

## Introduction

### *A Cup of Tea, A Letter, and Words of Bold Confusion*

It was raining, as it usually did in Galway, and it was quite cold. I was glad of the chance to nip inside the pub, and anyway, I had to discuss the details of a possible forthcoming gig with the proprietor. I wasn't driving, so calling for a pint wouldn't have been a problem, but, quite frankly, I was more in the mood for a cup of tea.

Having taken off my coat, seated myself on the barstool, sipped my tea, and passed quickly over the ceremonial weather blather, the conversation soon deepened, as conversations with barmen in Ireland usually do. The barman wasn't from Galway, as his thick Cork accent let you know in no uncertain terms, and there were those who would tell you in hushed tones that he wasn't from Cork either.

He wasn't a happy man, wherever he was from. From what I could make out, he had opened his mail to a letter which he was not inclined in the least to agree with. It had come from the Irish Music Rights Organisation, the national performing rights collection agency, known to friend and foe as IMRO. They wanted him to pay money, which was bad enough as far as he was concerned, but what was worse was that they had been demanding money for the traditional sessions that he ran in the bar a few times a week. Although they were by no means the least touristy of sessions in Galway, a tourist mecca at the best of times, these sessions were, as far as he was concerned, 'traditional'.

I was vaguely aware of the problem that now concerned the barman, as every session-going traditional musician was, although I had tended to avoid seeking out the details. It seemed all a bit too confusing and ever so slightly dangerous, suggestive of signs that proclaim "**Here Be Dragons!**" I really wasn't a very political animal. Mostly, all I knew was that a lot of publicans had been getting more than a little peeved as IMRO continued to seek payment for royalty licenses. I didn't really understand how they worked. I didn't know anybody who did. Not really. It crossed my mind at the time that contesting payment for 'traditional sessions' was an important point, but that, to be honest, money was the bottom line for this guy. I was moonlighting as a journalist, so I decided to listen anyway. You never know where a conversation with a barman is going to lead you.

He produced the letter he had received from IMRO, and read it out. It seemed to be pretty much a pro-forma letter as would be written by anyone demanding money from a publican. One line struck me, though: "I wish to explain that our interest lies in the public performance of copyright music and as traditional does not automatically mean non-copyright we are therefore pursuing royalties with you for these performances". I got him to repeat the line, slowly, very slowly. My attempt to make sense of the logic of that sentence was to lead me to places that I had never even imagined.

I have often found myself in casual conversation with musicians. There is one question I dread: "So, what's your thesis about?" Personally, I find this a very difficult question to answer. For a long time I wasn't really sure what the answer was myself. I tend to compromise. The simple answer I usually give is "music and copyright". People hear "music" and there's a flicker of interest. They hear "copyright" and their eyes glaze over. If I get a reaction that indicates the presence of life it is often the rolling of eyes to heaven. The mention of "copyright" most often signals that it's time to talk about something else. It is hardly a subject to provoke widespread enthusiasm or interest, being as it is ensconced in legal particularities and often mind-bending

paradoxes. People sometimes, in seriousness, tell me that I have chosen a 'sexy topic'. These people are never musicians.

In this thesis I provide a theoretical analysis of the expansion of the Irish Music Rights Organisation (IMRO) during the period 1995-2000 as an example of the process and practices of enclosure. Enclosure, I eventually argue, is dispositional, founded on a disposition towards the elimination of uncertainty. Unquestioned acceptance of the Irish Music Rights Organisation entails unquestioned acceptance of the labels, categories, meanings, and expectations of law, intellectual property, performing rights, and copyright. Such acceptance, I argue, contributes to very particular effects of power in the ways that people relate to each other as they negotiate social interaction.

My research is complicated by my membership of the Irish Music Rights Organisation. I have laboured as a singer-songwriter since I was nineteen. I can honestly say, however, that my early dreams of music-business glory have been replaced by quieter concerns with stories well told, and songs well crafted. Nevertheless, I have experienced all the confusion, and uncertainty outlined in this thesis on a very personal level. To question the position of the Irish Music Rights Organisation has been, in my own case, to question myself. I have become aware that I have different and often conflicting ways of making sense of the worlds I live in. I have found myself questioning some of the most taken-for-granted elements of my personally-earned understandings.

