The Long Note: The Mediation and Mediatisation of Irish Traditional Music on Irish Public Radio, 1970-1994

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For Andrew

Abstract

This thesis explores the mediation and mediatisation of Irish traditional music activity, ideas, and discourse in the period 1970-1994 through a case study of long-running Irish traditional music radio programme *The Long Note* (1974-c.1991) on Irish public broadcaster *Radio Teilifís Éireann*. The research explores the musical practices and aesthetics that are cultivated, curated, and created in national broadcasting. It focuses on the late twentieth century when practices within Irish musical traditions were slowly becoming subjects of debate. Reference to the structures and materials in use for the creation of music radio on the minority language station RnaG as well as in nearby BBC Ulster affords a comparative aspect to the research. The methodology of the study comprises ethnographic fieldwork, interviews with central figures in music broadcasting and associated industry and institutional figures from this era, and close analysis of both sound and print archival sources.

This radio programming formed spaces for the articulation of Irish national identity and nationalism. Ideas were formed, received, acknowledged, eluded, discussed, and responded to within public broadcasting structures. Quantitative and qualitative inequities of representation in gender and ethnicity existed in this programming, foregrounding particular ideas of Irishness (male, settled). Liveness was a consistent theme in discourse surrounding the programme, categorised by separate taxonomies. Liveness was used to construct authenticity, and this process was connected to emerging discourses on tradition and innovation in this music which came to public attention in the mid-1990s. The historical perspective of this thesis adds to existing studies of mediation and mediatisation by coinciding with a period of accelerated development of Irish traditional music in the commercial realm, when Irish traditional musicians were beginning to present themselves on a larger scale as professional musicians. Radio was a site of important activity in this process, sowing roots for the global mediation and mediatisation of Irish folk and traditional music exemplified by *Riverdance* in the mid-1990s. Issues of representation, aesthetics and cultural nationalism also influenced the development of professionalism and commercialism in Irish traditional music in the period. This research contributes to the construction of an interdisciplinary framework for the exploration of the

mediation and mediatisation of traditional music, furthering conversations on the impact of technology on musical communities, cultures, nations, and societies.

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List of Abbreviations and Irish-language Terms

Cór Radio Éireann	The professional choir established by Radio Éireann in 1943. It was replaced by the RÉ Singers (1953-1984) and then the RTÉ Chamber Choir (1984 - c.1995). Later, the choir broke from its association with RTÉ, becoming The National Chamber Choir (1992-2013) and later Chamber Choir Ireland (2013 - present).
CCÉ	Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (Association of Musicians of Ireland)
Gaeltacht(aí)	Irish-speaking area(s) of Ireland
Gaelcholáiste	Irish-medium mainstream secondary school, based outside the Gaeltacht
ICTM Ireland	The Irish national chapter of the International Council for Traditional Music
ITMA	The Irish Traditional Music Archive/*Taisce Cheol Dúchais Éireann*
MRU	Mobile Recording Unit
NCH	National Concert Hall (located in Dublin)
OBO	Outside Broadcast Officers
RnaG	RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta, the Irish-language medium radio channel on RTÉ, established in 1972 to cater for the *Gaeltachtaí* (the Irish-language speaking areas of Ireland).
RTÉ	Radio Teilifís Éireann, the Irish public radio and television broadcaster. Beginning in 1926, it was first referred to as 2RN, changing to Radio Athlone (1933), Radio Éireann (1937), and finally, with the arrival of television, Radio Teilifís Éireann (1961). (I refer to the broadcaster throughout this thesis as RTÉ.)
RTÉ Guide	A printed radio programme guide, published weekly by RTÉ from 1961
SMI	Society for Musicology in Ireland
TD	Teachta Dála (Member of Parliament)

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Declaration

I, Helen Gubbins, confirm that this thesis is my own work. I am aware of the University's guidance on the use of unfair means (www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/unfair-means). This work has not been previously presented for an award at this, or any other, university.

Some sections of chapter 4 of this thesis were previously published in:

Gubbins, Helen, and Lonán Ó Briain. 2020. "Broadcasting Rock: The Fanning Sessions as a Gateway to New Music." In Mangaoang, Áine, John O'Flynn, and Lonán Ó Briain, eds. *Made in Ireland: Studies in Popular Music*. Routledge, 2020, pp. 31-41.

These sections are clearly demarcated in the text.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Research questions

"What are people doing with media? What are media doing to people?" John Horgan asks (2007, 9). One could fruitfully substitute "traditional music" for "people" to ask what is traditional music doing with (or on) media? And what is media doing to traditional music? Radio has had "a defining influence on the perception of what music is and, at the same time, musical practices and ideals have contributed decisively to the whole idea of what radio is and how it has developed" (Michelsen et al 2019, ix). Radio (like many media forms) is a medium for expression, as well as an artform that can be read itself as a cultural text, "a cultural text which is, itself, part of the discursive construction of [musical] history" (Stanbridge 2004, 95). In this thesis, I focus on Irish public radio as not simply an objective source of Irish traditional music, but rather as a source of cultural texts that merit exploration and investigation by themselves. This thesis investigates the relationship of the Irish public broadcaster Radio Teilifís Éireann (hereafter RTÉ) to musical activity, ideas, and discourse in the late twentieth century, specifically with regards to Irish traditional music. Functioning since 1926, RTÉ was a key site for Irish musical production as well as debate in the twentieth century, like many other public broadcasters internationally (White 1998; Vallely 2011; Samana 2012; Hilmes & Vancour 2007, 8). My primary case-study in this research is *The Long Note,* a weekly radio programme of Irish traditional music which ran for 17 years (1974 – c.1991), covering a time period of much debate within that musical tradition. My methodology comprises ethnographic fieldwork, interviews with central figures in music broadcasting and associated industry and institutional figures from this era, and close analysis of both sound and print sources.

My central question guiding the research is thus: How did the people involved in radio programming of traditional and folk music on Irish public radio mediate that music for listeners in the time period 1970-1994 and why? And what, if any, were the apparent effects? I addressed this by asking the following questions of RTÉ, BBC Ulster, and the people involved in its programming:

What were the values underlying *The Long Note* and other music programmes in RTÉ? How did these values manifest themselves in the programmes' commissioning, scheduling, advertisement, and content? How did they compare with the values of RTÉ as a station and its other music programmes of the time? How did *The Long Note* address and respond to RTÉ's audience and taste communities over the years? What were the effects of these programmes on listening musicians? To what extent did the radio programmes enable or encourage experimentation, virtuosity, and the development of professionalisation on the part of the performing musicians? How did the music performed on these programmes articulate with musical activity of the period, including: the formation of academic and popular perceptions of Irish music in the twentieth century? And how did the mediation of folk and traditional music change along the lines demarcated by nations, regions and locales? Asking this question in the Northern Irish context proves fruitful in my discussions of nationalism in chapter 3 in particular, though it also contributes to discussions of gender and ethnicity in chapters 4 and of liveness in chapter 5. I outline the narratives, forms and assumptions of the programming in this era and contextualise them within the range of music and music broadcasting changes in the late twentieth century, utilising recent critical scholarship in the field of Irish traditional music and broader scholarly fields as appropriate. I base this on wide archival research of newly-deposited and/or catalogued papers (ITMA and RTÉ), on wider archival research across RTÉ, ITMA and further afield, on sixteen interviews conducted with former employees and listeners of RTÉ, BBC Ulster and RnaG, and on recent literature on the concepts of mediation and mediatisation in particular (introduced in detail in section 1.3). I hope this thesis will form a point of departure for those interested in the topic of Irish traditional music on public radio in Ireland and beyond, and that it will further understanding for those exploring the impact of technological mediations on traditional and folk musics.

1.2 Choice of time-period: 1970 - 1994

The choice of time period for this thesis brackets *The Long Note,* a radio programme which broadcast on RTÉ Radio 1 from 1974 - c.1991 (Bradshaw 2019). Fintan Vallely (2011, 440-442) provides a

useful chronology of key events in Irish traditional music in this period, but the following section will outline my own reasoning for focusing on this time period.

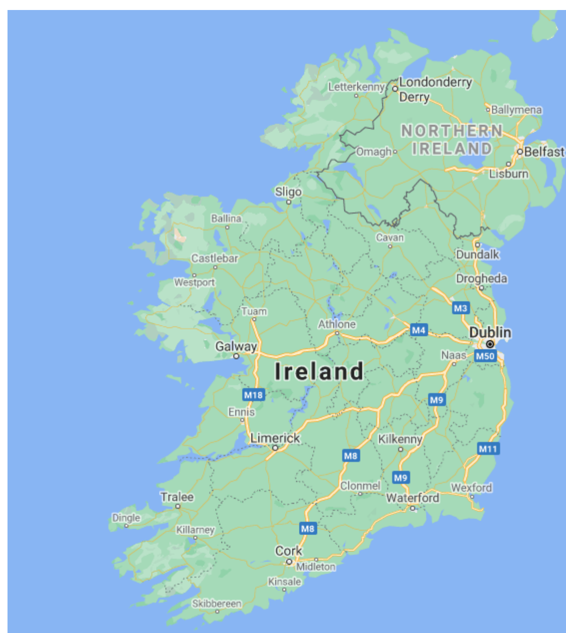

Fig. 1.2: Map of the island of Ireland showing the Republic of Ireland (also referred to as "Ireland") with the capital city, Dublin, from where RTÉ was transmitted, and the border dividing the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Source: Map data copyright 2022 Google.

The Irish political climate of the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s was tense, characterised by financial hardship from high mortgage interest rates, regular changes of government, a tense relationship with the UK (its nearest neighbour), controversy surrounding the 1985 Anglo-Irish agreement, and difficulties for Irish citizens living and working in the UK. The general "opening up" of Ireland economically, educationally, and politically, which began with the Seán Lemass government of the 1960s, continued through the 1970s and 1980s, but not without its challenges. Other major geopolitical changes at the time included Ireland joining the EU in 1973.

On a musical level, key changes came to pass in the broader Irish traditional & folk music environment in the period 1970-1994. Regular academic publication *Éigse Cheol Tíre* began under the stewardship of Hugh Shields. Record labels Green Linnet, Tara and Mulligan records joined Claddagh records and Gael Linn records in releasing Irish music material (Murphy 2020). Building on the global reach of first Irish music supergroup, The Chieftains (Glatt 1997) throughout the 1960s and 1970s, groups like The Bothy Band and Dé Dannan came to prominence, forging a path for the professionalisation of traditional musicians in Ireland. In the educational context, Irish traditional

music came to third level (higher education) for the first time in 1975, under the stewardship of Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin in University College Cork. These globalising media and educational phenomena continued into the mid-1990s, through the work of *Riverdance*, first performed in 1995 as an interval entertainment in the European Song Contest, and subsequently in its global full-length dance show. The experimentation and fusion of *Riverdance* was followed swiftly by further exploration in the BBC Television show *A River of Sound*. Both *Riverdance* and *A River of Sound* were watershed moments in the mediation of Irish folk and traditional music, both in Ireland and internationally. While the 1970s were described by founder of the Ulster Scots Orchestra, William Drennen, as the period of "homogenization of Irish traditional music" (Cooper 2009, 78), the period after *Riverdance* and *A River of Sound* is often discussed as one of hugely increased mediation of Irish traditional music (Motherway 2013). The internet arrived in the 1990s, which, as Wendy Bergfeldt-Munro notes, allowed people to "seek out and explore culturally specific musical forms beyond local radio offerings and person-to-person exchanges" (2015, 7). This forms an appropriate bookend for the period studied here. In this thesis, I suggest that the seeds of the global mediation and mediatisation of Irish folk and traditional music exemplified by *Riverdance* in the mid-1990s were sown in the period 1970-1994. I also suggest that the medium of radio was a site of particularly important activity in this realm.

The period of time studied here is also bookended by "The Troubles" in Northern Ireland, a thirty-year sectarian conflict generally regarded as spanning the period 1968-1998 and resulting in over 3,500 deaths and tens of thousands of injuries.[1] The Troubles is generally marked by the beginning of civil rights marches in 1968 and the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement in 1998, although related violent events continued after this period of time. My interviewees used differing names for "The Troubles," including "the northern conflict," "the northern Irish conflict," and "the bad times." The conflict was the focus of much discussion by the traditional music organisation Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (Association of Musicians of Ireland, hereafter CCÉ) and their response to it included the politicising of traditional music festivals (as discussed further in section 3.5). The subject of how to name the

[1] I discuss the violent conflict in Northern Ireland from 1968-98 in greater detail in chapter 3.

northern part of the island of Ireland also came up in discussions during this project, during the singing workshop at the 2019 Willie Clancy Summer School in Milltown Malbay, County Clare, for example, led by BBC Ulster broadcaster Brian Mullen and singer Ciaran Ó Gealbháin (see chapter 3 for further discussion on this topic). The importance of this name is also discussed by David Cooper in his study on the musical traditions of Northern Ireland and its diaspora (2009, 1, fn. 2). In my interviews for this thesis, I used the description "Northern Ireland" when referring specifically to the political state of Northern Ireland. Otherwise, where appropriate, I mirrored whichever term my interviewees used (generally, "The north of Ireland") in order not to interfere with their views on the name nor with the narrative of their interview.

Several other factors contribute to the relevance of this time period to the study of the mediation and mediatisation of Irish folk and traditional music. The late '70s to the early '90s was the era where musicians in folk and traditional music began to carve out their careers as professional musicians in growing numbers. It was also the era of more widespread use of tape recorder technology, resulting in more fieldwork recordings being produced in a private context. Many key figures in Irish traditional music passed away during this period, including Seán Ó Riada (1971) and Willie Clancy (1973). These deaths were significant contributory factors galvanising traditional music communities around Ireland towards memorialising and commemoration. This led to the staging of the first dedicated Irish traditional music festivals in the Republic: Scoil Éigse (1972), the Willie Clancy Summer School (1973), South Sligo Summer School (1977) and the Joe Mooney Summer School (Drumshanbo, 1979). The period 1970-1994 was thus an era of many firsts in relation to Irish traditional music.

Additionally, 1970-1994 formed a chronological progression of my earlier Masters research on the relationship of Irish traditional music to Irish media, and in the appendices of which I include a chronology of Irish traditional music programmes from the first days of Irish radio on 2RN in 1926 through to 2005 (Gubbins 2016, 192-196). Though a study analysing in detail the spectrum of Irish traditional music programming in its first 100 years (as named in that chronology) would indeed be helpful, I felt that the scale of the task would bring it outside the scope of this thesis. I also felt it would

reduce any possible analysis I could make to mere description, instead of a more in-depth consideration of specific themes as I have attempted here. However, what this early research made clear to me was that one particular radio show, *The Long Not*e, was mentioned by many broadcasters (including RTÉ producers Peter Browne and Harry Bradshaw and many others), listeners, and musicians as being particularly significant. Instead of aiming for a broad, general study on traditional music across RTÉ Radio, I decided instead that probing the promotional statements and wider discourse around one programme and time-period and carefully exploring their meanings would offer something more useful. I hoped it could reveal something about the society I grew up in and in which I became a musician; about the wider political, historical, economic and social context of the twentieth century; and about how this programme and its imprints influenced and influences contemporary musical and media activity.

1.3 Scope and purpose of the research

This section introduces the framing of this study and justifies the grounding of the project in the discipline of ethnomusicology with reference to the field of radio studies. Writings on cultural identity and modern history in Europe invite us to consider music (especially folk and traditional musics) as a context for the nation, and as inextricably linked with the changing landscape of new nationalisms (Bohlman 2004; Taruskin 2000; Winter and Keegan-Phipps 2013). The roles of mass media as primary actors in the construction of musical nationalism in the twentieth century have been widely acknowledged (Goslich et al, 2017; Samana 2016; Winter & Keegan-Phipps, 2013). Radio in particular has been a significant medium for the transmission of folk and traditional music since its adoption globally in the early to mid-twentieth century (as it was for many other musical genres). To more fully understand expressions of nationalism and cultural nationalism in radio, however, we need a detailed understanding of how music and culture are mediated by this technology. Media studies has developed strategies for describing the mediation of popular musics in particular (Hennion and Meadel 1986; Born 2005; Prior 2015). However, radio mediation of folk and traditional musics remains

relatively under-theorised. Tom Western has recently addressed this gap (2014, 2015, 2018), inviting ethnomusicologists to look at radio as "ethnomusicology is radiophonic and radio is ethnomusicological" (2018, 255), reframing radio as "less a thing or an apparatus than it is an ethnographic site" (2018, 255).

As stated in section 1.1, the central research question of this thesis is how did Irish radio mediate Irish traditional music in the late twentieth century and what was the effect of this? Little to no academic work has addressed the central role of radio in the mediation of traditional musics and in other key discussions of music and cultural history in the context of smaller European nations. This research addresses that gap by discussing the historical mediation of traditional musics in the particular context of the relatively small European nation of Ireland. The project investigates the representation by the Irish public broadcaster, RTÉ, of Irish traditional music and activity, ideas, and discourse. The primary case-study, *The Long Note*, was a weekly Irish traditional music radio programme involving multiple presenters, producers, and performers. I use *The Long Note* (1974-c.1991) as my primary case-study because it was a regular and continuous source of musical performance and activity in this period, broadcasting as it did a half-hour programme of Irish traditional music and song on a weekly basis during its seventeen years. The programme also included regular performances from musicians from the Irish diaspora in the UK and, to a lesser extent, Europe and the United States. I consider the programme to be a suitable source for enquiry because of comments gathered in preliminary research from performing musicians from the era, as well as from broadcasters and people involved in the programme's production, all of whom ascribe it significance in the history of Irish traditional music on the radio in the twentieth century (although for varying reasons, as described in chapters 3, 4 and 5). Available recordings of the programme show that *The Long Note* was a significant development from previous Irish public radio programming, because it commented directly on current musical events and engaged in communication with its audience members through letters and through conversations with audience members at those events. The programme is also significant to the history of Irish traditional music on the radio because it broadcast in a time-period when opportunities were increasing for commercialisation of that genre of music in Ireland and overseas. With this increasing

commercialisation, practices within the Irish musical tradition slowly became subjects of discussion and developing controversy. These practices, and their accompanying discourses, were all showcased on *The Long Note*.

This thesis is thus the first extensive study of the relationship of Irish traditional music to radio. Richard Pine's *Music and Broadcasting in Ireland* (2005) includes a small section on Irish traditional music. Gubbins (2016) focuses on RTÉ Radio up to the arrival of television in 1961. This thesis covers a different time period to these earlier works, focusing on the more complex media environment of RTÉ of the 1970-1990s. In addition, this work is also more theoretically focussed. It draws out themes of nationalism, representation, and liveness, utilising a theoretical framework based on readings from ethnomusicology, media and radio studies, and gender studies in particular. This thesis identifies changes in practices and knowledges in Irish traditional music which were originally cultivated, curated, or created in broadcasting. It also examines changes in music on a macro level, looking at broader patterns of broadcast music output across the station over several decades in an attempt to determine the impact of radio technological mediations of music on this musical tradition over the long-term. Further developments brought by the show's dedication to providing "liveness" are discussed in chapter 5. In focusing on the particular history of Irish traditional music on Irish public radio in this period, the research maps significant shifts in Irish musical and cultural terrain in the twentieth century. It accommodates increasing debate in the fields of ethnomusicology, musicology, media, communication and cultural studies and radio studies on the broad question of how music is mediated by broadcast and technological forms of communication. Examples of this debate include Kevin Edge's (2009) work on popular music and mediated listening, with particular reference to the BBC and public service radio, and Margaret Hall's (2015) work on modern radio practices in the light of new technology.

