mulpatrick) corrupted to Fitzpatrick (Woulfe 1923) but now re/membered.

The Ossory group includes many who share the same patrilineal ancestors as the Barons of Upper Ossory. However, the dominant narrative that this 'noble line' were patrilineal descendants of Mac GiollaPhádraigs does not fit the y-DNA findings Part II, intriguingly mirroring Fitzpatrick as a wholly Norman name—and there lies the narrative twist.

4.6. A Fitzpatrick Re/Dis/Membering

The R-A1488 descendants of Barons of Upper Ossory, who claimed descent from Gaelic chieftains, have a mixture of lineages immediately before ca. 1300 AD. Prior to ca. 1000 AD is a long genetic bottleneck with no Irish cousins; shared ancestry is those of mostly English/Welsh descent. It is considered R-A1488 Fitzpatricks possibly descend from an Anglo/Cambro-Norman line that arrived in Ireland in the 12th century. The Barons of Upper Ossory re-wrote the rules of how the Irish could engage with their foreign enemy but did they also re-write their pedigrees to make them appear mere Irish? In spite of Edwards' convincing assessment that labeling the Barons simple traitors was "not grounded on a solid core of fact" (Edwards 2001, p. 94), a ghostly reminder of their betrayal has emerged. Edwards could not have known, since it was almost 20 years prior to recent DNA insights, the need to factor in a most critical point—the lineage of the Barons is, perhaps, not what it seems. DNA data instead cut/intersect the historical narrative and serves to remind us of "the inescapably political dimensions of all accounts of origins and ancestors" (Nash 2009, p. 22).

Being a Fitzpatrick of Norman patrilineage may run against the grain for some, particularly those of the 'noble line' and the diaspora since the "culture of Irish-American genealogy is dominated by references to ancient Gaelic kings" (Nash 2009, p. 106), but speaking with ghosts is important if one is to make sense of historic political and social, hauntings. Amongst the stark realisations that many clan members, not just Fitzpatricks, are being confronted with a DNA report that 'changes everything', there is also a liberation. Fitzpatrick identities are no longer bound to dominant and elitist narratives; there is now freedom to re/member Fitzpatrick narratives away from clouded visions and binary thinking that you are either 'noble', or not. Revealed now are the re/membering identity narratives of Fitzpatrick women, those of Afro-American descent, or 'others', such as the Russian history professor with a Fitzpatrick way back somewhere in his maternal line—his desire, a connection and a home in an Irish clan. Importantly, these all open up the potential for future investigation.

Ultimately, membership of an Irish clan is "based on one's inherited and chosen identity and not on bloodline descent alone" (Clans of Ireland 2020); hence all Fitzpatricks can stand side-by-side if they so choose. Far from resulting in a clan identity crisis, the Fitzpatrick y-DNA study can facilitate a re/membering of Fitzpatrick identities with a richness never before imagined, for if Irish identity is not defined by DNA (Nash 2009), how much less the identity of Fitzpatricks? And, above all else, critically analysing the data in the Fitzpatrick y-DNA study demonstrates the complexity of identity constructions over time and teaches us in the clan that we are all Fitz/Mac/Gil/Mul/Patricks.

5. Conclusions

What We Know Today

Investigating the name Keesing alongside an investigation of the name Fitzpatrick demonstrates the very different ways surnames come into being for different groups. You cannot make assumptions. Often those who are exploring their ancestry do so looking for an original place where their ancestors come from, some single story, and with y-DNA an idealised progenitor. These findings demonstrate that there is no single story. Instead, our identities are a mishmash, impacted by macro-level political and social turmoil, and micro-level familial crises and alliances. DNA analysis provides a way by which such elements can be brought into focus and better understood, but DNA by itself is not identity. For Jewish surname stories, the findings reveal how surname investigation unfolds the diasporic journey of survival. How surnames varied and often changed according to the political and social structures of the society they resided in. Perhaps Beider's (2018) argument applies to more than just Jewish surnames, Importantly to note in the complexity of historical, social and political influences on naming of Jews is the ambiguous term "Jewish surname" is best replaced by the much simpler notion of "surname borne by a Jew" (p. 217).

Researching Fitzpatrick y-DNA, likewise, demonstrates there have been many different ways the surname has become attached to genetically distinct individuals who form a clan, which has resulted in a dis/membering, a re/membering, and a further dis/membering and has even disrupted dominant clan narratives, including the notion that Fitzpatrick is an original *Irish*, non-Norman surname. However, unlike Keesing, investigating the surname Fitzpatrick helps us re/member the ongoing naming strategy of colonisation to dismantle identity.

With the increase and interest in family history research, it is important to provide researchers with the tools to be critical, to explore the nuances and complexity of our many-layered identities, and to understand that one individual's story impacts many, and sometimes a whole clan. Also critical is understanding the impact radical findings that 'change everything' can have on an individual and the collective understanding of identity and sense of belonging. Ultimately, the intersection of DNA data and historical archival data provides a way to deconstruct dominant historical narratives, and illuminate the complexity of our identity stories, alongside the political, social and economic forces of the time.

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