My research focuses on the emigration of WWI Irish ex-servicemen in the United States in the 1920s. At the end of the First World War, hundreds of demobilized Irish veterans left their country and settled in the United States in order to escape unemployment and harassment from the Irish Republican Army.

While writing a new chapter of the history of the Irish diaspora in the United States, I intend to develop a comparative study on the demobilization of disabled French and American WWI ex-servicemen, focusing more particularly on the clinical/psychological aspect of their homecoming. Encompassing in its approach the anthropological, historical and medical, the aim of this interdisciplinary project is to analyse the representation of disfigured and disabled veterans in post-war French and American societies.

In the process, I will determine whether a society which directly endured the consequences of the conflict, like France, was more receptive to the suffering of its veterans than those societies, like the United States and Ireland which were spared the atrocities of war on their territory. In addition I focus particular attention on the impact of the overwhelming obsessive trauma of the conflict on ex-servicemen’s social reinsertion, and explore to what extent their common experience of the war forged a community of survivors based on mutual help and support.