Reading the work of Nick Couldry (1999, 273-288), Andreas Hepp (2016), and other media scholars on the concept of mediatisation prompted me to revisit early discussions around musical practices with my friends, and to reconceptualise them as experiences of mediation (later mediatisation) in action (see sections 3.1 and 5.1 in particular) . As I began to think more broadly

about the history of Irish traditional music, I began to wonder about other contexts in which mediation and mediatisation occurred. I recalled that many of my outstanding memories of Irish traditional music from my formative years involved RTÉ, the Irish public broadcaster. When I first began academic research in music (Gubbins 2016), I chose to focus on radio's involvement in the mediation of Irish traditional music over that of television, because of radio's focus on the aural. I was mindful of radio's existence in Ireland for 30 years before television was produced for broadcast in Ireland, and I was interested in examining its influence on the structure of the Irish media environment.

I began to think about the phenomenon of radio as a relatively slowly-changing international technology relative to the long period of time it has been in use, reading in the work of Bessire and Fisher how "radio matters across time and space" (2012, 4). Various writings in the field of radio studies, such as that of Kathleen Battles, discuss how "our current narrative of media history leaves us too little prepared to understand the nature of contemporary changes," (2008) and encourage us to look beyond the institutional behemoths of national broadcasters (such as RTÉ). David Hendy emphasises the extent of change in methodologies of radio and how this is understated in radio studies in general: "there has been an overemphasis on stability instead of the constantly changing and infinitely complex web of relationships that lies behind every broadcasting act" (Hendy 2008, 131). Finally, outside of studies directly focussed on radio, writers on cultural production such as Georgina Born stress the importance of looking at three separate areas of cultural production - the context, the text itself, and its reception (2016, 3). In this thesis, each of the chapters in turn reflect on the context of a radio programme, the programme itself (the text) and its reception. In applying these debates and frameworks to the topic of Irish traditional music broadcast in the context of Irish public radio, this thesis develops an interdisciplinary framework for the exploration of the technological mediation of musics in the particular realm of 'traditional' or 'folk.' It also furthers discussions and conversations on the impact of technology on everyday life, and on the prevailing themes and questions of culture and society, including those of cultural nationalism (chapter 3), representation (chapter 4), and liveness and authenticity (chapter 5).

1.4 Historical research in radio and ethnomusicology

The impact of mass broadcasting on society has been measured and described in evolving ways by scholars since the earliest work on media, communication and cultural studies by sociologists of the early to mid-twentieth century such as Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer (1972) and Walter Benjamin (1968), amongst others. We may easily agree that "media in their historical sense are quite different from media today," but as Dan Laughey explains, still "this historical sense provides an important dimension into what the mass media are" (2007, 1). Laughey conceives of the media in six separate senses: historical, technical, capitalist, social, cultural, and political. These six separate senses of the media are foregrounded variously throughout this thesis.

On the subject of the historical in media studies research, Cumberbatch and Howin argue that "the history of mass communications research is conspicuously lacking in any kind of clear evidence of the precise influence of the mass media" (1989, 25), suggesting that our ability to perform accurate historical readings of media influence is uncertain. However, from as early as 1948, communication scholar Harold Lasswell defends our ability to conduct historical research on the media, suggesting some practical methods of doing so (1948). Lasswell's chain of communication theory suggests starting points for historical research, including a way to measure the often slippery concept of media effects. Lasswell recommends asking the following questions: who says what, in which channel, to whom, and with what effect? By effects, Lasswell means the most immediately obvious, short-term, and measurable effects of a media broadcast. The disadvantage of Lasswell's model is its lack of attention to the possible long-term effect of a broadcast and those effects that may lie outside what is perceived to be measurable. To the extent that there is a gap between the results of our observations of the short-term and long-term effects, it may be somewhat addressed by the work of cultivation theorists. Cultivation theory describes the long-term cultural work of a broadcast and how its construction of "a common symbolic environment" (Gerbner et al. 1986, 18) may affect an audience's view of reality – social or, as will be reflected on in this thesis, their musical reality. More recently,

Kate Lacey states that writing cultural histories of radio that embed it in everyday life and histories is difficult, and yet to meet the challenge is of great importance: "[I]f we can pay attention to both the horizontal density of the cultural context and the longitudinal context of history - we can hope, perhaps, to begin to discern patterns and significance from otherwise contingent and circumstantial evidence" (Lacey 2008, 7). Historical research into the media, she states, thus holds much relevance for our contemporary understanding of both the objects of study (in this case of this thesis, Irish traditional music) and the media of study (in this case, radio).

Historians of radio often have to conduct research by proxy on non-sound objects instead of via radio's sound recordings, by reference to radio's archived remains. As Lacey states, "historians of early radio are continually confronted with radio's immateriality, looking for its traces in paratexts and other surviving paraphernalia" (2018, 118). However, she asks for radio scholars to persist, because taking "a longer view of history" is worthwhile, and this acknowledges "the connections of communication forms over the last century" (Lacey 2018, 120). Similarly, though Bessire and Fisher describe radio fields as "unruly ethnographic sites," they also argue for the value of these sites as "zones where social life and knowledge of it are organized in specific and comparable ways," highlighting the "diversity of…entanglements" involved (2012, 4). Radio historians and historical ethnomusicologists and are both confronted with and challenged by a lack of sound sources, tracing instead the material through written sources, as ethnomusicologist Philip Bohlman does. Bohlman advocates in a parallel argument "trac[ing] tradition through written sources" to make use of "diachronic and synchronic approaches, history and ethnography, past and present" (2004, xxii). Historically sound has often been difficult to use as a research resource due to the difficulty in making it searchable and the accompanying delay in cataloguing its records. Certain archives have succeeded in making sound as searchable and researchable as possible, however. Doing this for radio archives, for example as the Hutchins Library and Archives of Berea College Kentucky have done through detailed cataloguing of their collections, continued investment, and creation of finding aids, fills a valuable purpose for radio scholars and is to be commended. In this research, I recognised the risk to my research posed by the elusiveness of full access to radio recordings and the time involved in

listening back to recordings in real time. As outlined in section 1.5 below, I soon determined to create my own personal catalogue of sources on this radio programme, to transcribe recordings where I could, and to gather together as many of the ephemeral sources surrounding this programme as possible in order to construct a more tangible narrative of the show's development and mediation over the years (Appendices B, C, and D of this thesis provide initial resources for other researchers on this topic; further foundational resources are planned for future publications).

As discussed above, the ephemerality of radio as a source, and the expense and time involved in cataloguing it for archiving are some reasons why radio research is difficult and necessarily incomplete; limited access for researchers to radio archives is another. This is an international issue, documented in the US by Susan Douglas (1999, ix), and in the UK context by Hugh Chignell (2008), amongst others. Gaining access to sources is a perennial challenge for historical research and all scholars of sound. However, accessing radio sources of sound comes with extra complications. Most historical radio sources internationally (e.g. pre-1996, as in this research) reside in broadcast repositories. The aural nature of radio, without documents that can be skimmed by the naked eye, also adds to the workload involved in the cataloguing, maintaining, and subsequent accessing of radio archives. In three of the archives approached for this thesis, RTÉ, BBC Ulster and BBC, there was little or very limited access to the sources, non-existent catalogues, and unclear or inconsistent permissions and copyright clearances across the period of study. What limited access did exist became even more rarer once the General Data Protection Regulation (2018) came into force in the European Union in May 2018, vastly increasing the workloads for archive staff.

Notwithstanding these challenges of ephemerality and access, there are many good reasons why sound persists as an important archival resource in contemporary times. For example, the news cycle throughout this PhD research (2016-2013) has been full of talk of truths, falsehoods, fake news, and alternative facts. As the radio curator of the British Library, Paul Wilson, remarked (2017), recorded sound provides another way of verifying evidence. In addition to communicating tone and emphasis and providing further evidence of words stated, it can give a much fuller representation of events. Additionally, as Erving Goffman remarked in his early research on forms of talk, including that

of radio talk (1981), research on broadcasting can in many ways be a useful subject of study as "there is no question of the subjects modifying their behaviour because they know or suspect they are under study… [Announcers'] routine conduct on the air is already wary and self-conscious" (1981: 198). For these reasons, Goffman continues, research on broadcast radio content often circumnavigates the need to get permissions before embarking on study, due to broadcasting already being a public event. Despite the difficulties accessing it then, sound as an archival source is still worth our pursuit as scholars.

In the twentieth century, as Badenoch and Follmer discuss, the construction of broadcasting institutions allied radio closely with nations and nationalism (2018, 15). Accordingly, this drew the focus of radio and media historians towards histories centred on nation-states (Brennan 2018, 425). This emphasis on mononational histories is quite visible in Irish media histories. Edward Brennan identifies an overreliance on the sources of national broadcasting institutions. Furthermore, he interprets this as resulting in an "unannounced connection between media history scholarship and state nationalism" (Brennan 2018, 425). Brennan asserts that, "through their dependence on institutional sources, orthodox media histories contribute to a view of the relationship between media and society that is bounded by state borders" (2018, 434). As international historians of radio and broader media have increasingly argued, the transnational aspects of broadcasting are deserving of more attention than previously received (Föllmer and Badenoch 2018, 15). Cronqvist and Hilgert, for example, have for some time now advocated for an "entangled" approach to media research, moving away from the monomedial, mononational lens of so much media history:

> Most often, the history of media and their contribution to public communication is written from a national point of view and tends to follow the development of individual media. This largely ignores the transnational and transmedial dimensions of media and communication throughout history (Cronqvist and Hilgert. 2017, 130).

These historiographical considerations encouraged me to take an all-Island look at the mediation of Irish traditional music, including BBC Ulster as well as RTÉ and RTÉ RnaG (BBC was unavailable due to lack of sources). Looking at the reception of both broadcasters (RTÉ and BBC) across the island aided the adoption of a transnational approach; future research will incorporate the transmedial.

1.5 Methodology

My personal preparation for this PhD research includes heavy involvement with the performance of Irish traditional music over thirty years combined with two years' experience of radio production. The methodology of the study includes interviews with central figures in music broadcasting and associated industry and institutional figures from this era (what I consider to be ethnographic fieldwork), and close analysis of archival sources in both sound and print form. A series of trips to ITMA (Irish Traditional Music Archive/*Taisce Cheol Dhúchais Éireann*) to consult archived programmes and materials of Irish traditional music, and to festivals of Irish traditional music to establish relationships with key figures in Irish media and music, to meet with interviewees and to conduct interviews also helped to facilitate the work. As an initial methodology, I transcribed a small number of audio recordings of *Long Note* shows held in ITMA and analysed the sounds. I wanted to listen to sound in order that my research would reflect sound cultures, i.e. where sound is just as much a priority as the visual (if not higher). I identified the prevailing themes and concepts of this material and compare it with key themes emerging from the literature for closer examination and discussion. Though I transcribe in detail only the spoken text of the radio programmes, I also made notes on the radio programme and its material in context (words, sound, radio programme category, audience information, format, institutions involved, etc.). During the first two years of my research, I undertook a comprehensive search of all available radio recordings held by the Irish traditional Music Archive in Dublin, an archive that was to become a key location of sources for this research. This involved a keyword search through their databases to compile a survey of every *Long Note* recording held by the archive, cross-checking it with archivists on-site to ensure the records existed. I added metadata from archival, academic, and ethnographic literature concerning the various personnel working on the programme and their roles in the process, as well as information on occasional performers. This enabled me to develop my own personal database of the programme including lists of personnel, surviving recordings, broadcast days and times, and other information involving the programme and its development over the years. In turn, this database helped me construct a chronology of major

developments in the programme, and also helped me to put contemporary literature concerning the programme in context. This aided my preparation for my interviews with programme personnel. Archives are continually updated however, without notification to the researchers using them. Thus, as the research continued, further recordings and sources relating to *The Long Note* became available in ITMA; some of these were added to the ITMA catalogue and incorporated in my research, while I am waiting for public access to be made available to other relevant collections with currently restricted access. This includes collections donated to the archive in recent times of performers who played on the *long Note*, e.g. uilleann piper Liam O'Flynn of band Planxty and others, whose personal collection was recently donated to ITMA and includes notes, diaries, newspaper cuttings, financial and business correspondences in relation to his performing. Similar sources become available on a regular basis, and include a similarly wide range of document-types. For the purposes of this thesis, I stopped referring to newly available sources in late 2021. I will incorporate new sources becoming available from 2022 onwards in future research. Much-publicised projects moving towards digitisation and greater accessibility of the various archives in RTÉ, as exemplified by the Digital Repository Ireland-Insight RTÉ project (DRI-Insight 2022), have not yet produced improvements in public accessibility. As RTÉ houses the *de facto* (though informal) national sound archive of Ireland, this failure to institute an appropriate archiving scheme and to make it available to the public has clear implications for the feasibility of radio research in Ireland and elsewhere.

In general, in all the archives I visited, it was difficult to figure out what the useful material was and where it was located. All of the archives consulted for this thesis included multiple uncatalogued collections of radio material. Once I gained access to each archive, it was not always straightforward to describe to archivists what materials I was looking for. For example, in RnaG, the broadcasters wished to help me so they asked me what my central research question was. I replied to say it was the relationship of Irish broadcasting to traditional music, but this needed narrowing down. As an example, I stated that I was asking what the music policy was, if any existed. I was trying to describe the list of norms that was in force in the industry and organisation in this period – the "in-house rules," as described in Cloonan (1985, 81). But when I mentioned "music policy" to both archivists and my

interviewees, the reaction ranged from confusion as to what I meant to laughter at my naivety in thinking that there was anything as organised or well-regulated in the broadcasting environment as a music policy. Clearly, in asking this question, I was demonstrating that I had no idea what either the broadcasting in that era or the archive environment now were like. The broadcasters I spoke to were all generous with their time and their efforts to help me, but in general, restating my central research question wasn't an especially effective way of stimulating the gathering of relevant data.

Despite complications in requesting sources, some source types provided systematic forms of historic documentation. For example, one source key to my compilation of a database of information on *The Long Note* was the RTE Document Archives, wherein lie boxes of paper documents called 'radio logs.' In the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, programmes were accounted for in these log books, where people wrote details of each programme as it was broadcast (including any last-minute changes to the programmes). Sometimes last-minute notes were added to update these details. Later on, in the '60s and '70s, typists were employed for this work and programme details were typed out on sheets, again with last-minute notes added in handwriting. Copies of what are left of these are now stored in the archive. I was able to gather information from the *Long Note*'s logs for almost the whole year of 1977 - 78 (see Appendix B). This was the limit of what I could gather in the time made available to me in the RTÉ Written Archives. I drew on this information throughout the discussion in this thesis, but in particular for Chapter 5. As broadcasting work became more and more digitised, especially in the early 1990s, fewer of these radio logs and their accompanying notes survive. (This provides another reason for this choice of period studied, as the logs and notes from the 1960s and 1970s were only recently made available to researchers on a rolling basis.) Cataloguing of the informal notes surrounding the programmes discussed in this thesis was due to be made available publicly in the RTÉ Written Archives after the main archival research section of this thesis was complete, but this did not materialise in the end due to COVID restrictions; I hope to access and incorporate reference to these notes in future publications. I also accessed archival documents of programme material from other broadcasters from the same time period, including those of BBC, BBC-NI and RnaG. For this work, I made use of the archival collections at ITMA, Trinity College Dublin, and the British Library in

London and Boston Spa, Yorkshire. I conducted a survey of a selection of programmes on BBC Ulster, taking note of continuity links, presentation styles, and other relevant features, as well as of supporting programme materials (scripts, archive metadata, archived interviews with broadcasters, daily radio programme listings from the historical *Irish Time*s, the *Radio Times*, and the *RTÉ Guide)*.

As they can be repeated and re-listened to, I view radio programme recordings to a large extent as readable texts in themselves. Notwithstanding the practical difficulties of accessing the sounds of the radio programmes researched in this thesis that I have described, and sharing them with others, there are other critiques of reading and analysing radio programme sounds as text. As John Miles Foley cautions of video texts, the temporal constraints of listening to an audio recording in real time limits the type of analysis one can do on it. It is not analysable in the same way a printed text can be, with reference to different sections, pages, chapters throughout.

> The truth is that while the kinetic dimensions of voice and visual action are a welcome restoration that helps to fill out the thin slice of reality portrayable via printed pages, audios and videos are likewise and inescapably frozen texts. They are cenotaphs of performance; they have no pathways in them (Foley 2012, 18).

Furthermore, Foley points out, listening to a recording of a radio programme is not the same experience as listening to it as it is broadcast simultaneously: “[C]ollating instances provides at best a facsimile, a creditable illusion, and not at all the real experience” (2012, 18). James Cridland similarly describes the difference between “native" podcasts, i.e. programmes that were originally designed and recorded as podcasts, and “reheated” old radio programmes (Cridland, 2023). In other words, though I read these radio programmes as texts, frozen in time, and listen back to them imagining the scene as if there is no change, this is not the same as listening to a radio programme as the time it was first broadcast. Indeed, with this point, Foley pulls at the thread of the description of liveness which becomes the main discussion of chapter five.

The limited access to archival material that I have discussed in this section is experienced by many historians and across many fields and types of study. As Philip Bohlman states of the music of European nationalism (Bohlman 2004, xxii-xxiii), his study of Europe is composed of materials gathered from many disparate archives in different countries:

> The whole of Europe can only be approached through its parts, indeed, by gathering fragments that do not so much yield a more complete picture of the whole as provide new and unexpected perspectives on the whole. It may well be that Europe has always been approached in this way, with fragments representing the whole.

A similar caveat applies to any history of *The Long Note*, a programme which broadcast a half-hour weekly programme over 17 years from 1974-1991, giving rise to 425 hours of listening material. Even if all of this material and its accompanying documentation was accessible (which it was not), any historical or ethnographic approach to such a programme, even if reviewed in its entirety, must resign itself to not being comprehensive. Rather, this thesis presents one account of the programme based on the gathering of fragments available, in the knowledge that any other ethnographer or historian would find different sources and fragments, coming up with a different narrative whole. My particular interpretation of these documents is guided by an understanding and interest in key themes that have been central to/complicated in recent studies of Irish traditional studies: representation, nationalism, liveness, and authenticity.

1.6 Interview Methodology

As mentioned in sections 1.3 and 1.5, this research draws on previous foundational fieldwork carried out in the RTÉ Sound Archives and preliminary interviews, expanded significantly through further work in this and other archives (ITMA, BBC, Irish Times, Ussher Library, Trinity College). I also conducted a more extensive list of interviews. My personal practical knowledge of Irish traditional music and the Irish broadcasting scene, along with sixteen further semi-structured interviews conducted over the course of the doctorate study, contributed to further contextualising the programme. I returned to and developed connections made with current and former broadcasters, listeners and performing musicians through over 30 years of performing music of different genres, but particularly Irish traditional music, at festivals like the annual Willie Clancy Summer School, the Feakle Festival, The All-Ireland Fleadh Cheoil, and many others in Ireland, the USA, and elsewhere. Since the 1990s, a wave of academic research has been conducted on Irish traditional music at

postgraduate level and beyond, most of it conducted by participants well-versed in that performance tradition. Like many of these performer-researchers, I consider myself to be an "insider" to this research in the sense that I can easily demonstrate to my participants my long involvement with Irish traditional music. Tes Slominski goes further than merely eschewing the dichotomies of insider/outsider and emic/etic, instead consciously subverting them, as she states that they describe "neither the lived experiences of musicians nor the production of meaning within the genre" (134).

