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Reddin van Tuyll, Debra, Mark O'Brien, and Marcel Broersma, eds. *Politics, Culture, and the Irish American Press, 1784-1963*. Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2021, 448 pp., \$39.95 (paperback). Reviewed by Jon Bekken, Albright College (jbekken@albright.edu)

This collection explores the contributions of several Irish-American journalists over two centuries, from the Irish emigres who edited partisan papers in the early American republic through Irish press coverage of African-American troops stationed in Northern Ireland during World War II to John F. Kennedy's presidential visit to Ireland in 1963. A foreword by the Irish ambassador to the United States and an afterword by the editors point to the continuing deep ties between the two countries. This volume is a significant contribution to the emerging field of transnational journalism, a subject it explores through the lens of the Irish and American experiences.

David Bulla's chapter on William Duane embodies its spirit, noting the role "the globe-trotting seditious" (21) played in Irish, American, British, and Indian newspapers. All four operated under the British common law tradition, which afforded few protections to critical journalism. Duane and his publications regularly faced official harassment, and he was repeatedly forced to relocate.

Other transnational journalists addressed in this collection include Michael Davitt, who covered Russia and South Africa for Irish, American, British, and Australian newspapers; Emile Dillon, an Irish journalist who covered Russia and the negotiations that formally ended World War I for London's *Daily Telegraph* and later did publicity work in behalf of Irish-American oil tycoon Edward Doheny's ventures in Mexico; and John Mitchel, who fled Ireland after being convicted of treason for his writings in the *United Irishman*, edited the *Citizen* in New York, was a foreign correspondent in France, edited pro-Confederate newspapers in Virginia, and finally returned to New York to launch his final paper, the *Irish Citizen*.

Many viewed the world through an Irish lens, deeply skeptical of British motives. Davitt supported

the Boers in South Africa, presumably because they were battling the British—largely ignoring the indigenous peoples whose lands were being fought over. Mitchel condemned abolitionism, insisting that slavery was far preferable to England's treatment of Irish workers. Debra Reddin van Tuyll argues that Mitchel's defense of slavery and the Confederacy should be read as a critique of British treatment of the Irish, and of progressivism more generally.

But others drew on their experience of oppression to inspire broader solidarity. Gillian O'Brien's chapter on Margaret Sullivan notes her long commitment not only to Irish nationalism, but also to the rights of women, Black Americans, and tenant farmers. Irish editor and rebel James Connolly's support for Indian independence also comes to mind, as do the efforts of the Chicago Federation of Labor's president, John Fitzpatrick, to organize integrated unions of Black and White workers and his support for anticolonial struggles around the world.

This is a far-reaching volume, including chapters on the representation of the Irish in American humor magazines; popular memory of the heavy death toll among the Irish laborers who dug the New Basin Canal in New Orleans; the journalistic exchange between Wexford, Ireland, and its diaspora in Savannah, Georgia; the displaced Choctaw people's 1847 contribution to Irish famine relief from their exile in Oklahoma; political cartoons addressing the Roosevelt and McKinley administrations in the *Irish World*; a post-independence Irish newspaper's crusade against slum conditions, led by an Irish-American editor; and the *Boston Pilot* and its attitude toward social reform (for labor rights and against women's suffrage).

The notes, tucked in the back, show close engagement with a range of primary sources as well as a solid command of the secondary literature. The

chapters are sure to prove invaluable to researchers exploring diverse facets of Irish-American journalism. They also complicate that construction in important ways. Michael Doorley's chapter on the *Gaelic American* notes that while the paper was established to support the Clan na Gael, advocating a revolutionary solution to the Irish question, it also addressed uniquely American concerns—leading to bitter conflict with representatives of Irish nationalism in the United States. “The objectives of the *Gaelic American* were fundamentally shaped by American considerations,” Doorley concludes, “rather than by the needs of the Irish leader” Éamon de Valera (253). The paper was contemptuous when de Valera pointed to the Platt Amendment as a model of how England could protect its security while granting Irish independence, noting that such an

approach had long kept Cuba under Washington's thumb.

This book is more than the sum of its (often excellent) parts; it is an argument (sometimes explicit, but usually implicit) for transnational journalism history, demonstrating the transnational character of journalism even in the 1700s. Colonized and often dispossessed, the Irish may have been forced by circumstance to cross borders and forge a new sense of their identity and their place in the world. But we can see echoes of this transnational journalism in the long tradition of foreign correspondence, in the many foreign-language newspapers whose editors and publications moved between countries, and in the reciprocal flow of journalistic ideologies and practices that long predate today's global information networks.