

# The St. Patrick's Day Parade is Decadent and Depraved



*"There's a state of mind to being Irish that focuses on a good sense of humor and self-deprecation. "*

by Patrick Correia

In 2012 I was drunk looking out over the parade from a third floor porch on west 3rd st. in South Boston. It was noon. As the clean up crew scooted along, picking up the worst of the garbage, there was an additional float trundling by green confetti. A blaring bit of nonsense and signs that, after adjusting my eyes, were less than jovial. The signs and chants are lost to me. None of this was part of the parade. The reality of inequality is nothing to put on someone utilizing a loop hole for alcoholism. That day I decided not to attend the parade until everyone was allowed to march on the St. Patrick's Day. Even if they've never had to eat Irish Soda Bread. Irish Soda Bread tastes like soap and cardboard.

The Catalpa sailed from New Bedford in April of 1875 to free Fenians being held in Australia. There's a plaque you've probably walked by a thousand times at the corner of North 6th and Market street in Downtown. You may not even know the

story, so here's a song. It was commissioned to free members of the Irish Brotherhood. In case you didn't know, Ireland is a history of failed rebellion.

In the far south end of the city, there's a large stone Celtic cross that looks out to sea. A famine memorial. I'll spare you the customary use of Irish in this situation. Plus, I can't really spell in English, let alone Irish.

The history of the Irish in New Bedford is a search for freedom. St. James church stands a marker of that pride and a hope for the current immigrant population. The largely Guatemalan population of the South End is continuing a tradition of strong community in the neighborhood. At my own grandmother's funeral, local men removed their hats for the bagpipes cascading off the houses.

Over the weekend Boston will be overrun with visitors, especially on Sunday for the St. Patrick's Day Parade through South Boston. A large number of South Coast residents attend the parade and travel to area for the holiday weekend. The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, based in New Bedford, march with blackthorn canes along with the rest of the parade. Don't go. Don't go to the parade.

Marty Walsh has already said he won't attend and it's really not worth the trip. It's cold, the bars are packed at 8AM and, unless you know of a house party, it's really not worth the trip. Go to Brighton Center, to the Green Brier or Porter Belly's. Go to the Tara Pub or The Eire Pub in Dorchester. For Christ's sake, go to Tommy Doyle's in Cambridge. Either one really. I will even give you pub suggestions for a great St. Patrick's Day, if you ask. Seriously. Not a joke. I'll do it.

There's a state of mind to being Irish that focuses on a good sense of humor and self-deprecation. Unless you're lace curtain, of course. We should always remember; we were there. We need to embrace our roots as pariahs and revel in

acceptance through quantity. St. Patrick's Day is contingent on the idea that a people can ascend from the depth of poverty. It's the closest we have to the American dream. So, through this weekend, drink too much, hug everyone, sing songs with strangers, and feel guilty about it for at least a week.

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