Various indicators of my insider, emic, or "at home" status include my previous performances (information about which is readily available online); my ability to speak Irish relatively fluently with my interviewees; my pale skin colour and accent indicating my likely long-established family origins in Ireland; my familiarity with the context of the research, people and institutions referenced by my interviewees; my attendance at relevant festivals, significant to this research; my friendships and other personal connections within the community of Irish traditional musicians; and my prior published and unpublished research in traditional music of Ireland and the USA (Gubbins 2008, 2016, 2017). All of these elements contributed in various ways to granting me enough credibility (whether fairly or unfairly) by the large network of musicians, archivists, and programme personnel I spoke to about the subjects of radio and Irish traditional music over the years (and whom I consider my research informants) for them to trust me with access to sources, research information, and to their stories of their work. In *Trad Nation*, Tes Slominski speaks about the "origin story" (2020, 1) she used in order to "locate" herself, and to claim legitimacy in accessing Irish traditional musical space in the USA. The instrument I carried – a red *Paolo Soprani* button accordion dated from the 1950s or '60s, carried on my back in a black cloth bag, branded with the well-known *Salterelle* accordion brand - often located me for others visually before I had to even open my mouth. And while Slominski rightly states how musical space has "not always been readily granted to Irish women instrumentalists," and demonstrates in detail how complicated access to this space is for ethnically non-Irish Americans and LGBTQ+ musicians (2020, 2 and passim), I seldom felt I had to work similarly for acceptance, legitimacy, or access to musical or archival spaces due to my identities – either in Irish America or in

Ireland. Instead, my presentation as a white, settled, heterosexual woman of Irish origin removed these potential barriers from my "origin story."

On the other hand, I felt unlike an "insider" in the sense that I don't have a high profile as a traditional performer in Ireland. (Though I did have a building profile when I was performing regularly over ten years ago, this momentum slowed as I began full-time work in secondary school teaching, started a family, and my performance activity inevitably reduced.) Timothy Rice describes how he felt he was neither insider nor outsider, neither emic and etic, but rather in "a theoretical no-place" in between these categories (Rice, 52) due to his capacity for describing musical sounds as well as to his acquired ability to perform the music of his informants to a high enough level (acquiring "gaida player's fingers'' (50)). Furthermore, my position as a researcher in the University of Sheffield (outside of Ireland) piqued the curiosity of some interviewees – why would I do this work outside of Ireland, where my academic mentors, peers, and community were less likely to be familiar with Irish traditional music? Doing academic work outside of Ireland and getting involved with international academic societies (including noting my service with them in my email signature) signalled that I was preparing this research for wide dissemination and publication. I worried a little if this might change how any of my correspondents responded to me, perhaps not directing me as readily to their sources. So many of the audio sources I encountered in my research lacked full clearance for public access that while some correspondents might have wanted to be helpful to me in my research, I wondered if they would be wary of drawing a publisher's scrutiny of access arrangements upon themselves.[2] Every time I presented a conference paper using sources from the RTÉ sound archives, I received questions from the floor about how I arranged access to these sources. A discussion normally ensued, where someone complained about the difficulty of public access to these valuable sources, with which I sympathised. Stock and Chou prefer the term "fieldworker at home" to those of insider/outsider, emic/etic, for various reasons including that "fieldworker at home," they state, allows for a more complex and nuanced description of the relationship between the academic and their field of work (2008: 113).

[2] Ryan (2015, 64) has some helpful suggestions of further literature on the distance between participant observer and outsider, and related reasoning for utilising a broad array of qualitative methods.

They note similar tensions in their research conducted at home, stating that: "the imperatives of overlapping identities…can be particularly pointed in home fieldwork situations" (2008, 123). Laudan Nooshin introduces the term "doorstep fieldwork" while discussing the relevance of fieldwork location to the context of parenting in ethnomusicology (2020, 273). The descriptor of "parent" was added to my research identity midway through this PhD journey, and I keenly felt the challenge of this addition to my PhD candidature not only on a personal level but also on the level of researcher, juggling my multiple identities as researcher, performer, teacher, and parent in various musical contexts.

One area in which my insider/emic/fieldworker at home status felt more complicated due to being at home/on my doorstep was during the process of obtaining consent for interviews. The standard method of confirming consent between musicians and researchers within the community of practice of Irish traditional music has, by consensus, become the hard copy, printed consent form. As Kate Walker notes, this textually-founded process of consent in interviews is not always an ideal way of arranging an interview with a musician (2021, 20). She laments that "the organisation of social relations between the researcher and project participants is a 'textually mediated discourse'" (quoting Smith 1990, 167), mediated as it is by consent forms and information documents. This process doesn't allow for the informal conversations and meetings that occur via lives spent in music; these informal conversations are rendered difficult to cite under a system where information received is only quotable once a consent form has been signed, and thus given less esteem. Introducing a written document in situations after an initial social connection has been established in an informal setting is disruptive and sometimes felt disingenuous to me. Asking someone about their work as a broadcaster or radio performer felt perfectly acceptable and within social norms (e.g. as a form of networking); pulling out a consent form in the midst of the same conversation in which I was introduced to them, and asking for a signature, did not feel within these norms.

Sometimes my feeling of being an insider changed dramatically depending on who I spoke to and in what language. Unlike Tim Rice, my capacity to describe musical sounds (amongst other things), *as Gaeilge* [in Irish] was less than average. In this case, being a fieldworker at home meant that while I had a fluency in Gaeilge, my use of it was not unproblematic. This was contrary to what

Stock and Chou noted (109): "using the local vernacular was hardly a problem." English is my first language, and Irish my second. I initially learnt Irish at school but when I took a few extra courses in Irish at University, I became more confident and began using it with native speaker friends. Only then did I discover that my father was also fluent in Irish from his school days (albeit a bit out of practice). I began speaking it with him on a semi-regular basis out of a mutual admiration for the language as well as in order to improve my fluency. When English was the first language of my interviewees (as well as mine), the decision to conduct our interviews in English was implicit. For all of the interviews conducted in English, I felt comfortable in the interview. However, for six of my interviewees, English was their second language, Irish their first. There was no lack of fluency in English on the part of my participants: all of them were vastly more fluent in English than I was in Irish. However, I conducted five of these interviews through Irish due to a combination of other factors. The primary reason was that the interviews were to be conducted on the Raidió na Gaeltachta campus. RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta (hereafter RnaG) is RTÉ's Irish-language medium radio channel, established in 1972 to cater for the Gaeltachtaí (the Irish-language speaking areas of Ireland). Thus, it employs Irish as the working language of each RnaG campus, including its main headquarters in Casla, Connemara, Co. Galway. As a visitor there, I had no wish to ask my participants to switch to English in this workplace for an interview they were giving to me as a courtesy. This wish to not intrude was strengthened by my experience working as a teacher in a *Gaelcholáiste* (an Irish-medium mainstream secondary school situated outside of the *Gaeltacht* (Irish-speaking area). I understand well how much effort and commitment it can take to maintain an Irish-language soundscape anywhere, especially a busy workplace, and how easily that soundscape can be undermined by the introduction of even very little English (the first language of the vast majority of people on the island of Ireland). Furthermore, it was clear to these interviewees that though I had a fluency in the language and was fairly comfortable speaking it, I was not a native speaker. Additionally, the Connemara dialect was not the most familiar dialect to me, and from time to time I had to pause for a second to comprehend a word or point. I knew that if I conducted the interviews in English I would understand my interviewees' responses more quickly, and that my follow-up questions would be more proficient. However, for many reasons, I

preferred to speak in Irish. I didn't make the choice of language a subject of discussion apart from to mention that the conversation would eventually be translated to English for the purposes of this dissertation and the requirements of examination. I was conscious of the fact that my own translations of an interviewee's Irish into English would never result in a "direct" or full representation of their thoughts, but would always be limited by both my own standard of language skills (as well as by my own worldview and assumptions to a certain extent). To me, however, the idea of conducting conversations in English while on the RnaG campus just because it might have been easier for me would have felt highly inappropriate and contrary to the purpose of the interview; the only language I felt comfortable using while there was Irish - the minority language which was being carefully supported in that location. If my participants had wanted to change the language we were using, I felt they would have been comfortable doing so. In summary, I planned this out of respect for the environment that we were in. That the interviewees were conducted in Irish felt like a natural consequence of our initial socialising conversations being in Irish.

A secondary reason for choosing Irish over English as the language of interview was that the main subject to be discussed in these interviews was the music broadcasting of Irish language station RnaG. To discuss this in English would bypass some important avenues of discussion, I felt. This approach parallels that of Nicole Beaudry, who emphasises the importance of speaking in the interviewee's first language: "Some people I interviewed could talk to me in English; nevertheless, they felt more at ease in their own language because in this manner they felt they were addressing the people of their community rather than me" (2008, 232). This was the feeling I wanted to create and harness while conducting my own interviews with Irish speakers. I wanted to be clear in my support for minority language broadcasting, and for that to be part of the foundation upon which the interview was conducted. From the perspective of RTÉ management, the promotion and conservation of traditional music was conceived of as part of the broadcaster's relationship with the Irish language and Irish heritage (this topic is outlined in more detail in chapters 2 and 3). The fragility of Irish language soundscapes in contemporary times resonated with the theme of representation of Irish traditional music on the airwaves, and other conversations of this thesis. The reason why traditional music formed

such a big part of the music broadcast via Irish language fora in Ireland was a central topic of discussion in these interviews.

1.7 Disciplining this study

The following literature review gives further information about where, how and why I situate my research within and amongst the disciplines of radio studies, media and cultural studies, musicology, ethnomusicology, and Irish music studies. My research design follows a growing number of scholars examining music cultivated or created in broadcasting, and the technological mediation of music in other technological forms over several decades. Such studies are exemplified in ethnomusicology by the relatively early work of Mark Slobin (1976), Daniel Neuman (1990), John Baily (1994), Virginia Danielson (1997), Tracey Laird (2005), Margaret Duesenberry (2000), Krister Malm and Roger Wallis (1984, 1992), Philip V. Bohlman (1988), Martin Stokes (1994, 2010), Peter Manuel (1993), and more recently, of Tom Western (2014).

Ethnomusicology has long emphasised the importance of accruing and creating knowledge of all the world's music and musical expressions (in particular see the foundational work of Alan Merriam (1964), John Blacking (1974), Bruno Nettl (1983). This inclusiveness was one of the factors influencing me to consider how radio music stations and institutions all over the world have been discussed and researched, and to consider it with ethnomusicology as its starting point. I justify my choice of ethnomusicology as the starting orientation for this research for several reasons, but mostly because of the 'living' nature of the research data, i.e. that my research informants or participants are living in the world today as I conduct this research. One of the particular strengths of ethnomusicology has been in its focus on managing human relationships in the field; that is one of the strengths I will leverage throughout this research. As Rice (2010, 109) says, ethnomusicology takes communities of people as its starting point, in contrast with other disciplines involving sound. In this research, I look at the community of people formed around the institution of RTÉ radio in Ireland as well as the practice of Irish traditional music within it. The theme of media and technology, its associated theory, and its

most useful terms and concepts are foregrounded in this work to illuminate the issues pertaining to my particular focus on radio music in the community of Irish traditional musicians and practitioners in Ireland.

This research also leverages the contributions that ethnomusicological theory, as a whole, has made to our understandings of what music is and what Irish traditional music is. I follow ethnomusicology's understanding of music's function as a phenomenon with social and civic significance (Rice, 2010, 110); as a form of art; entertainment; as a system of signs bearing meaning; as a social behaviour; as a non-verbal practice (from Bourdieu's practice theory, 1977); and as a text that can be read for meaning. I am also interested in the idea that music's forms and effects originate from its mode of production, in the Marxist sense (Manuel 1993). I made reference to this idea in previous research (Gubbins 2016) by highlighting the influence that radio forms of production in the early twentieth century in Ireland had on the tune sets and repertoires of broadcasting and listening musicians, amongst other things. Rice urges us to put our ethnomusicological theories in conversation with one another as well as viewing them from the perspective of our own particular, local studies (2010, 111). In this thesis, I engage theories of media and ethnomusicology in conversation with one another, as well as with key theories in media studies and radio studies. My own theories about the nature of the radio music of *The Long Note* are created at the intersection of my local studies of historical radio music with ethnomusicological theory beyond the local and with an awareness of the scholarship on gender, ethnicity, and race. Rice's writing reminds me to identify the limitations of the orientations and research questions I utilise from cultural, media, and radio studies. Pierre Bourdieu's 1977 practice theory, for example, helps me interrogate the domain of practice of radio music institutions and networks, as do the work mentioned above of Prior, Born, Hennion and Meadel, amongst others. Rice's suggestion to conduct interlocal theory about musical processes in related communities encourages me to consider the cultural work that different genres of music in RTÉ do, potentially informing future theorising of the region, group, genre, and institution. An important question is whether RTÉ radio was a "playing field upon which the powerful and powerless struggle for control of how and where the boundaries [of music] are marked and defined?" (Rice, 2010, 124). I

explore this particular question in greater depth in chapter 4, in discussion of representations of gender and ethnicity in RTÉ radio, before returning to it again in the conclusion, chapter 6.

Ethnomusicologists have long worked to identify and draw together strands of theory from the domain of ethnomusicology itself and to both connect that to theory from the wider humanities and social sciences as well as foster new theories from the field. I follow in their footsteps in this research, as I draw in theories, structures, frameworks, and concepts from disciplines alongside of ethnomusicology – in musicology by the work of Jennifer Doctor (1999), Christina Baade (2012) with James Deaville (2016), Ruth Stanley (2012), Kirstie Hewlett (2014), and Tony Stoller (2015), Holly Rogers (2016), Áine Mangaoang (2019); in media, communication and cultural studies by the work of anthropologist Georgina Born (2005), David Hesmondhalgh (1996, 2013, 2021), Antoine Hennion and Cecile Meadel (1986), and Sarah Kamal (2005), in popular music and the sociology of music by the work of Jarl Ahlkvist (2001), Tim Wall (1999, 2012, 2013), Marc Percival (2007), Dan Laughey (2006), and Kevin Edge (2009), Nick Prior (2015), Simone Varriale (2016).

My division of the above-mentioned scholars into discrete separate disciplines is based on their departmental locations at the time of writing, or the discipline listed for their Ph.D. However, many of these scholars, especially those examining music in broadcasting, consciously situate themselves between and amongst disciplines. Aaron J. Johnson, for example, engages multiple methods and orientations, approaching his work from what he describes as a "multivalent" perspective afforded at the intersection of several disciplines (2013). Some other scholars more consciously discussing the theoretical framing of studies of music in the media have recently begun to replace the term 'music studies' with the term 'sound studies' (Western 2015). This follows the recommendations of scholars like R. Murray Schafer (2012), Veit Erlmann (2015), and others. This change of terminology reflects a "reorganisation of [the] perceptual schema for aural phenomena," as Frank Biocca explains (1988, 63). The term 'sound studies' indicates a growing acceptance of the research significance of sounds not previously considered seriously in academia due to their previous ineligibility to be considered as 'music.' (For example, Veit Erlmann and Michael Bull list underwater sounds, hospital sounds and mobile phone sounds as previously unconsidered aspects of sound in social life that warrant

consideration (2016)). More generally, the adoption of the label 'sound studies' offers an alternative to existing labels of musicology, ethnomusicology, anthropology of music, popular music studies, and plain old music studies, which – while valuable, and which individually have offered improved visibility to areas of music sometimes previously overlooked – nonetheless have facilitated a situation where the research significance of sounds created outside our accepted (and somewhat bounded) categories of music delineated by these previous labels to remain hidden from view. Some might argue that the need for a discipline such as sound studies is less pressing in the field of ethnomusicology following Anthony Seeger's influential monograph *Why Suyá Sing* (Seeger 1987) which argues that music and speech are on a spectrum. However, the label of 'sound studies' encourages an openness about its subject which some find more conducive to interdisciplinary enquiry. By this, I mean to say that scholars non-expert in music might very likely feel more confident to research, write and publish about sound when the baggage that sometimes occupies the word 'music' is absent, as Erlmann and Bull argue in their editorial to the first edition of the journal *Sound Studie*s (2016). In the field of radio, these previously hidden sounds include such ubiquitous features as station idents, jingles, and sound effects. I included these sounds in my detailed transcriptions of the radio programme considered in this research. Most significant was the acknowledgement of radio as a distinct context, Western's "ethnographic site" (2018, 255).

Though this research takes ethnomusicology as its starting orientation, it thus draws useful questions and concepts from the disciplines of radio studies and media, communication and cultural studies, as appropriate. Within media studies, radio studies was a poor relation for a long time, vastly under-researched in comparison with its neighbours of film, drama, theatre and television. In 2009, Hugh Chignell wrote that the area of radio studies was still in its early development, and that there was no established or central conceptual or theoretical framework. Indeed his *Key Concepts in Radio Studies* (2009) claims to be the first book to have "radio studies" in its title. As detailed analyses of radio programming were comparatively thin on the ground, the necessary theory was generated from radio studies' sibling fields. While not always fit for the purpose of radio research, the body of pre-existing research in television studies and other broadcast media could sometimes be modified to

analyse a radio text. For example, Selby and Cowdery advocate analysing a television programme by the following five categories: construction, audiences, narrative, categories, and agencies (Selby and Cowdery 1995). This method can just as easily apply to the medium of radio, and provides a good starting point for research in that medium.

Apart from borrowing theory from the broader field of media studies, however, much development has occurred within the field of radio studies itself in the past fifteen years. Key foundational texts have been created and curated, and this has put radio studies on a firmer footing today. Since Chignell's early statement lamenting a lack of theoretical or conceptual frameworks, subsequent research has shown that radio follows conventions which themselves are the products of global and national culture (e.g. Crisell 1994, 2004, 2009, 2012; Starkey 2011; Chignell 2009; Lewis and Booth 1989; Gordon 2009; Mitchell 2000; O'Neill et al. 2010). Key features, theoretical frameworks, and conventions of radio have been consolidated and described in the context of national and global culture; these key foundational texts in the area have cleared the way for more focused studies of radio contexts like that proposed in this research.

In many broadcasting contexts, the choice of music has a direct correlation with class, gender, age and racial categories. In this situation, David Hendy states, "a radio station's decision to play a particular music means it is also choosing a particular audience" (2013, 169). In keeping these social contexts in mind to orient their assumptions and direct their choices of methodologies, the disciplines of radio studies and ethnomusicology have much in common.

