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A HISTORY OF THE MEDIA IN IRELAND

From the first book printed in Ireland in the sixteenth century, to the globalised digital media culture of today, Christopher Morash traces the history of forms of communication in Ireland over the past four centuries: the vigorous newspaper and pamphlet culture of the eighteenth century, the spread of popular literacy in the nineteenth century, and the impact of the telegraph, telephone, phonograph, cinema and radio, which arrived in Ireland just as the Irish Free State came into being. Morash picks out specific events for detailed analysis, such as the first radio broadcast, during the 1916 Rising, or the Live Aid concert in 1985. Outlining new ways to think about Irish culture, this important book breaks new ground within Irish studies. Its accessible narrative explains how Ireland developed into the modern, globally interconnected economy of today. This is an essential and hugely informative read for anyone interested in Irish cultural history.

CHRISTOPHER MORASH is Professor of English at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth. He is the author of *A History of Irish Theatre 1601–2000* (Cambridge, 2002; paperback edition, 2004).

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Acknowledgements

This book makes forays into so many discrete disciplines that I wrote it with an acute sense of standing on the shoulders of a great many diverse scholars, from early print specialists, to railway and postal historians, to commentators on contemporary broadcasting legislation. In recompense, I hope that these scholars in turn will find here, at the very least, something that will connect their own fields to others in ways that might be new or unexpected. More specifically, I would like to thank the numerous librarians and archivists who were so generous with their time, with particular thanks to the staff of the National Library of Ireland, the Royal Irish Academy, the British Library, RTÉ, the Linenhall Library and the National Archives of Ireland (who are owed particular thanks for permission to quote from unpublished materials contained here). Charles Benson of Early Printed Books in Trinity College Dublin, was a particular source of wisdom, as were Nicholas Carolan in the Irish Traditional Music Archive and the staff of the library at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth (especially Penny Woods in the Russell Library). I also found (perhaps ironically for a book that is about everything other than face-to-face conversation) that ideas for the project as often as not arose from talking with colleagues too numerous to name in the NUI Maynooth, where a genuine collegiality makes it possible to have enthusiastic discussions with friends in many fields, including Diarmuid O'Donoghue in the Department of Computer Science, who generously provided me with his work on internet visualisation. I owe particular thanks to colleagues in the School of English, Media and Theatre Studies, for their conversation, ideas and friendship. Three former students, Denis Condon, Deirdre Quinn and Tom Richards, particularly helped me to shape my ideas. Further afield, Peter Hart was especially helpful. The nature of this project was such that I picked up ideas from good friends outside of academia, especially Dave Selkirk and Woytek Kosinski, an engineer and an internet entrepreneur respectively. The organisers of the

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2008 International Association for the Study of Irish Literature (IASIL) conference in Porto gave me the opportunity to give some of the work here a public airing at a crucial stage, in a way that valuably sharpened the argument for me. I was also fortunate in the final stages in having a keen research assistant, Shane Creevy, funded under NUI Maynooth's SPUR initiative to encourage young researchers.

From the beginning, my editor at Cambridge, Ray Ryan, believed in this project; for bringing into the medium of print so many important contributions to Irish studies he has earned his own place in this history. Throughout the writing of this book, I have had a sense that it has all really been an attempt to explain the intensely mediated world of my children, Christopher, Dara and Aoife, who will know better than most why I dedicate it to the person to whom we all owe most, my wife Ann.

Chronology

- ca 1456 Johann Gutenberg prints first Bible
 1551 First Irish printed book: *The Boke of Common Praier*
 1571 First printed book in Irish in Ireland: *Aibidil Gaoidheilge agus Caiticiosma*
 1572 First Deputy Postmaster appointed; first mailboat
 1601 Battle of Kinsale
 1604 John Franckton granted patent as King's Printer
 1618 Stationers' Company take over patent
 1641 Outbreak of Ulster Rebellion
 First English newsbook: *Heads of Several Proceedings*
 1651 First Irish newsbook: *Irish Monthly Mercury* (Cork)
 1660 *An Account of the Chief Occurrences in Ireland* (Dublin)
 1685 *The News-Letter* (Dublin)
 1690 Battle of the Boyne
Dublin Intelligence (Dublin)
 1709 Copyright Act (8 Anne cap. 19)
 1716 *Limrick [sic] News-Letter*
 1720 Declaratory Act (6 Geo. I, cap. 5)
Dublin Weekly Journal
 1737 *Belfast Newsletter*
 1752 *Sligo Journal*
 1755 *Cork Evening Post*
 1763 *Freeman's Journal* (Dublin)
 1779 Volunteers demonstrate for Free Trade
 1782 *Volunteer Post* (Cork)
 Declaratory Act repealed; Irish Parliament in College Green
 1792 *Northern Star* (Belfast; suppressed 1797)
 1795 First Irish-language periodical: *Bolg an tSolair* (Belfast)
 1797 *The Press* (Dublin; suppressed 1798)
 1798 Rebellion in Ulster and Leinster; French forces land in Killala