### *Research*

This study is the outcome of research carried out from January 1995 until January 2002. From 1994 until 1997 I undertook an M.Phil. in Irish Studies at University College, Galway. During March 1998 I held a Royal Irish Academy/British Academy Research Award for study at the University of Oxford. I held the position of Fulbright Research Scholar at the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, Washington DC from September 1998 until July 1999. While at the Center I was engaged as one of the project coordinators for the UNESCO/Smithsonian World Conference: "A Global Assessment of the 1989 Recommendation on the

Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore: Local Empowerment and International Cooperation” held at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC, from June 27-30, 1999 (see Seitel, ed. 2001). I was registered as a doctoral candidate in Ethnomusicology at the Irish World Music Centre, University of Limerick from 1997 until 2002.

Extensive multi-site fieldwork interviews were conducted with recognised ‘traditional’ musicians from 1997 through 1999. The most intense period of fieldwork took place from October 1998 until May 1999, during my stay at the Smithsonian. Fieldwork sites at this time included Seattle, Philadelphia, Chicago, Boston, Baltimore, Bloomington, and Washington DC. Only a small number of interviews conducted will be referred to directly, but all have been crucial in coming to an understanding of the issues in this thesis. The reasons for this are explored in Chapter 1. Interviews were accompanied by prolonged periods of participant-observation among ‘traditional’ musicians as a bodhrán player and unaccompanied singer. This work was a reflective extension of my participation in similar contexts for a number of years prior to the commencement of this research. I am grateful to many people for regular feedback and critical comments which enabled me to periodically triangulate my findings.

The term 'fieldwork' is something of a retrospective label, which perhaps wrongly suggests a high degree of formalisation. The 'fieldwork process' here refers, in many cases, to the development and maintenance of friendships based around common interests. Many of the 'interviews' would, in another context, be regarded simply as 'friendly conversations from which I learned a lot'. I found that I was aware of learning more from those I had not previously known. People who were already close friends often left many things unstated under the assumption of shared knowledge, and, similarly, I perhaps left many questions unasked.

I have attempted to gather a wide range of information relevant to the affairs of the Irish Music Rights Organisation, including working papers, interviews with staff, publicity material, internal documents, informational and promotional literature. Interviews with representatives of the Irish Music Rights Organisation were conducted, although the tendency for officials to repeat a “party line” consistent with

documentation and legislation was noted. Thenceforth, reports, press releases, newspaper articles, and official presentations were primarily used as source material. Being myself a member of the Irish Music Rights Organisation I was in receipt of regular IMRO newsletters, an invaluable source with which to gauge the official representations made by the organisation. I also made a research visit to the IMRO library archives in Dublin. Considerable information on the organisation is freely available at the IMRO website (<http://www.imro.ie>), although a number of pages sourced during the research are no longer available. This is noted in footnotes where relevant. It must be noted here that this thesis does not provide a case study of the organisation. A case study analysis would have required a considerably different methodology. Rather this is a *theoretical* analysis of the relational implications of IMRO's expansion from 1995-2000. My focus on the expansion of the Irish Music Rights Organisation has led me to regard analysis of both the Mechanical Copyright Protection Society (MCPS) and of Phonographic Performance Ireland (PPI), similar organisations in many ways, as being beyond the scope of this inquiry.

I would like to be able to claim that “to embody a sensitivity to the marginalized - absences and inaudibilities in contemporary cultural spheres - I have avoided limiting this study to reported cases or even to litigated disputes” (Coombe 1998:9). The truth is that there are few directly relevant reported cases or litigated disputes to which I have been able to gain access. The representatives of the Irish Music Rights Organisation will not even consider taking up a case unless victory is guaranteed, and those cases taken have largely been settled out of court, leaving little but anecdotal evidence. Furthermore, “there has never been a fully comprehensive system of law reporting in Ireland” (Ó Máille 1990:v). The judgements of the High Court, Supreme Court, and Court of Criminal Appeal, are increasingly available, but there is no system for reporting District Court and Circuit Court decisions and judgements, those most relevant to my concerns here. In this thesis I have had to rely, with caution, on the internal reporting of the Irish Music Rights Organisation in their members' newsletter.