Based on paradigms from the fields of media studies and ethnomusicology, I view the radio programme *The Long Note* as part of the social construction of reality and social life in Ireland in the late twentieth century. Following the work of Hall (1980) and subsequent media theorists, in this dissertation, I highlight and interrogate the cultural codes embedded within *The Long Note.* Though this thesis is a study of Irish traditional music on Irish public radio in a particular time-period, its meta-subjects will include other key concepts from social theories of mediation, discourse, institutionalisation, standardisation, horizonal change, genre formation, and commercialisation, amongst others and its themes resonate with other disciplines. At a micro level, by documenting the

field of music in public broadcasting, particularly radio, these analyses impact on particular discourses of music in Ireland, in the twentieth century. For example, in chapter 3, I explore the relations between the networks of music broadcasters in Ireland, Northern Ireland, and Great Britain as varied over time. In this way, I follow Timothy Rice's advice to explore 'interlocal' theories as they pertain to this area of the world (2010, 108).

1.8 Mediation and mediatisation

The two key topics explored in this research are mediation and mediatisation, specifically the mediation of traditional music and the effects on traditional music due to mediation (mediatisation). In this next section, I provide an overview of the concepts of mediation and mediatisation with reference to music. I follow by considering the relationship between Irish traditional music, mediation, and mediatisation in Ireland, opening up some more specific questions, such as: in what forms has Irish traditional music been presented to the public in the first half of the twentieth century and how did this change or develop in the period 1970 - 1994? In addition, what were the particular "forms of staging" of Irish traditional music on radio in this period? In this way, I develop the general research questions noted at the beginning of this chapter "What were the mechanisms by which the people involved in radio programmes of traditional and folk music on Irish public radio mediated that music for listeners? And what were the apparent effects?" (section 1.1).

When music is made accessible to listeners through the medium of radio, the form in which it arrives is now considered to be "mediated"; in other words, it has changed in some way. It is distinguished because of the changes that have occurred to its sound characteristics – either its quality or quantity - through this process of communication, happening discretely at a particular time. Mediatisation, however, is a more nuanced process. The concept came to prominence in media studies just before the 2010s. Stig Hjarvard distinguishes the two concepts in the following way: "[M]ediation describes the concrete act of communication by means of a medium in a specific social context. By contrast, mediatisation refers to a more long-term process, whereby social and cultural institutions and

modes of interaction are changed as a consequence of the growth of the media's influence" (Hjarvard 2011, 124). Fredric Jameson defines mediatisation as being "the process by which the traditional fine arts come to consciousness of themselves as various media within a mediated system" (1991, 162), thus emphasising the change in the traditional arts themselves as a result of their having been mediated. As Hjarvard describes, media theory has followed two major paradigms: theories of media effects, and how social groups make use of media for various purposes (2011, 121). However mediatisation, he explains, offers a critique of both those paradigms, as it seeks to describe media in ways that do not distinguish it so distinctly from the concept of culture. Instead, mediatisation describes the changes in a particular milieu, or cultural group, or culture, or environment, or institution, or way of working and living, due to the knowledge accumulated by the participants of how mediation works and what its impact is.

Winfried Schulz itemises four changes wrought by mediatisation: (1) mediatisation extends the possibilities for human communication beyond a subject or person's own time and space; (2) it substitutes one form of face-to-face communication and interaction, and (3) it amalgamates media with existing forms of interaction and communication (see the "watercooler moments" later mentioned in section 5.4.6). Notably, as Hjarvard describes it, (4) "social actors and institutions may accommodate to the logic of the media" (Schulz 2004, paraphrased in Hjarvard 2008, 122). Mediatisation is wholly connected to the wish of the performer to have some level of control over how their performance is received by listeners/participants via that medium. In other words, mediatisation includes the fact that mediated material (for example, Irish traditional music or song) is sometimes changed before its mediation (e.g. guitar or bouzouki accompaniment added to a piece of solo fiddle music) so that it would be more favourably mediated and received. The iterative and broad effect of this process, which occurs outside of the mediation process itself is known as mediatisation. An example of mediatisation would be if a solo fiddle player gets in the habit of always performing with stringed accompaniment, whether they are performing on the radio or not, or if a singer tended to choose songs that could be performed in under four minutes in preference over longer songs, simply because they are in the habit of choosing songs of radio-friendly lengths.

Roger Silverstone explains the concept of mediation as "a dialectical term for the continuous interchange whereby media shaped or were shaped by broader life and culture" (2005). Mediatisation, however, goes deeper than this dialectic; it represents the wider consequences of media's embedding in everyday life, examining the result of "multiple processes of mediation" (195-7). It goes further than the "political economy of production, textual analysis, and audience/reception studies" triad (193); instead, it is "a push to think about the whole range of practices related or oriented to media" (193). To embed the concept of mediatisation in this thesis is, as Couldry and Hepp state, an attempt to "analyze critically the interrelation between changes in media and communications on the one hand, and changes in culture and society on the other" (197). The concept of mediatisation was also developed to acknowledge the "pervasive spread of media contents and platforms through all types of context and practice" (197). One of the contexts affected by the spread of media contents and platforms was that of Irish traditional music. The term "mediatisation" itself has garnered ongoing debate in media studies. Some describe it as a metaprocess (Krotz 2009, Hepp 2016). Peter Lunt and Sonia Livingstone reference the impact of time and institutions in the mediatisation process, stating that mediatisation concerns "the historical adjustment to or appropriation of media logics by institutions and cultural practices across diverse domains of society…" (2016, 466).

In Andreas Hepp et al.'s useful and in-depth (2014) summary of significant research published on the concept of mediatisation since 2008, Hjarvard identifies the growing power of media in the public sphere, clarifying that mediatisation is:

> a double-sided process … in which the media on one hand emerge as an independent institution with a logic of its own that other social institutions have to accommodate. On the other hand, media simultaneously become an integrated part of other institutions like politics, work, family and religion (2008, 105).

On a similar theme, Couldry and Hepp remind us to search for the "institutionalised formats" and "forms of staging" created by mediatisation (2013, 196). Hepp states that "Mediatisation can be defined as a 'metaprocess' (Krotz 2009) of change, in which everyday practices increasingly rely upon media and become 'moulded' by them" (Hepp 2016, 22). This moulding of everyday practices is illustrated in research by Krämer (2011) in relation to music. Krämer (2011) states that, "[F]or each [musical] genre, typical forms of mediatization exist" (484). He continues, "the analysis of mediatized

music starts with this question: In which forms has music been presented to the public since the emergence of the modern media?" (484) His discussion references pop and classical genres of music more so than traditional, folk or other types of music. In relation to popular and classical music, Krämer states that, "Mediatization is not only the adaption of actors in a field or a logic of reporting, but the emergence and transformation of new relationships, products, ways of consumption, and more" (473). An example of this is the emergence of listener-made tape cassette recordings from the radio as a genre – a new way of consuming radio both historically and in contemporary times (now due to lack of archive source and also broken-down access routes to hear these – no proper functioning of the RTÉ Archive. Krämer also includes mediatisation as being "the social construction and structuration of music in the media" (473). Krämer states that the media are technical and organisational devices for the production and delivery of musical experiences, they provide discourses about music, and the process of mediatisation defines the way music is defined as well as constructed. Michelsen and Krogh state that processes of mediatisation are "non-linear" (2017). Though they refer to historical accounts of music radio, they do not interrogate the process of mediatisation based on surviving historical sources, as this thesis does. As Simon McKerrell applies the term to Scottish traditional music (2015), "mediatisation" relates to a focus on the role of various media in the communicative construction of social and cultural reality. McKerrell highlights the importance of media to folk and traditional music in Scotland in contemporary times, as "they construct the aesthetic and social semiotic discourses that are central to the social value of these musical practices" (2015, 119). McKerrell continues, calling into question the distinction between the "reality" of live and recorded performances (119). His statement that "[T]he mediatisation of Scottish traditional music continues to alter different constituencies' conceptions of what it is, and different media have different effects and affordances on the community" (119) clarifies the significance of the concept of mediatisation for folk and traditional music communities.

Michelsen et al describe how the format of a radio music programme could be a "specific broadcasting template for organising performance and production" (2019, 3). For examples of this, a performance could have been presented alongside other short musical clips from similar genres and

discussions of these pieces, and presented in a magazine programme, or it might have been presented in a documentary format, alongside pieces from the same performer(s), or with the backstory of the song/tune presented before or after it, or an explanation of the lyrics and the language in the song, and with an allowance for longer pieces of music, or for pieces of music that wouldn't normally be heard on the radio, but for which the framing and documentary format has made possible. Folk and traditional music radio programming have much to offer the study of mediation and mediatisation. Processes of mediation in Irish traditional music have been discussed since 1996 (Gubbins 2016 provides a helpful literature review.). For example, examples of mediation in Irish traditional music on the radio include how in early recordings in particular of Irish traditional music, microphones might have only picked up a certain range of frequencies, or a certain amount of the timbre of an instrument. The length of a recording was usually limited, meaning that a piece of music was sometimes cut off before its completion, leaving either the story unfinished, or leaving out the climax of the pieces of music, or leaving out a long, slow boiling introduction, or cutting off the music in the middle of a cadence, or before the end of a 4- or 8-bar round structure. These are a few of the most obvious ways in which a piece of traditional music was mediated in early radio. When sound recording first became possible in the early twentieth century, a common recording medium was acetate disc recording. These cylinders could only hold 3-4 minutes of sound at a time (Gubbins 2016, 114). Thus, the length of a proposed musical piece for recording was adapted to fit this length. Performers prepared musical pieces accordingly. Most importantly, this reduction in length did not just occur for musical pieces that were eventually recorded. Recordings intended for an eventual recorded media output were often carefully prepared in live performance venues such as concert sets and other more informal live music venues and contexts. Over time, a selection of those sets were cherry-picked and further rehearsed for recording. With these recorded musical pieces being tested, prepared, and honed on the live circuit before recording, it naturally followed that a growing proportion of the live music circuit repertoire was, on the whole, reduced to this 4 minute limit. This was an indirect result of the limited length of acetate disc recordings. This limit in recording length continued on through the mid and late twentieth century, and though tape (45 minutes each side) and CD recording (80 minutes in total, in general), all

of which had much longer limits on their total length until the advent of MP3 formats in the mid 2000s opened it up again. Radio play had become so important to the commercial success of any recorded music output in the twentieth century, that the maximum perceived length acceptable for radio play remained at that 4 minute length.

In the early 2000s, the arrival of mass digital technology and streaming changed many things, one of them being that the total length of a musical recording was now not limited by the recording technology in use. However, the mid-twentieth century practice of radio stations favouring recordings of between 3 and 4 minutes remained. Performers generally stuck to this length. This performance length followed across many genres - not just those mostly dependent on radio play for their popularity. This - the average length of a piece of recorded music in certain genres - is just one concrete example of mediatisation in action; similar processes continue in the domain of Irish traditional music today. Indeed, this mirroring process is apparent across more domains than just Irish traditional music.

1.9 Case-studies

I chose not to research independent or pirate radio both to limit the scope of my thesis but also in order to focus on the characteristics of public radio as a state-funded communication and facilitate more in-depth research in general. In this choice I necessarily had to neglect researching further the stories of pirate radio stations like Radio Free Derry, and Radio Donegal (whose broadcasting schedules were mentioned in sources during this research). Similarly, the schedules of independent, fully commercial radio stations were neglected in this thesis due to similar reasons, but also because independent radio was mentioned by few of my interviewees as having had an impact on Irish traditional or folk music activity in the period, nor as something they listened to (though McCann mentions Radio Free Derry (McCann 1993, 109-10, quoted in Millar 2020, 100) and Brian Mullen mentions Radio Donegal (Mullen 2019)).

1.9.1 RTÉ's The Long Note

RTÉ's *Long Note* (1974-1991) is the primary case-study examined in this thesis. I introduce it in detail in section 2.7 and refer to it throughout the thesis. I also refer regularly to RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta and BBC Radio Ulster.

1.9.2 RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta

RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta (the RTÉ radio channel dedicated to facilitating the *Gaeltachta* (Irish-speaking areas of Ireland), hereafter RnaG) is an Irish-language radio channel that forms part of RTÉ and began broadcasting in April 1972. It gained funding and support, as Iarfhlaith Watson has documented (2003), not by advocating for itself as a representation of national identity in Ireland, but instead by focusing on the rights of the minority of Irish speakers who were not being catered for at that time by RTÉ's English-language radio and television channels. I refer not to any one particular programme in RnaG, but to the overall station, referencing it through chapters 3, 4, and 5.

1.9.3 BBC Radio Ulster

I include reference to BBC Radio Ulster material in this research for several reasons. First, BBC Radio Ulster in the period studied served a divided community. I wanted to complicate the narrative of folk and traditional music radio programming as a tool to construct or imagine a homogeneous national audience. As with RnaG, I refer not to one particular programme, but to the overall structure and materials of Irish traditional music as evidenced by the available station schedules, published articles, and other literature. I refer to BBC Radio Ulster mainly in chapter 3.

I had also wished to research BBC London and research their archives of Irish traditional music programming in this period, but it was unavailable to me due to privacy restrictions on the British Library sound catalogue.

1.10 Terminology

In this thesis, I use the term public broadcaster to indicate a broadcaster significantly funded by the governing state. I distinguish this from the term "state broadcaster" which indicates a broadcaster both funded by and to a large extent controlled by the state. For example, the BBC (including BBC-NI, BBC Radio Foyle, BBC Northern Ireland Radio, etc. as discussed in this thesis) is fully funded by the UK state and as such is a public broadcaster. RTÉ is mostly funded by the Irish state, with the shortfall made up from advertising and sponsorship revenue; RTÉ is also described as a public broadcaster. Pirate broadcasters are those broadcasters who operate without a licence in any jurisdiction and, consequently, without state funding from any source. Private broadcasters, like public broadcasters, are licensed and operate within the broadcasting regulations of their jurisdiction, but are not state funded so must fund their activities from other sources - normally advertising and sponsorship.

The institution now known as Radio Teilifís Éireann (RTÉ) was first founded in 1926 as 2RN. As it expanded and developed its services into the fully-fledged national broadcaster it is today, it was renamed Radio Athlone (1933), Radio Éireann (1937), and with the arrival of television, Radio Teilifís Éireann (1961). Athlone is the town nearest the geographical centre of the island of Ireland, and was thus an appropriate place to put the broadcasting tower once the station expanded from its origins in Dublin and Cork cities. Radio Éireann translates as "Radio of Ireland"; Radio Teilifís Éireann translates as "Radio and Television of Ireland."[3] Though I focus in this thesis on the period 1970-1994, I reference earlier periods of the organisation's history throughout for comparison purposes. For clarity, I refer to it in all time periods as RTÉ.

Other terms needing definition are "folk music" and "traditional music." A distinction between these two terms prevails in Ireland in a way that does not occur outside of the island. To generalise, on the island of Ireland, especially in the period studied, the term traditional music tends to refer to instrumental music, and the term "folk music" suggests the presence of singing - especially English

[3] Further details of the logistics and organisational structures of the earliest decades of 2RN/RÉ/RTÉ are available in Gubbins 2016, 1, fn. 1.

language singing with stringed accompaniment. As Susan Motherway has pointed out, "folk music" suggest music that is more commercialised that traditional music (Motherway 2013, 24). In Britain in the period studied, however, the terms folk music and traditional music were often used synonymously, and refer to all forms of instrumental music and song. Simon Keegan-Phipps (2008, 26) includes commercial folk and traditional music in the category. Morgenstern (2021, 1), Scahill (2020, 144) and others provide a more in-depth discussion of the etymology of the terms traditional and folk as they relate to music in Ireland. Naturally, given the transnational contexts of this research (Ireland, Northern Ireland, and Britain), various meanings of the terms are utilised by my interviewees or suggested by the sources consulted. In this thesis, I use the phrase "folk music" and "traditional music" separately to indicate this bifurcation of meaning as used in the Republic of Ireland. I use "folk and traditional music" when the sources indicated that the terms were synonymous. Other meanings implied by the use of these terms are discussed in more detail in chapter three in the context of discussions of nationality, nationalism, and class.

Finally, in all sources consulted for this thesis, the programme was variously titled *The Long Note* or *Long Note* depending on the grammatical context; I follow that convention in this thesis.

1.11 Chapter outline

Chapter 1 has introduced the topic of this thesis, the discipline of ethnomusicology and related fields as its context, and the concepts of mediation and mediatisation as the main subject of investigation, *The Long Note* as primary case study, 1970-1984 as the time period, some considerations of methodology, and my position in the field. Chapter 2 continues by contextualising the principal topics and terms of discussion: genre in music and a critical discussion of the term 'Irish traditional music,' the impact on radio music of categories of high-art/low-art in the RTÉ context, the growth of commercialisation and globalisation in traditional music in the late twentieth century, debates of tradition versus innovation, the growth of Irish academic musical debate, and other relevant themes and concepts. Chapter 2 also utilises a comparative viewpoint by referring to programme schedules in

BBC Ulster and RnaG. Analysis of the social, political, and economic environment of Ireland of the time 1970-1994 set the scene, allowing for more detailed analysis of the thematic material presented in chapters three, four and five. Chapter 3 focuses on the role of *The Long Note* in shaping and sharing images of the Irish nation, and nationalism in the presentation of Irish traditional music. It identifies various forms of nationalism apparent in the formats and forms of staging of the programme. Chapter 4 examines representation of gender and ethnicity in *The Long Note* with respect to women and Irish Travellers, and comments on the impact of processes of mediatisation on the formation of the category of professional musician in that era. I focus on the role of Irish public radio in representations of women and the Travelling community (i.e. the communicative construction of social and cultural reality) via the music programme *The Long Note.* The chapter concludes by connecting the media representations of gender and ethnicity to the theme of nationalism previously explored in chapter 3. Chapter 5 focuses on a characteristic of radio music highlighted frequently by interviewees and in archival documents as being crucial to the success and impact of *The Long Note* - its liveness. What exactly did it mean for radio to be "live"? And why was this given such significance? Employing strategies from radio studies and media studies, I analyse the construction of these programmes and explore the embedded narratives. The chapter presents a typology of liveness as presented in the programme and contextualised in interviews and programme materials. Chapter 6 concludes the thesis by summarising the findings of previous chapters and putting these conclusions into conversation with one another. It also outlines the limitations of this research and suggests avenues for further development.

Chapter 2: Buildings, brandings, categorisations: the material of folk and traditional music on Irish public radio, 1970-1994

This chapter explores the institutional history of RTÉ and examines the structures surrounding the radio music created within it. The bulk of the chapter focuses on Irish traditional and folk music material produced within RTÉ, with references to the institutions of RnaG and BBC Ulster via archival material. I describe the traditional and folk music created within the footprints of these three broadcasters, situating music radio production within the wider Irish and transnational context of that period. Discussion of the impact of broadcasting pressures on the production of musical programming in the station in these decades provides us with useful context for understanding the genesis of issues and debates of later years which I explore in chapters 3 to 5 of this thesis. I conclude this chapter by explaining how these discussions answer my overall research question of how Irish public radio mediates and mediatises folk and traditional musics on Irish public radio in the period.

