Client’s name

Professor’s title

The title of the course

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**Ethnographic Essay**

For this essay Iam taking Ms. Cara O’ Conner as a person of interest. Cara belongs to the state of Ireland which is a beautiful and majestic country with numerous cities like Bundoran, Ballyshannon, Donegal and Drumcliffe. The country is also rich with traditional history and cultural aspects along with a life style and economy as compared to USA.

Life style of any region is shaped by people’s preferences and belief systems. It is essentially a determinant of their habits and eating patterns. Some of the common characteristics of the people of Ireland that I witnessed during my journey includes their reputation for friendliness and hospitality to visitors and how it is well deserved. Cara, like most of the people of Ireland are accustomed to responding to friendliness and smiles. Their generally friendly nature is something I found out to be somewhat different from the US culture. The people of US are also very helpful and friendly to strangers but I found by witnessing Cara that Irish people have an incorrigible habit of engaging in conversation with total strangers. This can seem disconcerting, even threatening, to people from other cultures. For instance, any person in Ireland standing next to you in the bank or supermarket check-out queue might start chatting like your long-lost friend.

Cara’s conduct also exhibited that while considering courtesy, Irish are always the first to apologize. They queue for things as well. Furthermore, the people are fairly reserved and religious but they are not superstitious. Lastly communication with Irish people can be a challenge since they have lots of regional accents and dialects with different words for the same thing in English language. For instance, saying “I’m Grand” does not mean you feel like $1000 or £1000, it can mean anything from “I’m alright” to “I’ll have that pint you owe me in another 10 minutes” to “I’m just being polite, ask me again.” Likewise “Its Grand” means everything from “It’s OK to It Sucks”, it's the Irish catch-all phrase of choice. They are also very sarcastic tend to have a good sense of humor and love a good laugh and can generally see the funny side of most things. However, they’re quite strict about conformity and quick to criticise those who stand out. They have a strong ‘island nation’ mentality which, along with their imperial history, gives them a sense of exceptionalism.

Another unique aspect that I witnessed was that despite an unfortunate coarseness that has crept into many aspects of Irish life in recent years, most Irish people still are incredibly polite. Furthermore, for any guest, there is always some subtlety to the way to respond to an offer of food or drink when you pay a casual visit to someone's home (as opposed to an invitation to dinner). It is customary to politely but not too firmly decline an initial offer of refreshment but then to accept when pressed. This was particularly intriguing since in US there might be no customary trend to accept or decline any offer as a courtesy in fact people in the states have a free reign to eat anything of their choosing.

Regarding an invitation to someone's home, it is customary to never show up empty handed. During my experience witnessing Cara, I learnt that any guest should bring flowers or a cake, a small tin of biscuits, or nice chocolates; and of course one may never go wrong with a decent but not-too-expensive bottle of wine. In my view, such a fact is almost similar in US where it is a common trend to bring something when being invited to someone’s home as a courtesy but it is not an essential when casually visiting a friend. Over all, Cara helped me reach the conclusion that the natives of Ireland are warm and nice people with unique cultural traits.