All of the debates conducted in the Dáil (Irish parliament) on the Copyright and Related Rights bill during the period 1997-2000 are available as full transcripts on the Internet. These transcripts are lengthy and repetitive, but are particularly

illuminating for the degree to which the standard discourses of copyright and intellectual property are reinforced within the debates of central government. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to elaborate on this point. It does, however, merit further investigation. Also available on the Internet are the texts of decisions passed down by the Irish Competition Authority. All website addresses are listed in footnotes where relevant.

### *Stylistic Features*

The project was initially driven by my interest in what is considered ‘traditional’ music and song in Ireland. I approached it as a person who sings songs and plays the odd tune, and as an ex-journalist in the field of ‘traditional’ music. More correctly, perhaps, it is driven by love and respect for people I have met in ‘traditional’ contexts over the years. Many people I have met on my travels know more about what it means to be human than I could ever find out with twenty theses like this one.

Subsequently, this thesis has been written not only for an academic audience, but also mindful of a more general readership. In this respect, I have structured the thesis so that the concentration of formal theoretical analysis increases as the thesis progresses. Thus, it is hoped that most of the thesis is accessible to most readers, and that later theoretical stages emerge in a less abrupt manner. I have attempted to use a minimum of theoretical jargon, employing technical terms with discretion. I have tried to be as clear as possible where theoretical analysis is concerned. Any failings in this respect are my own.

A key factor in this quest for accessibility is the incorporation of a number of ‘ethnographic passages’ into the body of the thesis, such as is offered at the beginning of this introduction. These passages review key moments in the development of my research. They are presented in the personal manner in which they were experienced. I try to provide some insight into what it was like to experience these moments as they happened. This is not done in the structuralist sense of trying to freeze time in a synchronic “ethnographic moment” (see Fabian 1983). Rather, it is more sympathetic with a journalistic approach often found in feature articles that tries to give a sense of having been there. I think it is vitally

important that I convey a sense of the intense personal impact that the expansionary activities of the Irish Music Rights Organisation have had on many people. These passages give some idea of the competing meanings and expectations that came to light in the midst of uncertainty, confusion, and conflict. An awareness of local and specific interpretive arenas also leads to an awareness of the importance of individually-negotiated social interaction. Participants in these exchanges, myself included<sup>1</sup>, are compelled to adapt and shift with the nuances of what happens amidst a co-existence of voices, perspectives, discourses, and personalities. The issues, then, are not experienced as merely abstract concerns, but as proximate realities in “dialogic moments that, however halting, chaotic, or conflictual, form the core of human social and personal life”<sup>2</sup>.

Chapter 4 contains three such passages. The first, “The Rumble at the Crossroads”, recounts the exchanges that occurred following a paper presentation at a conference in Dublin in April, 1996. The paper, given by William Hammond, was perhaps the first formal airing of the confusion and bewilderment that many in ‘traditional music’ circles felt in the face of the expansion of the Irish Music Rights Organisation. Hammond’s presentation, and its aftermath, could be considered a significant flashpoint in IMRO’s cycle of expansion in the ‘traditional’ domain. The second passage, “Copyright Nearly Killed the Radio Star”, reports a heated discussion that took place in February, 1997, on Today With Pat Kenny, a popular daily radio talkshow on the national broadcast network, RTÉ (*Raidió Teilifís Éireann*). Two people had been invited to speak on the show. They were to discuss demands that representatives of the Irish Music Rights Organisation were making with regard to ‘Irish traditional sessions’. On one side of the debate was Hugh Duffy, then Chief Executive Officer of IMRO; on the other was Fintan Vallely, a respected musician, journalist, and ethnomusicologist who specialises in ‘traditional music’ issues. The third passage, “The Marsh”, reviews a specially-convened seminar on ‘traditional

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<sup>1</sup> It is important to remember that I experienced these events as a signed-up member of the Irish Music Rights Organisation. I also regarded myself as a neophyte member of a ‘traditional’ community. The conflicts reported here reflect personal tensions in the course of my research.

<sup>2</sup> William Washabaugh ([http://www.uwm.edu/~wash/102\\_18.htm](http://www.uwm.edu/~wash/102_18.htm)).

music' and copyright that took place in Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, in October, 1997. This seminar provided yet another opportunity for the issue to be debated.<sup>3</sup>

The fifth and final ethnographic passage is presented in Chapter 9. This provides an overview of an Extraordinary and Annual General Meeting of the Irish Music Rights Organisation as it occurred in Dublin in September, 2000. This passage offers an opportunity to ethnographically illustrate some of the features of enclosure that have been discussed up to that point.