2.1 Radio music institutions, structures, and personnel

Georgina Born states that the political, institutional, and architectural structures of a broadcasting institution are the "broader institutional forces" that "provide the basis of its production and reproduction" (Born 2005, 1). As the descriptions of broadcast departments, programming, personnel, contexts, and material in this and ensuing chapters will show, the institutional makeup and contexts of RTÉ, RnaG, and BBC Ulster in the period c.1970 - 1994 comprise a sprawling list of buildings and places, with diverse networks of people, institutions, geographies, languages, and cultural activities involved, and all the ensuing political and financial pressures that accompany these types of networks and resources. Similarly, Rodman and Wall state that behemoth-like industrial structures and conceptual categories exist in broadcasting contexts and are heavily implicated in organising the relationships between audiences and music (Baade & Deaville 2016, 23). Baade and Deaville invite us

to consider the materiality of broadcast production cultures in relation to music, and suggest that "broadcast media...tell us as much about the social relations that produce them as about the messages that they diffuse" (Baade & Deaville 2016, 23). This chapter embraces that suggestion. In their edited collection of music and the broadcast experience, Baade and Deaville focus on the musical material eliciting the greatest amount of scholarly focus up to this period - namely popular music and classical music. Consequently, a number of differences in the RTÉ context appear in the summarising comments contained in the introduction to the collection. For example, the public/private divide identified as one of the commonalities of music broadcasting across the contexts mentioned in Baade and Deaville's collection (all Anglo-American contexts) was upended in the Irish traditional and folk music context. For the radio listeners interviewed for this thesis, although sometimes the case, radio listening was not necessarily a public event (e.g. a concert broadcast from the National Concert Hall (NCH)), transformed into a private listening experience (one family listening to the concert in their home on their own). Indeed in the earliest decades of radio in Ireland, radio turned from being an often public event (where multiple families gathered to a neighbour's house to listen to the radio set) into a mostly private event. The exact period in which radio sets became ubiquitous in households differed across the island of Ireland, due to later access to radio sets in many rural areas, as well as the slow pace of rural electrification. (Ciarán Mac Mathúna states that the Outside Broadcast Unit was corralled into promoting the rollout of rural electrification during his early work with RÉ's Mobile Recording Unit from 1953 onwards. (*Gay Byrne Show Interviews…* 1984*).* The regulatory framework differed for the genre of Irish folk and traditional music. As the broadcasting personnel interviewed for this thesis repeatedly attested, in RTÉ the broadcasting of folk and traditional music existed below the radar of any regulatory framework (see chapter 3), i.e. without a specific, written music policy. However, large-scale structures conceptual categories and forces did exist and this chapter aims to identify some of them before detailing the genesis of *The Long Note*.

In the case of *The Long Note*, most of the media actors involved were "non-media actors" prior to their becoming involved in *The Long Note*, e.g. Peter Browne, Paddy Glackin, Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, Cathal Goan, Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh, Máire O'Keeffe, etc. Thus, the programme itself

crossed the media divide between media and non-media actors for the community of Irish traditional musicians. In Irish radio then and now, it would be unusual to see a presenter of Irish traditional music who doesn't or didn't also perform. For example, RTÉ Radio researcher, presenter, and producer Peter Browne is a well-known piper; Shannonside radio presenter Paddy Ryan is a well-known fiddler; RTÉ Radio presenter Aoife Nic Cormaic is a fiddler; Séamus Ennis was a piper; continuity presenter Kathleen Watkins played the harp; Maurice Gorham, the first station director, and his wife Mairéad Ní Annagáin, were well-known singers. Presenters Ciarán Mac Mathúna and Seán Mac Réamoinn were often noted as exceptions to this, emphasising again how much it was a norm. It was less usual for presenters of other genres of music in the 1970s and 1980s to also be performers (popular music presenter (DJ) and Something Happens band member Tom Dunne was one exception, showband musician and RTÉ 2 presenter (DJ) Ronan Collins another).[4] The earliest Directors of Music from 1926 to 1960 were usually also well-known conductors of classical music, either in Ireland or on the European scene (Gubbins 2016, 188-9; Pine 2005, passim). Dolly MacMahon: a well-known singer, regular performer on the radio, was married to presenter/producer Ciarán Mac Mathúna. Delia Murphy, married to Dr. T. J Kiernan, second Station Director of RTÉ, 1934, also performed as a singer on the station in its early years. In general, it was the norm in RTÉ that producers and presenters of Irish traditional music were competent performers; this was not the case in popular music genres. In Irish traditional music on the radio, one of the avenues to becoming a media actor was by becoming a professional musician first. Other genres of music did not cross the media divide in this way. This was one of the ways in which Irish traditional music was mediatised - with performance ability now forming part of the de facto essential criteria for becoming a radio presenter.

Additionally, RTÉ maintained a close relationship with many nationally funded musical institutions, the NCH, for example. Dr. Gerard Victory, Director of Music in RTÉ, was invited to sit on their Board. This type of close relationship was not replicated in every musical organisation with national coverage, however, including CCÉ. As with most arts organisations in Ireland in the mid-twentieth century, the community of participants was small, and there were many unofficial

[4] See Gubbins & Ó Briain (2020) for further discussion of the early years of RTÉ 2 and its relationship to popular music.

connections between the personnel of RTÉ and CCÉ. The personnel of RTÉ working in Irish traditional music were very familiar with the work of Comhaltas as they met at festivals and other musical events. RTÉ began regular reportage from the *Fleadh Cheoil* festivals from their beginnings in 1951. The first official connections between RTÉ and CCÉ came in the form of sponsored programmes.[5] In general, RTÉ had a chequered relationship with CCÉ (discussed in more detail in chapter 3).

2.2 Public radio and official performing groups: public service under scrutiny

Public service broadcasters around the world in the twentieth century were remitted with entertaining their publics as well as providing a public service. It is well documented that much of the schedules of international radio broadcasting in its first thirty years were under strict governmental control, with some stations used widely as vehicles for propaganda in the second world war. Just what exactly public service was or should have been was usually a source of much debate, division, and controversy, coming under regular scrutiny from politicians and other commentators in the spheres of democratic debate. Cultural nationalism was a regular consideration in British radio policy decisions in its earliest decades (Doctor 1999). Cultural nationalism - the idea that nations were defined by a shared cultural heritage which should be promoted amongst radio listeners - was also to be found across Europe in music radio in its first decades. In the twentieth century, many public service broadcasters were given the roles of saviours of national heritage. This role was especially emphasised in countries where the growth of popular music from records and commercial films was responded to with vigorous public debate, including Ireland, Northern Ireland, Britain, and India, as discussed in this chapter. In Ireland and Northern Ireland, when the music programming of public service radio broadcasters RTÉ, RnaG and BBC Ulster were discussed at governmental and institutional level, conversations often settled on the responsibility of the broadcasting institutions to conserve and

[5] See Gubbins (2016: 90-94) for a description of the introduction of sponsored programmes to RTÉ Radio in the 1930s and the importance of this advertising revenue to the station.

promote music. The category of music under discussion in these conversations was more often than not classical music, as the genre of music most perceived to have the potential to improve the mental and emotional capabilities of its listeners. Throughout the twentieth century, the focus of public service broadcasters with regards to classical music was mostly on the maintenance of professional performing ensembles, e.g. RTÉ maintained the RÉ Singers, the RTÉ Philharmonic Choir, the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, and the RTÉ Concert Orchestra (Samana 2012), and which I discuss in further detail later in this chapter. Within RTÉ, discussions of the public service responsibilities of RTÉ during the mid-twentieth century were usually dominated by vigorous debate around the Irish language and whether or not RTÉ was doing enough to contribute to its revival.

Cultural protectionism and nationalism was usually a result of discussion of the public service responsibility of RTÉ with respect to the revival of the Irish language. The Irish language was replaced by English as the dominant language of the country during the British occupation of Ireland, particularly during penal times. In India, similar debates abounded about the place of broadcasting in "saving" a national musical heritage. As David Lelyveld describes, Dr. B. V. Keskar was Minister of Information and Broadcasting in India from 1950 to 1962 and the major formulator of the musical ideologies and policies of All-India Radio. He imagined radio broadcasting as having a strong public service responsibility and as being a core part of saving and reviving national musical heritage.

> There remained a saving remnant of Indian musicians, thanks to the patronage of a few Maratha princely states… but even this had declined… Only with national independence and, indeed, primarily through radio broadcasting, Keskar thought, could the musical heritage of India be saved (Lelyveld 1994, 117).

As Lilyveld explains, Keskar viewed music as being core to the evolution of human society, as reflective of the strata that people inhabited in society, and as something which differentiated between those strata: "[M]usic is bound up with the evolution of human society from the primitive to the civilized, just as it differentiates between the high and low "strata" of any given society" (119). Keskar, Lilyveld explains, imagined All-India Radio's as having a role in raising "standards" across Indian culture. As All-India Radio enjoyed a monopoly on the airwaves similar to that of RTÉ in this period (and to the BBC and BBC Ulster, although to a lesser extent, due to the growth of independent popular music stations in the UK from the 1970s), allowed it to flex a lot of power, to be discerning in its

choices of musical material with the goal of activating its remit of cultural and musical protectionism and revitalisation.

> All-India Radio's role in the culture industry was to be rather similar: as a central government monopoly, it would play a leading role in integrating Indian culture and raising "standards." With regard to music, the major concern was to replace the system of princely patronage, now clearly dead, and to counterbalance the sources of commercial music, in particular in films (Lelyveld 1994, 120).

In Ireland in 1974, an Oireachtas Broadcasting Review Committee was established to review the "public service" aspect of public service broadcasting in Ireland, namely the work of RTÉ. A cursory browse through the published radio and television schedules in newspapers through the first 50 years of RTÉ broadcasting highlights immediately how difficult a task such a review would be. Included in its remit were an analysis of the broadcasting of culture and music, and some of the vague headings of the published report - "The Culture of Ireland" and "Music" (Broadcasting Review Committee, 85, 103) - demonstrate how difficult such a task would be. The immediate difficulty of defining just what "the culture of Ireland" was, is, or should be at any point in time, made the possibility of any useful analysis of that material a lot less likely. Ireland's position as a postcolonial nation is also relevant here. The Irish national broadcasting service and all its major and minor successes and failures lived under constant scrutiny from public representatives through the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s. RTÉ's output was considered to be a potent representation of the successes and failures of Ireland as a nation as it continued its path of developing away from British rule and leadership.

RTÉ's official ensembles were one avenue where the pressure to perform was felt most keenly. Cultural nationalism was a major influence on musical activity and informed the reception of musical activity in the station in its first several decades; there is less evidence that cultural nationalism formed part of the commentary and reception of all musical activity subsequently. As an example of the changing narrative of RTÉ performing groups in the late twentieth century, let us look at an overview of RTÉ's choral groups that culminated in what is now known as *Chamber Choir Ireland*

The earliest iterations of what is currently named Chamber Choir Ireland began in 1943, when the Minister for Posts and Telegraphs with responsibility also for broadcasting, P.J. Little, announced

in the Dáil the establishment of Cór Radio Éireann (the choir of RTÉ of the time) a 24-member, part–time chorus for opera and choir work, which began their work by giving a monthly concert (Pine 2005, 379). In 1953, the group became full-time and changed their name to the Radio Éireann Singers (hereafter RÉ Singers), with German Hans Waldemar Rosen appointed to be their conductor (Pine 2005, 380-1). Singers is an interesting choice of name, as opposed to "choir" or "chamber choir," which is what it seems they chiefly were. The choice suggested a mixed repertoire for the choir in performing both sacred and secular repertoire in the classical genre, some "light " popular songs, as well as arrangements of folk and traditional songs also. The RÉ Singers consisted of four sopranos, two contraltos, two tenors a baritone and a bass. Many of these singers had worked professionally as solo singers before joining the group. During the 1950s, the RÉ singers broadcast a mixture of light popular and serious classical songs - including arrangements of many of the county songs of Ireland, in a programme called *Round the Counties*. Later on, they broadcast programmes of popular music, showcasing the abilities of the choir to perform a range of repertoire. Sometimes the choir collaborated with the RÉ Light Orchestra, and sometimes with regularly broadcasting traditional musicians like The Gaelic Trio. Some other names of the RÉ Singers' programmes include: *A Musical Bouquet, On Wings of Song, Music At Eleven, Soireés Musicales, Music in Profile, Music all Inviting, Pro Musica, Sentimental Journey* and others (Pine 2005, 382, 379-400). Erskine Childers, commenting in the Dáil as a Teachta Dála (TD) in 1955, said he felt the choir had problems presenting Irish songs in a traditional way. Childers was later appointed to several ministerial positions and Tánaiste, before being elected President of Ireland in 1973. As a regularly elected public representative, his opinion on cultural matters held weight. This reiteration by a prominent public figure evidences the importance given to aesthetics of performances of traditional music in RTÉ (Pine 2005, 382).

The Singers were notable in being the first RTÉ performing group to give European tours, sometimes with an all-Irish composer programme, as was promoted in 1963. In the RTÉ Music Department Report for the Year 1962-63, Tibor Paul remarked on the propaganda value of these travels and performances for Ireland as a country and for Radio Éireann as an institution as being "beyond measure... It was quite obvious that... [t]he Singers were acknowledged…as a vocal ensemble

of international standing" (quoted in Pine 2005, 389, fn. 86). In this work, the contribution of RÉ to the building of the Irish nation justified the group's work on this material and the cost of their trip. Two years after this trip, the Singers made an international commercial recording with German label Harmonia Mundi. The choir's programming gradually developed into monthly concerts at the National Gallery in 1973, and tours around Ireland including some of the islands like Inis Mór in the Aran Islands or Oileán Chléire (Cape Clear Island), as shown in Fig. 2.2 (below). Travelling in this way to one of the islands of Ireland, an Irish-speaking area, the performance contributed to RTÉ's responsibility to represent locations all around Ireland, even places as remote from the capital as the islands.

Fig. 2.2: Radio Éireann Singers singing off the coast of Cork on Oileán Chléire. ("RTÉ brings music to the islands 1976" Source: https://www.rte.ie/archives/2016/0920/817829-rte-singers-visit-oilean-chleire/, accessed 19th June 2022)

Through the 1970s, the Singers exhibited a varied repertoire, with regular European tours, vigorous promotion and regularly commissioned works by Irish composers (Cox, 2013). Other choirs who performed in RTÉ include various local choral societies like the Culwick and Clontarf Choral Society, professional choir Anúna, college choirs like UCC and Trinity, and Irish traditional music choir, *Cór Cúil Aodha* (Choir of Coolea). RTÉ's *Cór na nÓg* (RTÉ Youth Choir) was established in 1987,

involving 65 children from the ages of 10-14 yrs, with annual auditions. Such ensembles served as a key pipeline for semi-professional and professional choral singing of the RÉ Singers and other groups. In 1990, however, the RTÉ Chamber Choir disbanded in 1990 due to a lack of funding for broadcasting associated with the cap on advertising imposed on RTÉ by broadcasting minister Ray Burke. Widespread condemnation of this decision followed in the national press of the time. This was partly reinstated by Michael D. Higgins in 1994 in his appointment as Minister for Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht).

There were several moments of transition and crisis in choral music in RTÉ; what follows is a description of two of these moments. In 1984, the full-time RTÉ Singers were disbanded, replaced by a part-time RTÉ Chamber Choir. At the time of this regrouping, the longest serving singer had been with the group for 31 years, the shortest 19 years, and the average age of the group was 51. In contrast, the replacement RTÉ Chamber Choir was comprised of 17 young singers, all of whom also had professional aspirations. Their contract formed part of a new policy for choral music at RTÉ, including provision for a large amateur choir (RTÉ Philharmonic) and a children's choir (RTÉ *Cór na nÓg*), all under the direction of Colin Mawby. The repertoire covered by the choirs included that of the renaissance through to the twentieth century, including works by Mawby himself. Members were recruited through word of mouth, and many singers came through the development of the Dublin cathedrals – namely St. Patrick's and the Pro-Cathedral.

At the point of the early 90s, RTÉ was devoting dwindling funding to its choral ensembles, and consequently experiencing a disimproving relationship with its choral members. In response to this perceived abandonment, the National Chamber Choir was founded, eventually becoming Chamber Choir Ireland. Though the instrumental ensembles the National Symphony Orchestra and the National Concert Orchestra lasted longer under the patronage of RTÉ, published plans to move them out from under the RTÉ umbrella and over to the patronage of the national concert hall both exemplify the close connection between the two institutions of RTÉ and the NCH. It also reflects the much-reduced funding situation of RTÉ in the closing decades of the twentieth century and the first decades of the 21st century. As similarly occurred in public broadcasters in Europe and further afield, performing

ensembles are becoming increasingly detached from their erstwhile broadcasting homes, and are having to look for creative alternatives for their patronage. The funding models of broadcasting stations have long been separated from performing ensembles of any type.

The pressure on the choir to steer away from 'modern' programming was constant. The issues surrounding the programming of contemporary classical music in general is again not restricted to Ireland, but to what extent the resistance to incorporating modern music in all its forms into the choir's regular repertoire was stymied by an assumption that the general public's taste was not ready for it is as yet unclear. The conflict between providing 'the best' of music in all its forms and broadening peoples' horizons – yet perhaps not going as far as to expect audiences to warm to contemporary musical compositions – evidences a mixture of both of Ahlkvist's musicologist and surrogate audience-member programming philosophies in the station and in the community of people involved in the station.

As clearly signalled by RTÉ's slow but steady relinquishing of its performing ensembles, RTÉ currently sees itself as less a part of a sustainable ecology of choral music in Ireland than it perhaps did in its first few decades. Another difficulty experienced in the broadcaster and flagged throughout official and unofficial memos, documents, and correspondences was the broadcaster's difficulty in obtaining Irish conductors/singers of good enough quality. Choral singing was very much an unknown employment path in the 1990s, and like many paths of cultural employment in Ireland in current times, remains so. Much as in other musical activities in RTÉ of the earliest decades, the geographical bias of choral activity in the twentieth century - confined as it was to a few key venues around Dublin city - was a persistent one.

Finally, in choral music as in traditional music (and as will be explored in further detail in chapter 3), the roles played by women were much less prominent than those played by men. Out of the total of 276 choral works commissioned by RTÉ from 1926 to 1990, only 10 were commissioned from women composers. The reasons why this was the case are outside the scope of this dissertation, but it is certainly clear that in the sphere of Irish radio broadcasting at least, women were socialised out of leadership roles in RTÉ performing ensembles. In a similar vein, no woman has ever filled the role of

permanent conductor of a RTÉ performing ensemble, in a pattern mimicked all across the board of RTÉ musical productions.

With regards to Irish folk and traditional music, RTÉ never utilised its official musical ensembles to produce Irish traditional music (or rock or popular music for that matter). Instead, the official RTÉ performing ensembles were confined to the genres of western classical music, unlike stations like BBC Scotland and All India Radio. RTÉ did, however, curate traditional, rock and popular music via other gatekeeping activities.