Chronology

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- 1800 Act of Union
 1801 Copyright Act (41 Geo. III cap. 107)
 1803 Abortive rising led by Robert Emmet
 1813 Irish Endowed Schools Act (53 Geo. III, cap. 107)
 Paddle steamer *Thames* makes first crossing from Dublin to London
 Bianconi cars begin running from Clonmel to Cahir
 1818 *Rob Roy* makes first steam crossing between Clyde and Belfast
 1824 *Morning Register* (Dublin)
 1828 *Pilot* (Dublin)
 1829 Catholic Emancipation
 1831 Postmaster General Act (1 Will. IV, cap. 8)
 Act Authorising Dublin–Kingstown Railway (1 and 2 Will. IV, cap. 69)
 1832 *Dublin Penny Journal*
 1833 *Dublin University Magazine*
 First steam-powered press in Ireland
 1834 Dublin–Kingstown Railway; first in Ireland
 1837 First commercial telegraph line, London
 1838 Steamer *Sirius* makes first trans-Atlantic crossing without sail, Cork to New York
 1839 Daguerre makes public technique for daguerrotypes
 1841 *Cork Examiner*
 First photographic studio opens in Dublin
 1842 *The Nation* (Dublin; suppressed 1848)
 1844 Samuel Morse invents Morse Code
 First Irish telegraph line, Dalkey
 1845 Great telescope at Birr Castle completed
 Potato crop fails; first year of Famine
 1848 *United Irishman* (suppressed May, 1848)
 Abortive Young Ireland rebellion
 Regular mail service by rail between London and Dublin
 1851 Julius Reuter founds telegraph news agency
 1852 Submarine telegraph cable, Holyhead to Howth
 1853 Dublin–Belfast rail line
 1858 First trans-Atlantic telegraph cable
 1859 *Irish Times* (Dublin)
 1863 *The Irish People* (Dublin; suppressed 1865)
 1866 First regular trans-Atlantic telegraph service

- 1867 Fenian disturbances in England and Ireland
 Clan na Gael founded in New York
- 1870 *Irish World* (New York)
Belfast Telegraph
- 1873 *Irish Monthly Magazine*
- 1874 650,000 miles of telegraph cable worldwide
- 1875 *Southern Cross* (Buenos Aires)
- 1876 Alexander Graham Bell patents telephone
- 1878 Thomas Edison patents phonograph
- 1879 University Education (Ireland) Act (42 & 43 Vict. cap. 65)
- 1880 First Irish telephone exchange opens, Dublin
- 1881 *United Ireland* (Dublin)
- 1882 *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge: the Gaelic Journal*
- 1884 Gaelic Athletic Association formed
- 1890 Eaward Muybridge displays zoopraxiscope, Dublin
- 1891 *Irish Daily Independent* (Dublin)
 Death of Parnell
- 1892 Irish Education Act (55 and 56 Vict. cap. 42); compulsory
 education
- 1893 Electric railways from Haddington Road to Dalkey
 Gaelic League founded
- 1895 *Irish Homestead*
 Edison kinoscope on display in Dublin
- 1896 First Irish cinematograph show, at Olympia Theatre
 First phonographs for home use
- 1897 First Lumière films made in Ireland
 Marconi patents wireless telegraphy
- 1898 First use of wireless telegraph for news reporting, Dublin
- 1899 First production of Irish Literary Theatre
- 1903 John McCormack; first recording
 Wyndham Land Act, allows tenants to buy land
- 1905 *Sunday Independent* (Dublin)
- 1907 Wireless trans-Atlantic telegraph begins
- 1910 *The Lad from Old Ireland* (dir. Sidney Olcott); first feature
 film shot in Ireland
- 1913 Irish Transport and General Workers' Strike
- 1916 Easter Rising; rebels attempt radio transmission
- 1919 First meeting of Dáil Éireann
- 1920 KDKA begins broadcasting in Philadelphia