Writing style has become quite problematic within anthropological research. Many of the tensions between literary representation and claims to ethnographic validity are discussed at length in the seminal collection Writing Culture (Clifford and Marcus, eds. 1986). There are a number of different writing styles employed in the course of "Beyond the Commons". This is intended to convey the variety of linguistic and social registers in and through which we move in the course of our lives. In writing I often move from a playful and colloquial approach to a more formal, theoretical tone, and back again. A wide range of grammatical and rhetorical techniques are used to broaden the associations evoked in the negotiation of both writing and reading this thesis. I also frequently intended to evoke the ever-presence of uncertainty in our experience. To this end, then, there are very few definitive statements, each statement being wary of the possibilities of alternatives, the persistence of windows to the 'otherwise'.

Where my specifically individually-negotiated experience is referred to I use the first person singular. Where I refer to development of the argument presented I use the first person plural, in rhetorical acknowledgement of the participation of readers. I have also taken the paradoxical step of making extensive use of the passive voice while also seeking to emphasise the importance of personally experienced specificity.

Often words and references in the text are offered playfully so that they might resonate quietly with other words and references elsewhere. These are never

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<sup>3</sup> It is notable that in each case there is an absence of official *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* (CCÉ) representation. The relationship between Comhaltas and IMRO is dealt with in detail in Chapter 4.

signposted and are left for the reader to discover for themselves. There are, for example, a number of running motifs that I hope are not overstated. Where possible I have allowed room for readers to make their own connections.

A number of Irish-language phrases are used in the text. Where a term is not italicised, the term is used regularly in the English language in Ireland. Conversely, where a term is italicised, it is rarely used in spoken or written English. Elsewhere italics are used for emphasis.

### *Bibliography*

Within the field of what might be called 'intellectual property studies' I found myself with a vast array of positions to contend with, ranging from economic analyses of intellectual property law (e.g., Merges 1996) to deeply concerned arguments against the encroachment of intellectual property upon the lives of indigenous peoples (e.g., Greaves, ed. 1994; Posey and Duffield 1996; Brush and Stabinsky, eds. 1996). The literature on copyright within the discipline of legal studies alone runs far and wide. I found the work of Goldstein (1990, 1994), Ginsburg (1997), Patterson and Lindberg (1991), Samuelson (1991, 1994, 1996, 1996a, 1998), and Litman (1996, 1997, 1998) particularly engaging. I maintained a bibliographic database<sup>4</sup> of related material, all the while narrowing the focus of the research. I received particular assistance in compiling this database from the staffs of the libraries of the Working Group on Traditional Resource Rights, affiliated to Mansfield College, Oxford, and the Folklife Reading Room of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.. The bibliographic style is consistent with that of the journal Ethnomusicology.

The direction of the thesis changed considerably during the course of my research, however. These changes are discussed in detail in Chapter 1. The appended bibliography reflects the entire research period from 1996 until 2001. As a result of the many shifts in research focus, not all of the publications in the bibliography have been cited in the body of the text. Nevertheless, I felt it important to provide a comprehensive record of the range of material consulted. In many ways the

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<sup>4</sup> A select bibliography on music and copyright, drawn from this database, is maintained at <http://orpheus.tamu.edu/pmssem/pmssem.htm>

bibliography represents the photographic negative of my thesis. Also, this research has proceeded largely on the basis of associative thinking and often on the basis of serendipity and synchronicity. The character of my bibliography speaks of this. I would further hope that this bibliography serves as a resource for people engaged in the study of issues related to this thesis. An expanding and thematically-organised version of this bibliography will be maintained on the Internet at a later stage.

### *Ethnomusicology or 'Eh ... no music-ology'?*

This thesis is undertaken within the research field of ethnomusicology. In 1979 the ethnomusicologist George List said that:

The field of study known as ethnomusicology has expanded so rapidly that it now encompasses almost any type of human activity that conceivably can be related in some manner to what may be termed music. The data and methods used are derived from many disciplines found in the arts, the humanities, the social sciences, and the physical sciences. The variety of philosophies, approaches, and methods utilized is enormous. It is impossible to encompass them all within one definition (cited in Myers, ed. 1992:14).