2.3 RTÉ and music genre categorisations

Up to the year 1983, RTÉ furnished statistics on a regular basis describing the percentage of broadcast material produced in various categories of material, including categories of programming named "music" and "non-music." The reason such blunt categorisations were produced is likely due to a combination of the pressures of nation-building under which the radio station existed, as well as interest from political representatives and social commentators. In the first decades of 2RN, music was seen to be less political (*Orpheus Ascending,* 1976*)* than most other categories of radio content, including drama and current affairs. The first decades of the Irish Free State consisted of former opponents from the Irish civil war locking horns in politics instead of in armed conflict. Thus, any programming seen to have political content was placed under scrutiny. Civil institutions, RTÉ included, were closely monitored for signs of partisanship to one or other of the former civil war parties. Broadcast programming was closely monitored for signs of bias, hence the regularly-published data on forms of content which resulted in such incongruous statistics as that in 1974, 34.5% of the radio schedule was considered completely "music," (*RTÉ Annual Report* 1974) separate from all other types of artform (similar to the "roughly half" of broadcast time Michelsen et al report music to have taken up in radio broadcasting worldwide in the twentieth century (Michelsen et al 2019, ix)). The same themes – of nation building, cultural education and levelling of hierarchies through mass mediation – that occurred at that time recur today in the reception of the radio's output in newspapers

and by politicians. For example, in February 2016, Senator David Norris complained in the Irish Seanad about the then recent axing of the *Gloria* choral radio programme on RTÉ Lyric FM, echoing politicians throughout the twentieth century who used their privileges in the Dáil and the Seanad to discuss the cultural output of public broadcasters and to lobby for changes of style or repertoire.

As Simon Frith discusses, the terms “high art” and “folk art” have long acted as “terms of censure” in music industries (Frith 1981, 40). As Hesmondhalgh has explored, related anxieties and simplifications surrounding genres have arisen in the modern arena of streaming (Hesmondhalgh 2021). The terms “serious” and “light” have similarly long histories of use within public broadcasting systems especially, bestowing both respect and censure on their attendant musics. The process of categorisation was widespread throughout public service radio stations worldwide, and, up until the 1980s at least, the process of detailed categorisation of the material produced was extended to music. In RTÉ, various sources show how deeply embedded the terms serious and light were in discourse about musical genres, even included in the station architecture. This next section discusses those discourses in detail.

Not only was programme material categorised after it was produced, in an exercise to communicate to necessary parties the type of material and programming broadcast by the company. Significantly, the material was categorised even before production took place, as demonstrated by the architecture of radio buildings internationally in the period. According to a 1974 report on accommodation requirements in a new RTÉ building, genre divisions in the station were (literally) embedded in the architecture of RTÉ buildings (see figure 2.3 below) (*Report on Accommodation Requirements in Radio Telefis Eireann*, 1974). In the report, it is interesting to note the plans as they relate to music: regarding the construction of the new Radio Centre, Upper Ground Floor, one room is titled ‘music,’ the other ‘light music.’ Clearly, ‘music’ and ‘light music’ were genre divisions of substance in RTÉ in the 1970s - substantial enough that they were written into the plan for the broadcaster’s new building. Their physical division in this way reflects the dichotomy between light and serious music in RTÉ at the time, and demonstrates how deeply the division was ingrained in theory and practice in RTÉ at the time. Furthermore, this division contributed to divisions in

programme-making in the institution, in ways which will be evidenced later in this chapter and in chapter 3. Due to the slow nature of institutional change, the effects of writing the division (between 'music' and 'light music') into the building design in this way would remain for years afterwards. These divisions between musical genres were built into the running and design of the whole building, and this process was planned and documented on a level that permeated the work of all the broadcasting employees - not just those involved in the creation of music programming on a daily or regular basis. As radio critic James Cridland observes, radio stations have not necessarily needed nor used particular buildings since the second decade of the 21st century (Cridland, 2018). However, in the twentieth century, the architecture of a radio station's building affected the ways programme departments and personnel within that station were organised, with consequent effects on the material produced within it. In summary, the division between the genres of 'light music' and 'music' was not just abstractly constructed by managerial personnel separate from the work of the programme makers. As this report makes clear, the divisions between "light music" and "music" existed openly and were embedded in their daily work lives via the physical structures and corporate divisions of the broadcasting institution of RTÉ itself.

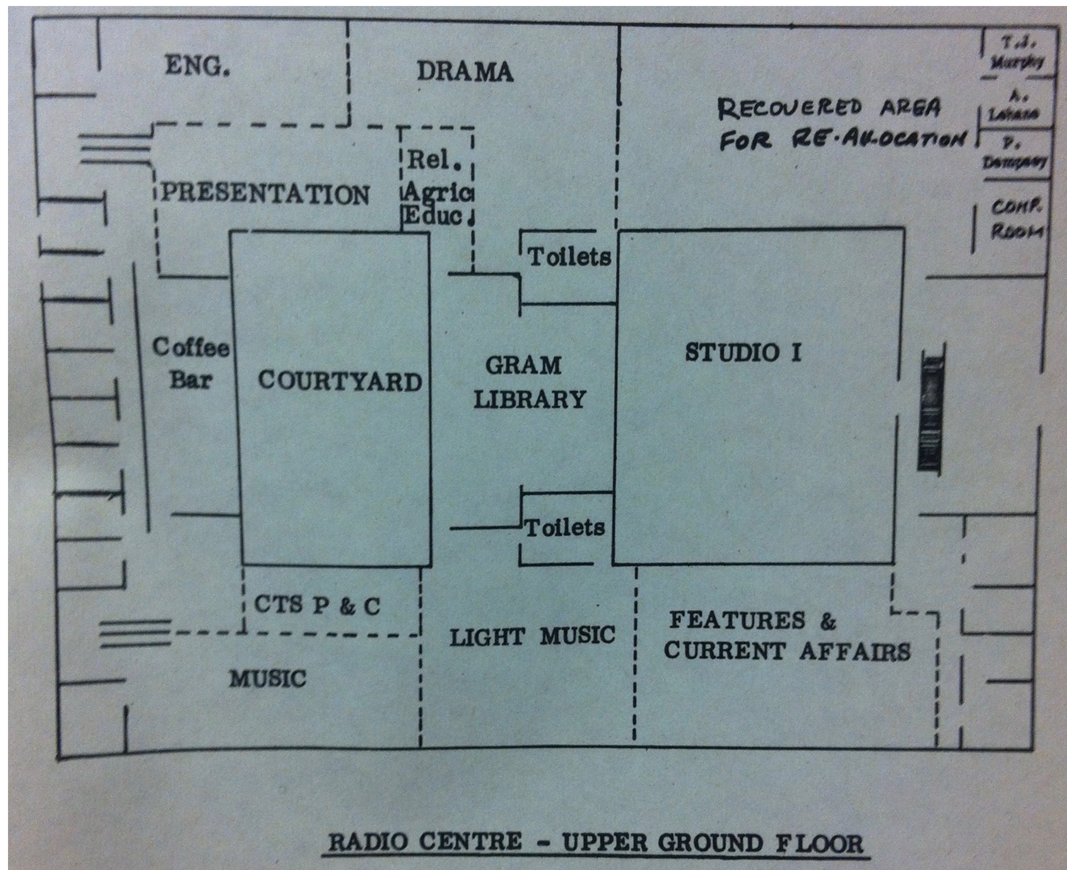

Fig. 2.3. Mock-up drawings of planned new radio building, 1974. (*Report on Accommodation Requirements in Radio Telefis Eireann*, 1974) Image courtesy of RTÉ Document Archives.

In the 1980s, the architecture of radio buildings globally involved sections devoted to "serious music" as well as to "light music." Within descriptions of "serious music" were references to "better music," "classical music" and just plain "music." The separate sections headed "light music" discussed "popular music" "light entertainment" and "variety" (*Report on Accommodation Requirements in Radio Telefis Eireann*, 1974).

The public service broadcaster of India, another nation going through a postcolonial separation from the United Kingdom, exhibited a similar separation of music into the categories of light and serious. However, the category of light music was less actively managed in RTÉ than in All India Radio. According to Lelyveld (1994), All India Radio's light music genre was heavily thought-out, and constructed specifically in order to be a "counter-blast" to the music becoming popular and readily available through commercial films. A similar effort was underway in the UK, where the BBC was heavily invested in providing light entertainment of good quality to its audiences. In Ireland, however, such reasoning does not seem to have been expressed. Although there had been much discussion of the

responsibility of RTÉ as a public broadcaster with respect to safeguarding the national heritage, and investing in the promotion of traditional music and the promotion of Ireland's national heritage and values, there was no expression that investment in an Irish light entertainment service would achieve this. Rather, there was more discussion about the safeguarding of the Irish language, “our” national language, and reflection on RTÉ’s efforts in this area in its opening decades, and (favourable) comparisons of RTÉ’s efforts compared to other institutions in Ireland.

It appears to have been a different flavour of cultural nationalism that influenced the investment (or rather the lack thereof) of RTÉ in its light entertainment provision. Furthermore, the distinction between light and serious music in RTÉ seems to have blurred somewhat in relation to folk and traditional music. The programming of Ciarán Mac Mathúna, for example, was produced within the serious music establishment in RTÉ. Along with Gay Byrne, Kathleen Watkins, and some others, Mac Mathúna was one the first serious presenters in RTÉ, beginning his broadcast career at a time when presenters were only first beginning to be used at the station, where broadcast material was beginning to be corralled into discrete programmes more than otherwise, and their presenters thus becoming better known.

The manufactured distinctions between serious and light musics in RTÉ were gradually broken down and disappeared from official documentation in the mid-1980s. In the period studied, the rhetoric used around genres of music was opaque in many artistic fields, and sometimes intentionally so, it seems. However, evidence suggests that in RTÉ, classical music was considered to be “serious music,” and “traditional” music was considered in general by management and many lower grade staff not to be serious. This is hinted at in the following discussion between the Director of Music in RTÉ, Dr. Gerard Victory, and the members of the RTÉ Authority in 1974:

> The Director of Music said he believed the point had now been reached in the development of radio where a better balance could be achieved between discussion and current affairs programmes, and programmes which should be seen as providing both entertainment and enrichment of the quality of life. He noted that the development of Irish traditional music and serious music were not in conflict and pointed to the desirability of making serious music available at many levels and of further developing Irish music to become more accessible and better known internationally (Minutes of the 270th meeting of the RTÉ Authority, 4th October 1974).

Exactly what Victory meant by “Irish traditional music” and “serious music” not being in conflict is unclear. However, it is clear that he considered classical music to fall into the category of “serious” music and that “Irish traditional music” did not. This conversation occurred at a time when, while classical music was not considered to be directly the music of British colonialism, it was, as Pine describes it, considered “anathema to the sense of an Irish identity which looked to indigenous cultural genres to create self-awareness and confidence” (2010, 287). The aim of Victory’s point was to contradict this conflict between the two genres; the effect of the language he used, however - putting traditional music in a category other than “serious” - fundamentally belittled that music.

As noted earlier in this chapter, the focus of many public broadcasting stations’ involvement with classical music related mainly to the maintenance of performing ensembles. From reading the official documents from the 1970s, it seems like there was no explicit music policy in the organisation, but instead a commitment to supporting and concentrating on the classical musical ensembles (orchestras, RÉ Singers, Choirs, etc.) as a reliable demonstration of RTÉ’s commitment to musical performance and patronage of musical life whenever there was any question about music in the station (on either radio or television). RTÉ followed in similar fashion until recent years. The narrative of performing ensembles in RTÉ was itself affected by the pressures of cultural nationalism.

As exhibited by the lack of references within official documentation and by discussions with interviewees for this thesis, RTÉ music programmes were created without explicit music programme policies. Archivist Michael Talty suggested that any specific music policy in place in RTÉ would have been discussed in the annual internal RTÉ publication *RTÉ Yearbook* (Talty 2018); thus the following section refers to implications of unofficial policies throughout the *RTÉ Yearbook*. However, former *Long Note* researcher and (later) RTÉ Director General, Cathal Goan, explained that broadcasting policies and guidelines really only came to be formally written down in the 1990s, and suggested two scenarios by which the official and unofficial music policies were formed.

> Written policies are things that people started thinking of in the 1990s there you know somebody on the Authority might have said wouldn't it be a great idea if we had more or less of X Y or Z and that would filter down into what we were doing at editorial meetings. That's one scenario. And the other scenario is that at certain stages in the organisation, different heads of department were particularly good at encouraging producers to be creative. And so

> for instance in the mid to late '70s, there was an extraordinary flowering of radio talent (Goan 2019).

In the period of the 1970s - early 1990s, several discussions evidence an unofficial policy in place. Within the category of folk and traditional music, "folk" was widely understood to mean "light" music, and "traditional" to mean "serious" within RTÉ radio. "Serious" music was also widely understood to mean "better" music (Bradshaw 2019). This suggests that the branding limited or deterred the development of Irish traditional music at the station, or the scope of how it could be used in programming.

In 1972, the *RTÉ Annual Report* described 'light music' as being "catered for" by the Pattersons, the Clancy Brothers and Seán Dunphy. The report states that "those interested in traditional music were specially catered for with the series 'Ag Déanamh Ceoil' which has proved to be the most successful series of this genre developed so far" (*RTÉ Annual Report* 1972, 23). That light music was 'catered for,' while serious music was 'developed' or 'included,' suggests a passive strategy in the broadcaster on the behalf of folk music and a more concerted effort on behalf of what was considered traditional music. Either the report writers are concerned to actively include what they consider to be serious music in their programming, or to be seen to include what they consider to be serious music in RTÉ programming. Either way, the report differs in the tone of its description of the two genres (*RTÉ Annual Report* 1972).

The 1976 annual report shows that the label "serious music" is still in use (in relation to television statistics). (*RTÉ Annual Report* 1976). These annual reports include very little discussion of developments in Irish traditional music, and only brief references to popular music, but they frequently give paragraph-long updates on the development of 'serious' music within the station. From 1978 onwards, the 'statistics' section provides scant notes on 'light entertainment' and 'music,' stating that "The hours of transmission provided by the light entertainment department take account of a large proportion of programmes formerly provided by (a) The Light Music Department and (b) the 'Variety' section of what was the Drama and Variety department."

As late as 1979, discussion by Dr. Gerard Victory about the new station (RTÉ Radio 2, later 2FM) equated the terms "better" and "serious" music, indicating again a clear assumption that serious music was referring to classical music and assumed that it was better music (RTÉ Authority minutes, 9th April 1979). The 1981 annual report followed up by stating that "the highlight of musical life in Ireland during the year was the opening on 9th September 1981 of the National Concert Hall," (*RTÉ Annual Report 1981*, pages unnumbered) the NCH being a venue devoted primarily to classical music.

These assumptions, that classical music was a better type of music, were supported by many personnel in the wider radio fields internationally, as exemplified by the conference "Radio in the '80s", whose proceedings documents were circulated amongst RTÉ staff. These papers detail a lot of discussion comparing and contrasting "light music" with "serious music." For example, one discussion musing on the future of radio, mused in a lamentable tone that "Those entering the workforce, [sic] 18-24 years in the 80's will be smaller in number, and... may regard radio as a source of light music more than as a source of serious information of substance…." (Radio in the '80s, Working Group 2, "How will people use and perceive radio programs?" June 7, 1976). Second, as these conference proceedings also show, the division of the music department into 'light' and 'serious' music was not just a feature of RTÉ radio; light entertainment was a label used across all institutions mentioned in this conference proceedings document.

That the separate buildings in RTÉ for "music" and "light music" were listed on the architectural drawings for the new RTÉ radio building in the 1970s, evidence that the division was accepted openly enough by personnel in RTÉ as to be included in architectural plans for the station throughout the next decade. Broadcaster Browne referenced this division in his description of the opening years of *The Long Note. The Long Note* producer Tony MacMahon strategically avoided applying to the Serious Music department for a job where he thought he would not get a hearing and instead got a job with the Light Music department. The long-established broadcaster Ciarán Mac Mathúna worked out of the Music department. Mac Mathúna's was an older style of presenting by that stage, and Tony MacMahon had some contempt for it. As Browne explained, "folk music" came in under the "light music" department, which was under the stewardship of Kevin Roche at the time. That

The Long Note was pitched as either "folk music" or "light music" demonstrates how successfully Tony MacMahon was able to make his pitch to the right department. As a magazine show involving Irish language material, singing, instrumental music, interviews, and reportage of current events, its format resonated with the variety of the light music department's material (Browne 2017). That the "serious music" department included traditional music (i.e., read "authentic" traditional music) and *The Long Note* was not included here displays how the era of *The Long Note* represented a time where these musical boundaries existed but also were beginning to be dismantled (if ever they were accepted). In summary, the genres of music in the early decades of RTÉ Radio initially described as serious included classical music, and later incorporated traditional music programmes. That material described as light included "jazz" music and was later described as popular music/crooners' music. Though the serious music department started out including all traditional music, it later came to connote only certain types thought of as more authentic. In general, the musical boundaries were vague and inconsistent, and likely involved a significant amount of political and institutional strategising by individual broadcasters and managers than any helpful or consistent musical denotations.

Long Note engineer and producer Harry Bradshaw clarifies how musical policy was decided by which department a programme was in. In the late 1970s, shortly after he began working on the programme, *The Long Note* was moved to the Music Department (formerly known as the Serious Music Department), a promotion in radio terms:

> [*The Long Note*] started under Kevin Roche. He was the head of Light Music and he was …Tony's [MacMahon's] boss. Then there was a reworking of the two departments and Kevin Roche moved with some of his programmes – the ones that were deemed suitable - … to the Music department. And traditional music was deemed [to] be better in Music rather than Light Music. So it was Kevin Roche who moved and he took that programme and Tony with him. … [I]n the music department you were autonomous, you know? It was seen as a serious treatment of…music - the same as three other people beside me were doing a serious treatment of symphonic music, somebody else with choral, chamber… Now what time they had for the content, I'm not sure, but they did say: you had your budget - go and do it. (Bradshaw 2019)

Later, in the early 1990s, when *The Long Note* was being prepared to be shelved as a programme, it was demoted by being moved back to the Light Music department (Bradshaw 2019). In addition to changing the programming department and location, the day and time of the programme's broadcast was also changed. In the radio industry, these were all well-known strategies to disrupt the listener-

base of an established programme and destabilise their support, so that by the time of their eventual removal from a schedule, the programme team and audience would already be diminished and weakened and any protests less damaging for the broadcaster. These strategic steps outlined by Bradshaw 2019 and presenter Browne (2017) highlight the importance of a supportive broadcasting environment for any programme to prosper, including having a favourable and consistent slow in the programme schedule. As Bradshaw states:

> They [RTÉ management] wanted to get rid of it [*The Long Note*]. So the way to do it was to mess it up, move it, lose a chunk of your audience, and then [impose] a set of rules [by being in] the Light Music department, which didn't exist when it was a Music department. So they were all kind of like moves on a chess board to get to the end of *The Long Note.* (Bradshaw 2019).

As Bradshaw experienced it, the attitude of many RTÉ personnel towards Irish traditional music was derogatory, viewing it as part of a 'lower tier of things' (Bradshaw 2019). "'Diddle dee eye' was the regular term that was used first by people who weren't involved in it... On the outside it was looked on as a very poor relation and slightly embarrassing," he states (Bradshaw 2019). Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh reports experiencing similarly ignorant remarks from some RTÉ colleagues involved in the production of the show.

> You know, some of the sound people wouldn't be into it at all. And they'd be listening to some piper "Who's that squealing?" they'd say. "Oh!" I'd be saying "That's such good piping!" [T]hey just didn't get it. So…it was a pity that we weren't able to get people that actually understood the music sometimes. Some of them did. But I'd find that very disheartening… when the sound person…[made] throwaway comments about fantastic musicians (Ní Mhaonaigh 2021).

Similar discussions existed in India concerning the division of music between "light" and "classical," as discussed by Lelyveld (1994), suggesting a postcolonial theme in the attitudes of these RTÉ personnel towards the traditional material so lauded by official Ireland as being key to safeguarding its heritage, revitalising its native culture, and rebuilding the Irish nation.

