What Stick Figures Tell Us about Irish Politics

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What stick figures tell us about Irish politics

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Where we come from

- Previous work involved students using freehand drawing in critical self-reflection
- "Doing research with people, rather than on them" (Bray et al., 2000: 7)
- Shared sense of experience - freedom to express in non-traditional manner
- Drawings, enjoyable, simple, yet deceptively revealing
- Learning experience an unfolding collaborative process of inquiry

What we interpret:
- Man = politician = corrupt
- People debate, questioning, seeking consensus – perception of Irish politicians
- Unhappy people under a cloud of taxes and other charges
- People2: frustrating (inability to understand)
- People3:步gradually

What emerged
- Tiny sample of drawings presented, but overall, largely negative perspectives on Irish politics – general sense of malaise and dissatisfaction
- Overwhelming sense of crisis
- But protest is largely absent
- Conservatism of Irish society
- Sense of powerlessness and inaction
- People resigned to status quo
- Elitism and conynomy in upper echelons of society
- Strong perception that politicians are either corrupt, incompetent or self-serving
- Lots of questions, but no answers
- A negative attitude towards the EU
- An absence of political transparency and accountability
- In whose interest does democracy function?

What we interpret:
- "We're all in this together" (PM)
- "Politics is about power and money" (PM)
- People designing, thinking, manipulating
- Large figure: authority or the state
- Smaller figure: ordinary citizen or disenfranchised

What we interpret:
- Lots of questions, but no answers
- Government (rich people) taking poor people’s money through different levies
- Ordinary citizens disgruntled

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