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GOTCHA!

The Role of Media in Politics and Society

Highlights of the principal Lecture themes, Speakers and other Events

Academic Director: Eithne Hand

Avondale House, Rathdrum, Co Wicklow.

SUNDAY

• **Mick Fealty/ Slugger O’Toole**

Lecture Title: **New media, politics and culture: Can we ever fix what the Internet seems to have broken?**

Mick will argue that the new media revolution is about culture, not technology. We are in a period, as an evolutionary biologist might put it, of ‘punctuated equilibrium’. What worked before, by and large, no longer does. Gatekeepers of big organisations struggle to meet the demands of increasingly intelligent forms of open conversation. But in an increasingly global, 24/7 news driven world how do we cut through the noise to what’s meaningful or useful? And how do we harvest the intelligence of a diverse and open digital commons.

Mick is over 50, but - much to his initial surprise - has become one Ireland’s most prominent political bloggers. These days, when he’s not hunting down a new story, he spends his much of his ‘offline’ time mentoring influential ‘digital refugees’ via his ‘Slugger Consults’ agency and helping opinion leaders who are struggling to understand the new grammar of online communication and what it means for their organisation.

His award winning website, Slugger O’Toole, has a reputation for generating robust engagement, and its golden rule - ‘play the ball and not the man’, acknowledged as a significant key to generating intelligent conversations online. He also writes on politics and culture for the Daily Telegraph, The Guardian, the Financial Times and the Irish Times. He speaks regularly at events throughout Ireland, Britain, Europe and the United States.

• **Elaine Byrne**

Lecture title: **When is corruption positive?**

The role of the media as an interpreter of corruption is under-estimated. As watchdogs on behalf of the public interest, their responsibility to the public trust deserves more scrutiny. Are the media as influential today as they were in the 1880s when Parnell made political decisions in return for political donations? Do the media exaggerate corruption? Is corruption sometimes positive?

Dr. Elaine Byrne is a weekly Irish Times columnist and adjutant lecturer on Irish politics in Trinity College Dublin. She has worked for the United Nations and the World Bank on governance issues. Elaine is from Wicklow and her first book Political Corruption in Ireland will be published by Manchester University Press in 2010.

MONDAY

• **Chris Morash**

Lecture Title: **The Palladium of Rights: Learning from Media History”**

The 2009 Broadcasting Act states clearly that the role of the Broadcasting Authority is to ensure that “the democratic values enshrined in the Constitution, especially those relating to rightful liberty of expression, are upheld.” It could be argued, however, that the democratic values of free expression go back well beyond the 1937 Constitution, to the appearance of a mediated public sphere in the eighteenth century. Indeed, by taking this longer historical view it may well be possible to trace the roots of the core values of Irish media culture. Accordingly, this lecture will look at the effects – sometimes unintentional – of key shifts in media policy since the early eighteenth century, reflecting on their lessons for the Irish media today.

Prof. Chris Morash is Head of the School of English, Media and Theatre Studies at NUI Maynooth, where he was the founding Director of the Centre for Media Studies. He is the author of A History of the Media in Ireland (Cambridge, 2010), and Chair of the Compliance Committee of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland.

• **Felix M.Larkin**

Lecture Title: **Parnell, Politics and the Press in Ireland**

This lecture will explore the power of the press, and the nature of journalism, in Ireland in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by reference to Parnell’s sometimes troubled relationship with the press – in particular, the Freeman’s Journal – and by reference also to the impact that the Parnell spilt and its turbulent aftermath had on the evolution of the newspaper market in Ireland. The Freeman and its contemporary newspapers were highly partisan organs for particular points of view, and an editor was required to promote in reportage as well as in the leader columns the views of those who owned or otherwise controlled his paper. The implications of this intensely political focus for standards of journalistic professionalism at that time in Ireland will be discussed.

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

For further information, call 01 -2852113

Felix M. Larkin is a freelance historian and writer, with a lifelong interest in the history of the Freeman’s Journal. He is the author of Terror and Discord: the Shemus Cartoons in the Freeman’s Journal. 1920-1924, published in December 2009. A recently-retired, career public servant, he is vice-chair of the National Library of Ireland Society and a founder member of the Newspaper and Periodical History Forum of Ireland. He studied history at University College Dublin, and was an editorial advisor and external contributor to the Dictionary of Irish Biography.

• **Myles Dungan**

Lecture title: **‘Mr. Parnell’s Rottweiler: United Ireland, 1881-91’**

Why did United Ireland outsell all other nationalist newspapers during that most politically active decade, the 1880s? Was it merely a Parnellite propaganda sheet or did its editor, William O’Brien, manage to retain his journalistic independence? To what extent was it viewed as a significant threat by Dublin Castle? Was it at odds or comfortable with the emerging ‘new journalism’ of the ‘fin de siècle’? Myles Dungan looks at the brief flowering of this controversial newspaper from the time of its establishment by Parnell to its condemnation of the Irish leader at the time of the infamous Parnellite Split.