A final example of the anomaly inherent in the divisions of musical genre in RTÉ music programming in the period 1970-1994 was the exclusion of folk and traditional musics from coverage in *The Arts Show*. The only art forms included in this show were popular music and classical music. This has changed since the mid 2000s, but that the disparity existed at all offers further proof that folk

and traditional music in RTÉ were located on the other side of the spectrum from "art" music and were perceived by programme-makers as its polar opposite. According to Goan and *Long Note* presenter Paddy Glackin, "serious music" in the time of *The Long Note* meant "performing groups" (2019) and provided evidence of the fact that folk and traditional music in RTÉ existed with a lack of respect - that and the fact that no traditional musicians were ever employed by RTÉ as professional musicians, like those musicians employed in the performing groups.

2.4 Irish traditional music radio in the context of minority language rights: RnaG

The revival of the Irish language was one of the central goals of the Irish Free State from its beginnings in 1922. When the ability of radio to influence the masses became apparent early on in its history, many public service broadcasters came under pressure from governments to influence political and social change. The quality and quantity of Irish language material broadcast on RTÉ became a much-discussed topic in Ireland in the twentieth century. Public service broadcaster RTÉ was tasked, amongst other things, with the nation-building objectives of the Irish Free State government, including revitalising the Irish language, becoming a significant patron of the arts, entertaining the masses, and providing current affairs journalism. All these activities were expected to be completed on a shoestring budget, and under constant comparison to that produced by RTÉ's nearest neighbours - the generously funded, cultural behemoth of the BBC.

RTÉ was heavily lobbied by the cultural nationalist movement - both in the Dáil and in journalistic circles. Irish traditional music was closely tied to the Irish language as it was considered a part of Irish heritage, of national Irish identity. Discussions of Irish folk and traditional music in official broadcasting circles was usually subsumed under the heading of the Irish language. Most references to Irish folk or traditional music in institutions in the period (e.g., minutes of the meetings of the RTÉ Authority, RTÉ Annual Reports, memos, and other miscellaneous RTÉ documentation, 1974 report of the Oireachtas committee on Broadcasting) appear under the actual or implied heading of the Irish language. Naturally, there was some crossover in the relevance of Irish traditional music

and the Irish language - the contexts of Irish language singing, music in the Gaeltacht. However, that Irish folk and traditional music was not generally discussed as a subject in and of itself in RTÉ supported working broadcasters' views that it garnered little respect amongst management (this is further discussed in chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis). At the level of the RTÉ Authority, Irish traditional music is seldom discussed, except in the context of the Irish language. For example, discussion of the CCÉ/RTÉ dispute (see section 3.5) by the RTÉ Authority was typed under the same item heading as that of Irish language programming policy. This indicates that the RTÉ Authority thought of Irish traditional music programming as similar programming (and covered by similar rules and regulations) as that of Irish language programming, even though the programme was conducted in the English language, bar some minor exceptions. The strongest conclusion we can draw from this lack of official policy of RTÉ regarding traditional music is that the programming that was broadcast in this period - especially that begun in this period, like the work of Tony MacMahon and others - did so not as a response to top-down policy pressures from management. In contrast to Draisey-Collishaw's study of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's "multicultural" Fuse radio programme from 2005-2008, for example, which described Fuse as "typical of a category of production that responded to particular policy pressures and priorities—namely that programming become 'more multicultural'" (Draisey-Collishaw 2018, 324), programming of traditional music in RTÉ radio in the period 1970-1980s, at least, was created and existed very much away from the sphere of upper management in RTÉ.

Though most programming in RTÉ existed without the support of clear programme guidelines, guidelines for the creation of Irish language programming were clear and specific from as early as 1971 (Ó Riada archive, UCC, item 584). Before *The Long Note*, musical material was considered to be less political than news or drama (Gubbins 2016, 65-67). This was like the case existing in India. "According to Lionel Fielden, the first Controller of Broadcasting, music was "'padding' because it does not instruct or inform," even if it made up about seven-eighths of all broadcast time" (Lelyveld 1994, 114).

In many cases, the broadcast time was limited to 4 minutes (thereabouts), thus putting restrictions on the musical items broadcast. Similar limits existed in broadcasts of Indian music, with

effects upon performers. “But the decorum of a more extended performance, the open-ended and improvised exposition of a single raga, was ill-adapted to radio, at least as conceived by its administrators” (Lelyveld 1994, 115). In India, as in Ireland, the location of performers was limited by their distance from the broadcasting stations: “Recruiting musical talent was a function of the location of the broadcasting studio, since All-India Radio was in no position to bring people from any great distance” (Lelyveld 1994, 115).

In RnaG from 1974 -1991, the music broadcast on the station was mostly folk and traditional music, with little popular music (apart from the genre known as Country ‘n Irish (see Motherway 2016)) broadcast, no labelling of music as light or serious music, and certainly no division as such of rooms per genre in the building in any form - official or unofficial. (RnaG began on 1st April 1972, with 2 and a quarter hour each evening.) The main policy of RnaG has always been an unofficial but very firm ban of English language material on the station. This persisted until *Anocht* FM came on board in 2005 (Anocht FM is the moniker RnaG gave to their station after 9pm at night, when English-language material was allowed for inclusion (*Anocht* FM 2005)), when DJ Cian Ó Cíobháin’s pop music radio programme *An Taobh Tuathail* and others began being able to include English language programming. There was a reluctance of the station management to discuss the policy in the beginning: “No absolute policy against the use of English on RnaG” (RTÉ Authority minutes, 268th meeting 1974).

RnaG’s presence at the bi-annual Oireachtas festival, broadcasting live the competitions of sean-nós singing and sean-nós dancing, had a significant impact on its listeners, enhancing the popularity of the sean-nós singing styles among the Gaeltacht communities and contributing to the survival of the artform. The broadcast of these competitions, in combination with RnaG’s regular broadcasting of unaccompanied sean-nós singing were said to have been particularly influential on singers in the RnaG listenership (which were mostly based in Gaeltacht areas). The support of RnaG for sean-nós singing and dancing - artforms that were reportedly in serious danger of decline and demise - was much lauded and stood in sharp relief to the gradual decline in the amount of time RTÉ devoted to this artform in the same period. RnaG was also described by interviewees based in

Gaeltacht areas as contributing greatly to the communication between the various Gaeltacht areas. Before RnaG, interviewees described people from various Gaeltacht areas couldn't understand each other, as they were too unfamiliar with the different dialects and accents used by Irish speakers in each Gaeltacht. Once RnaG began broadcasting from the various Gaeltachtaí daily, however, they began to learn and to be able to understand one another. This was recognised as one of the major contributions of RnaG in its first two years, according to the RTÉ Authority:

> The contribution being made by Radio na Gaeltachta [sic] to the cross-fertilisation of music and ideas between the various Gaeltacht areas was of equal significance to the substantial contribution of Radio Éireann to the development of traditional music in Ireland (RTÉ Authority minutes, 268th meeting 1974).

In the same period that the demise of regional styles was beginning to be discussed in Irish traditional music.

In assessment of the contribution of RnaG in its first two years, the RTÉ Authority likened it to the contribution of RTÉ as a whole to the development of traditional music in Ireland (RTÉ Authority minutes, 268th meeting 1974). This meeting took place in Carraroe (*An Cheathrú Rua*, site of the current headquarters of RnaG) and included many members of the RnaG. The positive comments of the Authority concerning RnaG, somewhat congratulatory, must be read in the context of a visit by the RTÉ Authority to the station, i.e., as a demonstration of support for the station and its personnel by the wider RTÉ establishment in the context of regular criticism of RTÉ's support of artists and musicians outside the Dublin and Cork studios, and a lack of support for Irish language material in its schedule.

RnaG carefully cultivated its identity as a local/regional broadcaster, less so as a national broadcaster. It indicated this in various ways, but most clearly by the locations it referenced in its broadcast, being mostly from the Gaeltacht regions of Ireland and from Irish-speaking listeners further afield. In terms of the music it broadcast, importance was placed on playing music made by the people of the Gaeltacht themselves; unaccompanied traditional instrumental music formed a major proportion of this. RnaG was broadcast live (i.e., not pre-recorded, but as a real time broadcast, simultaneous to its creation) from Carraroe from the first day (RnaG, 1st April 1972). In addition, the Catholic church was given prominence in the schedule e.g. The first day involved the participation of 6 Catholic priests, one from each of the Gaeltachtaí, in honour of the occasion. A representative musician of each Gaeltacht in

Ireland performed, including Northern Ireland, despite difficulties getting tapes to Casla in time for the broadcast due to delays caused by the Troubles (a violent conflict spanning over thirty years, and discussed in more detail in section 1.2 and chapter 3). Seán Ó Riada's musical setting of the Catholic mass was performed. According to research carried out by the Social Science Research Centre of University College Galway in 1973, there was a high level of local satisfaction with RnaG (RTÉ Authority 268th Meeting, 7th September 1974).

RnaG put a heavy emphasis on Irish traditional music, with unaccompanied instrumental music regularly broadcast from the first day, similarly to RTÉ as it began in 1926. Meaití Jó Shéamuis Uí Flatharta was the first musical broadcaster in RnaG; he performed on the uilleann pipes on the first day, choosing to play a reel on the uilleann pipes, unaccompanied by any other instruments. It quickly became evident on the station that this solo instrumental style of performance was the preferred across all traditional music broadcast on RnaG, according to the remaining digitised catalogues of performances in the RnaG archive. Uí Flatharta's performance mirrored the performance of James Ennis (father of noted musician and broadcaster Séamus Ennis and noted piper in his own right also) on the first night of 2RN in 1926. Uí Flatharta worked as Head of Music in RnaG from 1972 until about 2010.

Representatives from RnaG attended the first two annual festivals of Irish traditional music on the island from their very start, and these festivals remain as the most significant festivals in modern times - the *Scoil Samhradh Willie Clancy* (Willie Clancy Summer School) and the All-Ireland Fleadh Cheoil (Neansaí Ní Choisdealbha 2018). *Lán a Mhála* (a bagful), presented by Uí Flatharta was the main music programme from the start of RnaG and continued until the retirement of Meaití Joe Shéamuis in the 2000s. The programme involved a mixture of music and song material. RnaG established itself as an ardent institutional supporter of sean-nós song. RnaG's live broadcast of *sean-nós* (old-style) singing performances at the *Oireachtas* (a long-running annual national competition and festival based around Irish language performance activities founded by *Conradh na Gaeilge*

(Gaelic League) in 1937) had a major positive impact on the revival of the singing style, according to all listeners to RnaG I spoke with.[6]

The line-up of performers for the first day's schedule on RnaG exemplifies how male-dominated the station was, with only one female performer/producer/presenter on the whole schedule - poet Máire Mhac an tSaoi. This male dominance on the broadcast schedule that day reflected male dominance of the world of work and of positions of authority and responsibility in Gaeltacht and rural society at the time. A new, mostly English-language, radio station RTÉ Radio 2 began broadcasting on the 31st of May 1979. In response to the very successful commercial pirates, it involved mostly pop music, but it also broadcast some Irish language material (see Gubbins and Ó Briain 2020).

2.5 Irish traditional music radio in the context of a contested border: BBC Ulster and folk/traditional music

In BBC Ulster, when Irish traditional music was mentioned, it was usually in the context of other regional music, and presented to the listeners as if they were not familiar with it. (e.g., *Countdown to the Festival*, which reported on people from mainland UK going to the Fleadh (Loughran and McCavana 1993). According to the BBC Ulster archive's *Radio Catalogue* publication, which lists broadcast musical output in BBC Radio Ulster from 1970 to 1991, literary producers David Hammond, Tony Knox, and Tony McAuley "built programmes of modern arrangements for this music, Horslips for example, or arrangements by the Chieftains. Judith Elliott made an interesting programme on the Belfast Harp Festival of 1972" (Boucher in Loughran and McCavana 1993, 245). Andy Irvine and Paul Brady performed a lot in BBC Ulster (as per *Radio Times* schedules of the time). The only catalogue available of any music programming on BBC Ulster radio in the period 1970-1994 is *The Radio Catalogue* (Loughran and McCavana 1993), published by the archive of BBC Ulster's in 1993, and its section entitled "Music" contains a relatively short list of programmes containing Irish

[6] For further discussion of the link between *An Oireachtas* and RnaG, see Costello 2019.

traditional and folk music, broadcast in the period 1974-1981. These programmes foreground themes of local and regional styles and musics and focus on local performers like Irvine and Brady. This type of programming also functioned to introduce Irish traditional music to the wider listenership of the station. In this way, BBC Ulster programming differed from that of RnaG and RTÉ, often presenting programming of Irish traditional music as if unknown. The following are the names of programmes listed in the BBC Ulster catalogue in the period with names suggesting the likely inclusion of traditional music as per programme listings in Loughran and McCavana's *The Radio Catalogue* (1993):

- Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 1977
- Traditional Dance Music (From radio series, Four Centuries of Music in Ireland)
- The Irish idiom in the orchestra
- Music in Ireland Today
- The popular tradition in Ireland today
- The Uilleann pipes
- Traditional song
- Traditional dance music
- The Belfast Harp Festival
- Music for a while
- Songs from Belleek
- Tom Paxton
- Music of the Balkans
- Eddie Butcher of Magilligan
- Causeway Folk

Goan and Glackin also mention listening to other programmes on radio in Northern Ireland, like *From Glen to Glen* (Glackin and Goan 2019).

In this period, material broadcast under the simple label of "music" (i.e., without genre distinctions) seemed to present the genre of classical music. The description of *Hobson's Musical*

Choice in the *Radio Times* provides an example of this: “Offering each week just one of the many facets of music-making in Northern Ireland” (Loughran and McCavana 1993, 269). This habit of presenting classical music as needing no genre label beyond “music”, as if classical music was clearly the most prominent or preeminent among all musics, also occurred regularly in RTÉ listings. The effect of this type of regular signification by a public broadcaster - the only, or at least the most prominent local media outlet available in that period - is likely that it shaped the discourse of that community regarding what was meant by different genre labels in music. It could possibly be said to efface the communities and audiences represented by other types of music.

In contrast, in BBC in the period 1970-1994, there seems to have been little to no regular programming that specifically includes Irish traditional music. According to Irish flautist Niall Keegan who grew up in London in the period, he didn’t hear any Irish traditional music radio programmes which, as an interested performer, he would have known about. UK-based flute-player Michael Walsh concurs, stating that his family listened carefully to performances of Irish traditional music available from RTÉ on long wave radio, that it was the only source of this type of music radio in the UK.

2.6 The genesis of *The Long Note*

As outlined by RTÉ researcher and producer Peter Browne (2017), there were several different eras on the programme *The Long Note*, corresponding to the work of different producers on the programme and resulting in changes in the format and aesthetics of the programme’s presentation. A close network of presenters, producers, and performers were involved in *The Long Note*’s production from the very beginning, and the combination of personnel involved changed on a regular basis, particularly in the first few years. Interviews with presenters and producers indicated that it was a significant development from previous radio programming. RTÉ’s promotional publication, the *RTÉ Guid*e (the Irish public broadcaster equivalent of BBC’s *Radio Times*), described the programme as “not to be missed” and “one of Ireland's best-ever folk programmes.” (“Watch out for… Tune in to…,” 1973, 6th July, 3). *The Long Note* used a specialist magazine programme format and it appealed to the small

target audience of "those seriously interested in the Irish musical tradition," as presenter Small has explained. The show was in the magazine format – what Hugh Chignell has described as the "audio equivalent of the print magazine" (2009, 30-32), a fast-paced, itemised treatment of the major musical events of the day. Several interviewees involved in the production of the show suggest that *The Long Note* was an important, ground-breaking programme in Irish traditional music broadcasting, and have suggested to me that it was central to the relationship of Irish traditional music with broadcasting in Ireland. They indicated that *The Long Note* was a significant development from previous radio programming on RÉ - more directly engaged with current musical and cultural events - and that it was more concerned with its audience members than previous programmes.[7]

Tony MacMahon was the first producer of the programme, followed by Michael O'Donnell, Gene Martin and finally Tony McMahon again. Harry Bradshaw took over the programme in 1979, continuing in that role until the series ended in the early 1990s. The first presenter was Mícheál Ó Domhnaill (not to be confused with series producer Michael O'Donnell), followed by Bill Meek, Peter Browne, Paddy Glackin, Triona Ni Dhomhnaill, Eamon Fitzgerald, Robbie Hannon, Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh, Jackie Small, and finally Máire O'Keeffe. Doireann Ni Bhriain and Mick Moloney presented separate features in the programme without ever filling the role of regular presenter. *The Long Note* began its journey in the Light Music department, reportedly because producer Tony MacMahon knew he would not have a chance at being employed in the Serious Music department but was given a job by producer Kevin Roche (*RTÉ Guide*, July 12 1974). The programme used a combination of studio-based recordings as well as field recordings collected during field trips made by both producers and presenters. It was the first regular programme in the wider RTÉ radio schedule to feature the burgeoning new commercial recorded content of Irish traditional music and song. Baade and Deaville describe a tension created by the co-existence of "musical tastes and music markets" in broadcasting contexts (Baade and Deaville 2016, 23). Though the presence of commercial music recordings in *The Long Note* context implied market conditions, a delicate balance was maintained between commercial music recordings, field recordings from festivals and events, as well as with the

[7] For example, as outlined by Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin in conversation with author, 2005.

presentation of archival material. The magazine show format of the show, switching deftly between these various formats of presentation, is often described as being key to the popularity of the programme.

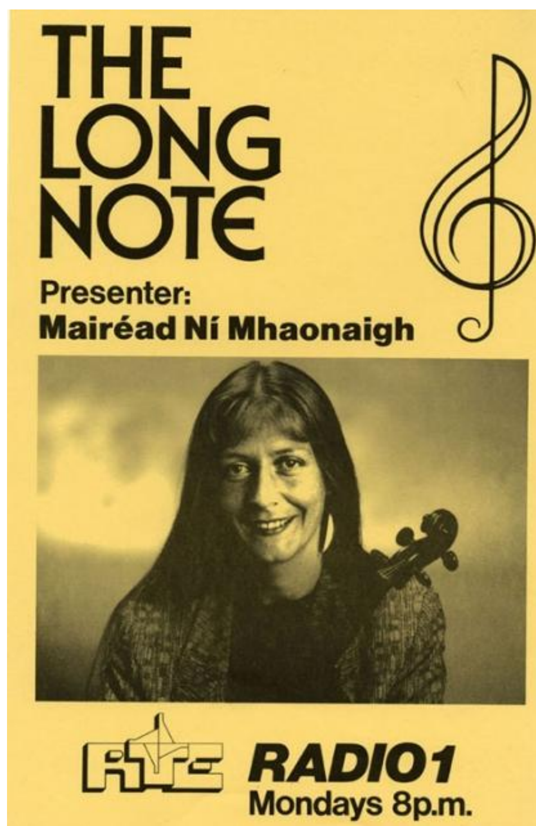

Fig. 2.6.1 *The Long Note* promotional poster. Image courtesy of the Irish Traditional Music Archive.