In the course of my research it has become clear that the field of ethnomusicology is as hopelessly interdisciplinary as my own thesis has turned out to be, which has been more than comforting. Not only that, but my personal curse of finding most commonly-used terms in most fields partially objectionable is also reflected in the field of ethnomusicology, and I believe this to be no bad thing:

In the 1990s, the conscientious ethnomusicologist is often at a loss for descriptive words to explain his enterprise, having been stripped during the last several decades of his working vocabulary of vivid, colourful terms. In the kingdom of exiled words live the labels condemned as pejorative: the old-timers, 'savage', 'primitive', 'exotic', 'Oriental', 'Far Eastern'; some newcomers, 'folk', 'non-Western', 'non-literate', 'pre-literate'; and recently 'world'. 'Traditional' survived the trial of the seventies, leaving ethnomusicologists with an impotent concept that refers, in the world of music, to everything and therefore nothing (Myers 1992:11).

In the late 1960s it was stated that: "Ethnomusicology is concerned with the music of other peoples" (Wachsmann cited in Myers, ed. 1992:8). This is still a popular notion of the field and one which at first made me question my role as an Irish doctoral student doing research in Ireland in an Irish university under the umbrella of the field of Ethnomusicology. But, as Rice writes: "Even so-called "insider" ethnomusicologists, those born into the cultures they study, undergo a productive distancing necessary to the explanation and critical understanding of their own cultures" (1994:6). The term "ethnomusicology" engenders something of the same

reaction that the word “copyright” does among the uninitiated - typically, glazed eyes and a vacant stare - which threatened to condemn me to a somewhat isolationist pursuit in the course of my research (Thankfully, this has not been the case). I shall not seek to define ethnomusicology. From a pragmatic perspective, the field of ethnomusicology has allowed me to hold a research position in a university department, permitting me to delve into the fields of anthropology, sociology, folklore, and critical legal theory. Starting from within ethnomusicology has also led me to question the use of the term “music” at all. To paraphrase Foucault: “... it is precisely this idea of [music] *in itself* that we cannot accept without examination” (1990:152).

The term ‘music’ is such a commonplace that it seems natural, and inevitable, that it be used as a category for analysis in ethnomusicology. It seems to be understood that we know what it is that we are referring to when we use the word, that there is “a cultural phenomenon called “music”” (Wallis and Malm 1984). There are innumerable books, recordings, classes, and conferences to support such a claim. Like those in the fields of musicology and ethnomusicology, those who participate in the discourses of the law, economics, intellectual property, and copyright presume that there is such a thing as “music”. There is nothing in our experiences of the music industry, technologies, music education, concert performance, and aesthetic appreciation to suggest otherwise, it is assumed. Almost my entire journalistic experience, for example, was based on the assumption that ‘music’ was the focus of my inquiry.

What if there isn’t a ‘thing’ called music? What if our acceptance of the abstraction of a singular category of “music” is counterproductive to our research concerns, at least those weighted towards the disciplines of anthropology and sociology? What if we are able to analyse “music” because we set out to analyse “music”, and classify, separate, and differentiate in ways which justify our analysis and satisfy our curiosity, systematically forming the object of which we speak (Foucault 1972:49). As an intellectual exercise, what if we try to understand what we have been trying to understand without using the term “music” as a category on which to base our analyses? I realise that this is so radical as to be virtually unthinkable, and is hardly likely to find widespread support. A lot of people have a lot of power invested in and justified by the presumption of the existence of ‘music’ as a universal phenomenon.

As an initial analytic category, though, I have found that the label “music” has hindered my own attempts in this thesis to find new ways to think about the puzzles and paradoxes of copyright. It has hindered the search for common theoretical grounds for the comparative analysis of power relations and the transformative potential in our negotiations of meaning in social interaction. If we are trying to find perspectives that offer windows to the otherwise, that deconstruct those things that are presented as natural, inevitable, or necessary, then maybe seeking radically new ways to speak about what it is we do is a fundamental task.