Chronology

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- 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty ends War of Independence
- 1922 Beginning of Civil War
 Marconi Company makes first English radio broadcast
 BBC begins broadcasting
- 1923 White Paper on Wireless Broadcasting
 De Valera orders suspension of Anti-Treaty Campaign
Irish Statesman (Dublin)
Dublin Magazine
 Censorship of Films Act
- 1924 BBC Belfast first broadcast as 2BE
- 1925 Boundary Commission defines border between Free State
 and Northern Ireland
- 1926 First broadcast of 2RN
 John Logie Baird demonstrates 'televisor' in Dublin
- 1929 Censorship of Publications Act
- 1931 *Irish Press* (Dublin)
- 1934 *Man of Aran* (dir. Robert Flaherty)
- 1936 *Vigilanti Cura*; Papal Encyclical on cinema
 BBC begin first regular television broadcasts
- 1937 EMI open first Dublin recording studio
 Irish Constitution
- 1940 *The Bell* (Dublin)
- 1948 33 rpm LP and 45 rpm single replace 78 rpm disc
- 1949 Republic of Ireland Act
- 1952 BBC television begins broadcasting from Belfast
- 1954 Television Act lays basis for commercial television in UK
- 1958 Ardmore Studios (cinema) opens, Bray
- 1959 UTV begins broadcasting, Belfast
- 1960 Broadcasting Authority Act
- 1961 Telefís Éireann; first broadcast (New Year's Eve)
- 1962 First broadcast of *The Late Late Show*
 Telstar satellite launched
- 1964 Radio Caroline begins broadcasting in North Sea
- 1968 Television coverage of disturbances in Northern Ireland
 Satellite coverage of Mexico City Olympics; first major live
 global television event
- 1969 First email sent; UCLA to Stanford University
 Riots in Derry and Belfast; British troops enter Northern
 Ireland

- 1970 *Fortnight* (Belfast)
- 1971 First colour broadcast by RTÉ
 Directive under Section 31 of Broadcasting Act bans inter-views with members of organisations linked to political violence
- 1972 'Bloody Sunday'; British Army kill thirteen people in Derry
- 1973 *Sunday World* (Dublin)
- 1974 First use of word 'internet' to describe linked computers
- 1976 *In Dublin* (Dublin)
- 1977 *Hot Press* (Dublin)
Magill (Dublin)
- 1978 RTÉ2 (television)
- 1979 RTÉ launches Radio 2
- 1980 *Sunday Tribune* (Dublin)
- 1982 *Angel* (dir. Neil Jordan); first film funded by Irish Film Board
- 1986 Anglo-Irish Agreement
- 1988 Broadcasting and Wireless Telegraphy Act
 Section 35 of Finance Bill facilitates film production
 Independent Radio and Television Commission (IRTC)
- 1989 First licensed commercial station in Republic: Capital Radio
 Sky begins satellite broadcasting
 EU Television without Frontiers Directive
My Left Foot (dir. Jim Sheridan) wins two Oscars, 1990
- 1990 Tim Berners-Lee and Robert Cailliau develop World Wide Web
- 1994 IRA announces ceasefire; Loyalist paramilitaries follow
 Netscape Navigator launched
Irish Times launches online edition: Ireland.com
- 1995 First computer operating system with web browser:
 Windows 95
 Green Paper on Broadcasting
 Referendum legalises divorce in Republic
- 1996 Telefís na Gaeilge begins broadcasting (TG4 as of 1999)
- 1998 First commercial broadcaster in Republic: TV3
Michael Collins (dir. Neil Jordan)
 Good Friday Agreement
- 1999 Exchequer surplus in Republic exceeds €1 billion
- 2000 *Metro Éireann*, multi-ethnic newspaper (Dublin)
- 2002 *Foreign Policy* ranks Ireland as world's most globalised society

Chronology

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- 2003 BBC begins Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) in Northern
 Ireland
- 2008 Broadcasting Bill
 RTÉ begins DAB broadcasting; announces Digital Terrestrial
 Television (DTT) for 2009
 Economy enters recession

BOOK OF THE DAY: MICHAEL FOLEY reviews *A History of the Media in Ireland* By Christopher Morash Cambridge University Press 244 pp. £45.00. THERE IS a scene described by Chris Morash in his *A History of the Media in Ireland*. It takes place in 18th century Dublin and illustrates the communal nature of early media. In coffee houses, such as Dick's Coffee House in Skinner's Lane, as well as drinking coffee, customers could read *The Flying Post*, printed and edited in the same premises, and debate issues not just with each other, but with the editor as he set up print and wrote stories. The housing of History of the media. America's earliest media audiences were quite small. These were the colonies' upper class and community leaders - the people who could read and who could afford to buy newspapers. The first regular newspaper was the *Boston News-letter*, a weekly started in 1704 by the city's postmaster, John Campbell. Like most papers of the time, it published shipping information and news from England. Most Americans, out in the fields, rarely saw a newspaper. They depended on travelers or passing townsmen for this news. When rebellious feelings against Britain began to spread i

The latest Tweets from Irish Media History (@media_history). Irish media history blog, by Stephanie Rains, Maynooth University. Maynooth, Ireland. A blog post about the cost of reading in Ireland a century ago " Irish Media History <https://irishmediahistory.com/2016/10/04/money-matters-the-cost-of-books-newspapers-and-magazines-in-early-20thc-ireland/> | 0 replies 5 retweets 1 like. Reply.