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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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Illustrations

1. *Aibidil Gaoidheilge agus Caiticiosma*, the first book printed in Irish in Ireland, was produced with specially cut type in 1571. It would be the first of many attempts to provide an Irish-language readership with a reformed catechism. Courtesy of the Library, Trinity College Dublin. *page* 7
2. John Temple's account of the massacres of 1641, *The Irish Rebellion*, originally published in 1646, would be republished at moments of sectarian tensions for the next three centuries. This edition, produced by the Dublin printer Aaron Rhames in 1724, contains some impressively grisly woodcuts. Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland. 27
3. *The Young Gentleman Volunteer's Universal Spelling Book*, printed in Dublin by Patrick Wogan in the 1780s, contained instructions for the two essential skills needed by a 'Young Gentleman Volunteer': literacy, and the ability to handle a gun. Courtesy of the British Library. 53
4. 'To create and foster public opinion in Ireland and to make it racy of the soil.' The slogan adopted by *The Nation* found an iconic image in Henry McManus's painting, *Reading 'The Nation'*. Courtesy of the National Gallery of Ireland. 81
5. The first successful trans-Atlantic telegraph lines, laid in 1866, ran from the west coast of Ireland to Newfoundland, in the process drawing a new informational map, with Ireland at its centre. 85
6. On April 18, 1887, *The Times* published a facsimile of a letter in which Charles Stewart Parnell appeared to condone the Phoenix Park murders five years earlier.

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Apart from the political storm that it provoked, the visual nature of the facsimile caused consternation in media circles in an age when news circulated by telegraph. Courtesy of the Library, Trinity College Dublin. 93

7. One of the earliest practical processes for producing colour photographs was developed in Dublin in 1892 by Professor John Joly of Trinity College. Interestingly, he chose an image that was iconic of tradition – an Irish peasant girl – to demonstrate the process in the pages of the *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*. Courtesy of the Royal Irish Academy. 105

8. In September 1897 the Lumière cameraman Jean Alexandre Louis Promio, shot the first moving images of Ireland including this footage of a very empty Sackville Street taken from O'Connell Bridge in Dublin. Courtesy of Association Frères Lumière and Irish Film Institute. 110

9. O'Connell Street, immediately after the 1916 Rising. The Irish School of Wireless Telegraphy, from which the world's first radio broadcast was attempted, is the pile of rubble in the foreground on the right. Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland. 126

10. 'Worst of all was the gloating hatred in some of the faces of these policemen.' Television footage of the civil-rights march in Derry on October 5, 1968, shot by RTÉ's Gay O'Brien, which brought the reality of police violence into homes outside of Ulster, is seen by many as a turning point in the Northern Ireland conflict. Courtesy of RTÉ Archives. 163

11. In the mid-1920s, Ireland had a number of magazines dedicated to the new medium of radio. However, radio had barely become a reality when new media technologies beckoned. This 1926 edition of the *Irish Radio and Musical Review* reports on John Logie Baird's latest invention, the 'televisor'. Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland. 167

12. 'I must admit that sometimes when I think of television and radio, and their immense power, I feel somewhat afraid.' President of Ireland, Eamon de Valera, on the opening broadcast of Telefís Éireann, December 31, 1961. Courtesy of RTÉ Archives. 172

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13. This internet visualisation suggests a way of picturing the results when searching for the word 'Ireland' using the internet search engine Google. The programme that produced it allows the viewer to visualise the links from one page to the next; the balls on the horizon break down into individual pages as the viewer moves towards them. Courtesy of Diarmuid O'Donoghue, Department of Computer Science, National University of Ireland, Maynooth. 224

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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.

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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)
1725	*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

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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

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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	Eaweard 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 kinetoscope 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

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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

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1970	*Fortnight* (Belfast)
1971	First colour broadcast by RTÉ
	Directive under Section 31 of Broadcasting Act bans interviews 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

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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

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