Seeking to understand ‘music’ as a universal or total phenomenon draws us to the safest common denominators of similarity in comparative analysis, which are music-as-sound, music-as-vision (e.g., notation), or music-as-thing (e.g., recorded product). This safety replicates the biases towards visualisation, auralisation, and fixation that can be found within the discursive formations of law and copyright. ‘Music’ is analytically separated and abstracted from social context in order to justify the validity of using the category as a universal label at all, and to justify the place of ‘music’ as product and commodity within discourses of copyright and intellectual property. This leads us to reduce our understanding of ‘music’ to those aspects which, as they become reified, guide us to blind ourselves to the specificity of locally-negotiated meanings and relations.

I feel that ethnomusicology is, in many ways, an attempt to back-pedal from this totalising abstraction of ‘music’ while still retaining ‘music’ at the centre of inquiry. Some, like Martin Stokes (1994), cope with such problems by suspending ‘music’ as a ‘vague category’ while also saying that “music ‘is’ what any social group consider[s] it to be, contrary to the essentialist definitions and quests for musical ‘universals’ of 1960s ethnomusicology, or text-oriented techniques of musicological analysis” (5). One option is to take up the challenge of Anthony Seeger’s (1987) “musical anthropology” to overcome the theoretical divide between the study of music and the study of society. Another is to confront the challenge of Christopher Small, and recognise that “The apparent thing “music” is a figment, an abstraction of the action, whose reality vanishes as soon as we examine it at all closely” (1998:2). Small’s use of the label of “musicking”, while it draws attention to activity and the specificity of social context, still fails to recognise its own fundamental insight, that

the most fruitful theoretical engagements with whatever people might mean by “music” are those conducted in such a way as to leave sound, vision, and material product as, at the very least, secondary concerns that can only really be addressed successfully in the wake of comprehensive anthropological or sociological analysis.

This is the challenge I believe I must confront if I am to properly engage with questions of meaning, power, and expectation within social contexts increasingly dominated by the discourses of ‘music and copyright’. The task is to remain vigilant and to minimize my complicity in the very discourses I seek to challenge. As Foucault puts it, speaking in the context of an exploration of madness: “This is doubtless an uncomfortable region. To explore it we must renounce the convenience of terminal truths, and never let ourselves be guided by what we know ...” (1988:ix).

This is not, then, an orthodox ethnomusicological thesis. As an ethnomusicologist I approach my work with an absence of music theory and a strong inclination towards anthropology, sociology, and philosophy. I was not trained in ‘music theory’, and have no formal musical training beyond knowing enough to play an Eb tenor horn at band practice on Sunday afternoons as a teenager. It is enough to learn a tune on my banjo from a book. This thesis contains no musicological analysis. It contains no strict analysis of musical practice. Whatever I or anyone else might understand by “music” is not the primary focus of my explorations.

### *Towards theories of negotiation and enclosure*

What you will find are attempts to think about the research area, and, ultimately, about life, in other ways. In Chapters 7, 8, and 9 of this thesis I attempt to lay the grounds for a new theoretical system. In Chapters 7 and 8 I present a theory of what I term ‘negotiation’. In Chapter 9, I present a theory of enclosure. I am very aware that the theoretical suggestions offered here are underdeveloped. The fact that they are squeezed into three chapters of a doctoral thesis says this clearly enough. In many ways, however, these ideas are presented only as brief, preliminary, skeletal outlines to provide some measure of guidance in my future work. Presenting a fully developed theoretical system is far beyond the scope of this thesis. This thesis offers no definitive answers. It hopefully provides some insight into some of the ways in

which I make sense of my world. The ideas in this thesis are not intended as authoritative pronouncements, but, rather, as invitations to think, connect, and dream, in and through the doing of the doing.

*And finally ...*

Throughout the course of this research one of the most difficult things has been to convince myself, never mind others, that there is an issue, that there are issues, that this research is important, urgent, and that the problems, conflicts, and confusion that arise as copyright is applied within our lives is changing the way in which we understand what we do and who we are. It has often been difficult to retain focus. When in doubt I look to the words of Irish journalist Fintan O'Toole:

... there is still, in Ireland, a great deal to be said. Those of us who work in the media become affected by a paradoxical mixture of weary futility and self-centred arrogance in which we both undervalue and over-rate the work we do. We get tired of dealing with the same issues time and time again, and often lose the conviction that there is any point in saying them. But we also assume that because we are weary of an issue, its importance has somehow diminished. We forget why it arose in the first place - because it touches the lives of the people we are supposed to serve (O'Toole 1996:234).