Myles Dungan is a broadcaster and historian. He has written two books on the Irish experience in World War 1 (Irish Voices from the Great War and They Shall Grow Not Old) as well as a biography of William O’Shea (The Captain and the King). His most recent work is Conspiracy: Irish Political Trials, published by the Royal Irish Academy and RTE. He is currently studying for a PhD in Trinity College, Dublin in the area of government censorship of the nationalist press in the 1880s.

Afternoon/Evening Panel Discussion Topics:

Monday: Giving Voice – Irish Media and Scandal.
Tuesday Evening: Reporting Irish Politics – a cosy consensus or a challenging voice?
Thursday: Should Anyone Shout Stop? – Censorship and Privacy issues in modern media.
Friday: Citizen Journalism and Beyond.

Other Key Events

Cartoons: The history and relevance of Political Cartoons
Comedy: Clown show “Keeping Up?”
Drama: Re enactment of Pigott Forgery Trial

• **John Horgan**

Lecture Title: **The Freedom of the Press: Some Reflections**

Professor John Horgan was appointed as Ireland’s first the Press Ombudsman in 2007. He started work as a journalist in 1961, and wrote for a number of newspapers between then and 1976, when he went full-time into politics. After serving in Seanad Eireann, Dail Eireann, and the European Parliament, he joined the staff of Dublin City University in 1982 as a lecturer in journalism, and was appointed Professor of Journalism in 2001.

• **Mark Little**

Lecture Title: **Write Here: Right Now – Citizen Journalism and New Media**

Mark Little is the founder of Storyful.com, an online news service which will curate useful content from the noise of social media. For almost 20 years, he worked for RTE. He was the network’s first Washington correspondent and served as foreign news correspondent, reporting on all the major global news events of the past decade. In 2001, he won an Irish national media award for his reporting from Afghanistan. He was appointed presenter of RTE’s flagship current affairs show, Prime Time in 2002. He wrote and presented the documentary series, Who’s Afraid of Islam and American Dream – dead or alive? He is the author of the books, Turn Left at Greenland and Zulu Time. His most recent book, The New America, examines fundamental social and political changes in the United States. Mark is married, has three children and lives in Dublin

For further information, call 01 -2852113

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

PROVISIONAL SCHEDULE

Sunday August 8th

16.00: Official Opening: Tim Pat Coogan

Keynote Address:

New media, politics and culture: Can we ever fix what the Internet seems to have broken?

Sluggie O'Toole aka Mick Fealty
(Political Blogger)

Chair: Joe Duffy, RTE.

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Monday August 9th

10.30: Morning Coffee

11.00: Lecture

When is Corruption Positive ?

Elaine Byrne (TCD/Irish Times and author of "Political Corruption in Ireland")

Chair: Rosemary Day (University of Limerick)

14:15: Panel Discussion

Giving Voice : Irish Media and Scandal

Patsy Mc Garry - Irish Times
Terry Prone - Chairman, The Communications Clinic

David Gordon - Belfast Telegraph.

Chair : tba

20:00: Drama

Ruth Lehane - "Keeping Up?".

Tuesday August 10th

10:30 : Morning Coffee

11:00 : Lecture

The Palladium of Rights: Learning from Media History?

Prof. Chris Morash MRIA, (NUIMaynooth)

Chair : Brian Hand

14:30: Guided Tour with Pat Power

20:00 Woodenbridge Hotel

Panel Discussion:

Reporting Irish Politics – a cosy consensus or a challenging voice?

Kevin Rafter. IADT, Dun Laoghaire

Alex White, Senator

Fionnuala O Connor. Author and Journalist

Chair: Bride Rosney

Wednesday August 11th

10:30: Morning Coffee

11:00 : *The Parnell Lecture*

Parnell, Politics and the Press in Ireland

Felix M. Larkin

Chair : Emer Woodful BL

14:15: Media in the Classroom:

Dave Dunn – *Media Forum*

15:30: Lecture

Parnell, O'Brien and Censorship :

Myles Dungan, Author and Broadcaster

Chair: Eddie Holt (DCU)

20:00 Woodenbridge Hotel: Illustrated Talk

The Ongoing Relevance of Political Cartoons

David Rooney

21.00 Dramatic Re enactment of Pigott Forgeries

Myles Dungan /Mikel Murfi

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Thursday August 12th

10:30 : Morning Coffee

11:30 : Lecture

The Freedom of the Press: Some Reflections

John Horgan. Press Ombudsman

Chair: Catherine Halloran (Political Corr, The Star)

14:15: Panel Discussion

Should anyone shout stop ? Censorship and Privacy issues in the modern media context.

Dearbhail Mc Donald – Irish Independent

Mark Brennock - Murray PR
and others.

Chair : Gerard Stembridge

20:30 Woodenbridge Hotel Summer School Dinner

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Friday August 13th

10:30: Morning Coffee

11:00: Lecture *Write Here Right Now*

Mark Little. (marklittlenews)

Chair: Alison O'Connor (Sunday Business Post)

14:15: Panel Discussion

Citizen Journalism and Beyond

Helen Shaw, (Athena Media)

Jack Murray (MediaContact.ie)

Rosita Boland (Irish Times)

Chair: Garrett Harte, Station Editor, Newstalk

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