The first broadcast of *The Long Note* was on July 16th, 1974 (*RTÉ Guide*, 15th August 1975). As promotional articles in the *RTÉ Guide* described the programme, it involved "[a]spects of the wide world of traditional music - singers, events, musicians, attitudes, recordings old and new" (18th November 1977, 14). In most of its promotional material, writers describe it as containing both folk and traditional music. A clear distinction is made between the two, and although the individual meanings of both words are not consistent throughout the article, there is a suggestion that the word 'traditional' refers to 'real' music, and that 'folk' music refers to music 'more progressive.' The headline of the *RTÉ Guide* article, 'Tony: traditional and progressive' suggests an equal balance between items considered to be progressive and those considered to be traditional, but this was not the case with regards to the programme materials. This thread of thought (traditional versus progressive) was followed through by discussions at the Crossroads Conference in Dublin in 1996, which was one

of the first academic conferences on the topic of Irish traditional music, and which was set up around the dialectic of tradition and innovation. Interestingly, the two keynote speeches were conducted by former members of *The Long Note* management team, Tony MacMahon (producer) and Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin (researcher/presenter). Both MacMahon and Ó Súilleabháin had earlier been involved in a public debate in 1995 on Friday night chat show, *The Late Late Show*, on the topic of the conflict between tradition and innovation, itself sparked by television programme, *A River of Sound*, and this conference, entitled *Crossroads Conference: Tradition and Change in Irish Traditional Music*. The conference was organised by academics of Irish traditional music of the time, Liz Doherty, Either Vallely, Fintan Vallely, and Colin Hamilton and the proceedings later published for public consumption (Vallely 1999). In this way, the thread of thought and discussion surrounding 'tradition' and 'change' could be seen to parallel 'tradition' and 'innovation' and, in a loose way, the concepts of 'tradition' and 'folk.'

Fig 2.6.2: Image from RTÉ's *Tuairascáil Bhliantúil/Annual Report 1974* (36), with the following caption: "Mícheál Ó Domhnaill (right) who presented 'The Long Note', a radio series on folk-music" (Image courtesy of RTÉ Document Archives).

The programme from 5th May 1975, a year into the programme's life, exemplifies its style and format. Several different versions of the signature tune existed as it was changed regularly over the

years; this version was played on fiddle and bouzouki. PR materials of the programme stressed its connection with young people playing music, and the entertainment factor of the programme, as in the following feature by the *RTÉ Guide*:

> Tony MacMahon sees the programme as having a young, entertaining image, with the emphasis on giving listeners an up-to-date account of music, events, and happenings on the folk scene… The title of the new series – *The Long Note* – comes from two sources. Tony MacMahon says, 'In Clare people interested in traditional music always ask of a traditional performer, 'Did he have The Long Note, though? But Peadar O'Riada [sic] (son of the late Seán) also played a west-Cork tune for me called *The Long Note*, so there's the title' (*RTÉ Guide,* vol 11, no 28, July 12th, 1974, 3).

The significance of this is that the producer was approaching the programme with a particular idea of what was traditional music, indicated ambiguously by his statement about the title of *The Long Note*. Presumably, that choice of programme title indicated that he thought the programme would represent 'real traditional music,' performed by 'real traditional musicians.' MacMahon also referenced the fact that there was an Irish traditional tune called "The Long Note," which only served this point further, but it was the meaning attached to the name *The Long Note* that made it desirable as a name for a new radio programme. The idea of the "long note" suggests an authenticity of some type – like that required in some senses as described by RTÉ Radio 2 DJ Dave Fanning, when he suggests that they were not producing programmes for chart music aficionados, but instead for 'rock freaks' (*RTÉ Guide*, 15 June 1979). To what extent having 'the long note' and being a 'rock freak' embodied other non-musical characteristics, perhaps, is not clear.

To be able to say they were fulfilling their remit and catering to the public, broadcasters needed to first define who that public was. In the absence of sufficient data on who that audience was, broadcasters did the work of imagining those audiences themselves. In the following article in the *RTÉ Guide*, writer John Walsh describes the programme audience as young, uninformed, but interested:

> Maybe the best way to understand what it is about is to imagine yourself – very interested, not too well-informed, probably young – fortunate enough to be spending an evening in the company of, say, Tony MacMahon, Mícheál Ó Domhnaill, and Seán Corcoran (Walsh 1974).
>
> Corcoran founded the Tradition Club in Slattery's of Capel St. (*RTÉ Guide*, 1974-08-30, 4).

This quote indicates a reverence for the producers and presenters listed, and an acknowledgement of

the high level of cultural capital they held, due to their positions as broadcasters with the public system, as well as their being knowledgeable musicians.

Tony MacMahon was the producer of the programme, and he recruited the other broadcasters and presenters for *The Long Note* through mostly personal connections in general. MacMahon had been gradually building up his profile within RTÉ, as a television producer on *Ag Déanamh Ceoil* (broadcast from 1971), on radio with *Binneas* [sweetness] (broadcast from 1973) and producing the radio department's St. Patrick's Night musical programme (*RTÉ Guide*, 15th March 1974), before beginning with *The Long Note* once he received a job with the Light Music Department. Presenter Small got involved through his piping teacher, Pat Tuohey. Peter Browne, before being employed as a researcher on the programme, was a well-known piper on the pub session scene. (A pub session is a participatory musical context, generally led by a few key musicians, and open to members of the public to join in.) This pub scene was very much a male-dominated context (*RTÉ Guide*, 18th October 1974). His family were known to MacMahon, and MacMahon heard that he was looking for a job at the time. The first set of pipes that Browne played were given to him by Séamus Ennis, one of the first broadcasters of Irish traditional music in Radio Éireann. Threading this narrative through the presenters on the programme, family and kinship relationships and connections were foremost in the recruitment process, and in the gatekeeping process for mediators of Irish traditional music in RTÉ in the 1970s. As Irish society was quite segregated at the time in terms of gender, it is understandable that fewer females would be part of these networks, and thus fewer females in a condition to be employed by MacMahon. (For example, it was still illegal for married women to work in the civil service or in banks at the time, and most pub contexts were male dominated.)

MacMahon stated from the start that presenters would spend only about three months each on the programme (*RTÉ Guide*, 15th August 1975, 11). He had already planned that Bill Meek would take over from Mícheál Ó Domhnaill, and that Mick O'Sullivan (also known as Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, and who later became professor of music in the University of Limerick) would take over from him in turn. Bill Meek was advertised as being a musician and folk music correspondent for the *Irish Times*, and originally from Liverpool. Through the first few years, the personnel making up the programme

were all male. Tony MacMahon listed the people involved in the programme in 1975 as: Mícheál Ó Domhnaill, Seán Corcoran and Gerry Hartford (*RTÉ Guide*, 31st March 1975). Though MacMahon was clearly knowledgeable of female musicians in the area, like singer and harpsichord player, Tríona Ní Dhomhnaill, Peig McGrath (concert flute), and Sinead Caher, females were conspicuous in their absence from the management of the programme (though MacMahon arranged these musicians to perform on St. Patrick's Night in 1974, so presumably was in no doubt of their status as musicians of broadcast quality).

MacMahon references the professionalism of sound operators, and their skill of setting performers at their ease when making a recording. 'The sound operators have gone to great lengths to set them at their ease, and this has resulted in getting the best performances from them' (*RTÉ Guide*, 17th October 1974, 10). Shortly before beginning *The Long Note,* MacMahon gave up a career as a primary school teacher to pursue freelance music-making and broadcasting. One of the earlier programmes made by MacMahon for RTÉ included *Binneas*, a radio show which claimed to feature both traditional and folk music and musicians. In the following commentary on the programme for the *RTÉ Guide*, MacMahon aligns the term "traditional" with the idea of "pure" music and "folk" with that of progressive music:

> Tony talked to us about his new radio programme and explained that Binneas would have a fairly free format, featuring both the real traditional musicians, such as John Kelly (fiddle) and Seosamh Ó hÉanaí (singer) and those Irish folk musicians who could be described as playing progressive forms of Irish music such as The Press Gang and Shades of MacMurrough. Some purists, he suggested, did not like what progressive music-makers did with traditional airs, but on Binneas they were not taking sides on the matter, but simply featuring both kinds of music (*RTÉ Guide*, 6th July 1973, 11).

MacMahon's attempt to maintain an objective position for himself as a broadcaster regarding the two types of music does not obscure his meaning, however. As Hilmes reminds us, music radio formats are not "mere commercial formulas," but rather are "important culture-defining and boundary-enforcing exercises" (Hilmes 2002: 13, also discussed in Gubbins 2017). MacMahon's description of the *Binneas* programme also sets up a binary between purist and traditional perspectives, which were to persist in discourse in Irish folk and traditional music for several decades to come. Indeed, the controversial *Crosbhealach an Cheoil* (Crossroads of Music) conference (Vallely et al, 1999), of

which MacMahon was one of two keynote speakers, in the mid-1990s, was formulated directly around these two binaries of tradition and innovation described here by MacMahon.

Speaking to the *RTÉ Guide* before the launch of *The Long Note*, McMahon stated that he saw *The Long Note* as:

> [h]aving a young, entertaining image, with the emphasis on giving listeners an up-to-date account of music, happenings and events on the folk-scene. The series will have a magazine-type format. In other words there will be a mixture of concert performances by prominent groups, reviews of concerts and records, news items about up-coming events, old songs and the stories behind them, famous musicians and their own special style of playing (*RTÉ Guide* vol. 11, no.28, 12th July 1974).

The Long Note maintained a regular turnover of presenters on the show, due amongst other things to the demanding schedules of the professional musicians MacMahon recruited to present it, but also, as MacMahon stated, to give the series a "freshness" (*RTÉ Guide* 15th August 1975). The magazine format also was described as very important to the success of the show. Most of the people working on the show were fluent in the Irish language, and use of the Irish language was embedded in the show, often in the formalities at the start and end of the programme. Male personnel dominated the programme (like with most RTÉ programmes of the period) (this point is discussed in further depth in chapter 3). Apart from in the first year of the programme, there was no reference to the show in the RTÉ Annual Reports, highlighting how traditional music programming operated at a lower status than news and current affairs in the station. This was a significant period for Irish music with the deaths of key figures and establishment of key festivals like the Willie Clancy Summer School, the All-Ireland Fleadh, and the South Sligo Summer School.

The Long Note launched the careers of many commercial acts in Irish music at the time. It was a significant mark of esteem and status in the world of Irish folk and traditional music to be asked to be involved in the programme, as Ní Mhaonaigh states:

> I listened religiously to *The Long Note* from when Mícheál Ó Domhnaill started presenting it. Because it was just new at the time. And it had very good critical[ity]… There was a lot happening in the music scene at that time. There were a lot of bands starting but then there was this focus on traditional music as well, so. When Harry … Bradshaw came and asked me to present it - I think that was in '87, '88 around that time - I was *so* honoured, because it was one of my favourite radio shows, you know... And at that stage, radio shows were *very, very, very* important to musicians…. [There was] no internet and if there was anything about music

> on radio or TV, we *religiously* [her emphasis]would be following them, you know? (Ní Mhaonaigh 2021)

Ní Mhaonaigh's use of religion as a metaphor to explain how closely she and others active in the traditional music scene paid attention to the programme is an example of the many religious references that were found widely spread throughout the programme, including frequent references to God in listeners' letters. Including references to God in formal signatures was a frequent practice at the time, and persists up to contemporary times in the practice of handwritten letters (as displayed throughout letter correspondences in the Bradshaw Collection in ITMA, e.g., with 'TG," or "PG," always uppercase. (i.e., Thank God and Please God). This was wholly reflective of practice in that period in wider Irish society in general. The programme itself was also peppered with occasional references to God by the presenters, in similar fashion, e.g., "goodnight and God Bless."

Many of the interviewees described their personal connection with and commitment to the programme *The Long Note* using the metaphor of religion. Ní Mhaonaigh listened regularly to the programme before presenting it in the 1980s and states that radio and television programming on Irish folk and traditional music was never missed but listened to like an imperative. Ní Mhaonaigh's choice of wording suggests that the programme was considered a significant representation of the inviolable text of tradition and suggests that the programme was significant enough to be considered as authoritative a source on folk and traditional as a bible:

> Everyone listened to it. Like everybody. Like [in] traditional and folk music - everyone. And that's why I'd be nearly sick in the morning. Listened to it on a Monday night…[T]here was always discussion about it then in the Tradition Club on a Wednesday night. Why didn't you have such and such on, or you know? So everyone did listen to it, you know. And that was the scariest thing, that it was like a bible! (Ní Mhaonaigh 2021)

2.7 Conclusions

Couldry and Hepp talk about how, "''media logic,'' on the one hand, takes up non-mediatized forms of representation; on the other hand, non-media actors have to conform to this ''media logic'' if they want to be represented in the (mass) media or if they want to act successfully in a media culture and

media society” (Couldry & Hepp 2013, 196). In this chapter I have set out the materials, structures, and logics surrounding the mediation of Irish traditional music on RTÉ, setting up the context for more in-depth discussion of the themes of nationalism, representation, and aesthetics in chapters 3, 4, and 5 of this thesis.

Chapter 3: Nationalism and *The Long Note*: shaping and sharing images of the Irish nation.

3.1 Introduction

One memory that always stands out for me occurred on a Friday night, when I was about twelve years of age, staying up late by the fire with my family to watch *The Late Late Show*, as we did most Friday nights at that time. *The Late Late Show* is a long-running magazine-format television chat show on the national public broadcaster RTÉ, beginning at the very start of public television in Ireland in 1962. Within the show's format, slots were always held for discussion and debate of contentious topics sometimes hitherto undiscussed in Irish public life - religious, political, and social scandals, and issues like divorce, abortion, and contraception. Sometimes *The Late Late Show* departed from their regular magazine format, to do a special episode focused on one topic. That was the case this Friday night of my memory when they did a special on Irish traditional music. That night, host Gay Byrne and his guests focused on the topic of a television series that had just been broadcast on RTÉ and BBC (Vallely 2011, 319). The series was called *A River of Sound*, and it focused on the diversity of cultural influences involved in Irish traditional music at that time. A group of musicians performed a musical extract from the series live on the show. They played instruments unfamiliar to me at the time, that I didn't know the names of. To this twelve-year-old, the music played sounded so new, different, and radical - I didn't know what to make of it. The part of the show that really made me sit up, however, was when host Gay Byrne (GB) asked a member of the audience, Tony MacMahon, (a producer in RTÉ at the time) what he thought of the music played. MacMahon (TM) replied thus:

> TM: Well my first reaction is that I can hear very little of Ireland in it. As music, it is wonderful. And it's wonderful in the sense that it can sell Ireland to an audience abroad, which has given Ireland a very bad press over the past twenty-five years. That is one of the great things about the modern movements in Irish traditional music - it has sold an image of Ireland which is youthful, beautiful, and nice. But my problems begin where we find that the sources of the music are being increasingly lost to such a degree that the next generation may not rediscover them. And do you remember earlier you spoke to me all about tradition and innovation? My problem is that there is a huge divide coming there. Innovation is taking over, steam-rolling

> tradition. And what is happening is tinsel, glitter, consumerism… [MacMahon begins to be interrupted by other audience members] is actually replacing…the tenderness and the poetry and the essential lyrical nature of traditional music. Because Irish music is the music of localities. It's soft, contemplative, tender music. That is being lost.
>
> GB: And do you... not see in that piece what I saw - it was the coming together of all kinds of different influences flowing in together? That's what I read in it anyways.
>
> TM: No, well certainly the Irish influence isn't there in any central fashion. As a piece of music, now, I'm specifying that I like it.
>
> GB: It's lovely, yes.
>
> TM: And it does give a wonderful image. And it's musically interesting.
>
> GB: Quite, yes.
>
> TM: But what concerns me is that Irish traditional music is being lost. The essential characteristics, its regional quality, its poetry, its softness, its tenderness, its poetry at its centre is being lost.
>
> Unidentified audience members, interjecting: It's not![8]
>
> GB: Tell you what, they're saying nonsense up there, but…
>
> TM: Well, you asked me for a reaction!
>
> GB: Yes, I asked you for a reaction!

I didn't know anything about MacMahon at the time. I didn't even know that he was a musician, much less that he played the button accordion, like I did. But I felt blown away by his statements, and troubled by the conflict they represented within what I thought of at the time as an unproblematically homogenous and unified whole called Irish traditional music. I understood that the way Byrne afforded MacMahon such space to speak on *The Late Late Show* meant he must be a person of standing in the community of Irish traditional music. I went to bed wondering how merely playing music (something I had classed up until that point as a completely positive or, at the least, neutral activity), could be thought of by MacMahon as problematic.

MacMahon's comments likening innovation in traditional music of the time to tinsel, glitter, and consumerism made me worry that if I wasn't careful about the ways I played this music, I could

[8] MacMahon states separately that the word "Begrudger!" (inaudible in the recording) was shouted at him from the audience (2014).

perhaps unwittingly do something wrong or immoral. As an impressionable twelve-year old, that possibility affected me deeply, and I couldn't shake the feeling for many years afterwards. I began to ruminate on the ideas of cultural nationalism, authenticity, and musical purity that Tony MacMahon expressed that night. I wondered why these concepts were so prevalent in Irish traditional music discourse. What exactly was a "source" for Irish traditional music? Was it a tune melody, a published tune collection, a skilled musician, a composer, a CD, or a radio programme? And what were the ways in which Ireland could be represented in a piece of music, or rather more importantly, as MacMahon claimed that night, how could Ireland *not* be represented in a piece of music and was this necessarily a negative thing? This experience inhabited my thoughts about Irish traditional music over the following two decades, as I tried to unpack the narratives of Irish traditional music as mediated by Byrne and MacMahon on *The Late Late Show* that night in 1995. In combination with my later experience as a performing musician creating musical products for consumption in concerts or CDs or on radio in the US (see section 5.1), I began to think about mediated discourses affecting musical practices in participatory music sessions far removed from the first mediated performances. Geoff Wallis later downplayed the influence of *River of Sound* television series discussed by MacMahon, stating, "It would be extremely hard to identify any alteration in the flow of Ireland's musical current or pinpoint any development which occurred as a result of the screening of the series and the album's release, other than the staging of the 1996 Crossroads Conference on tradition and innovation" (Wallis 2006). Yet, the impressions first placed in my twelve-year old mind that Friday night by Tony MacMahon and others remained over many years and developed into a curiosity of how Ireland could be represented in music and, furthermore, of the part of a national broadcaster in mediating activity, ideas, and discourse surrounding Irish traditional music. By coincidence, the same Tony MacMahon whose words affected me so much as a young musician happened to be the first producer of radio programme *The Long Note,* the primary case-study for this thesis.

In this chapter, I present and examine some expressions of national identity emerging from Irish public radio in the period 1970 - 1994. As throughout the rest of this thesis, the programme *The Long Note* forms the primary case study, but in this chapter, I draw more on additional research

conducted on the institutions of RnaG and BBC Ulster. I continue my use of *The Long Note* as my primary programme source and I examine the concepts of nationalism and transnationalism in public music programming. I look at both “national" and “nationalistic” traditional music on Irish public radio and explore the varying ways radio was used to shape and share images of the Irish nation. I highlight some significant broadcasting moments from the programmes considered, and I explore the meanings of these moments for the broadcasters and audiences involved. I describe the organisational and geopolitical considerations of the *Long Note* programme as folk and traditional music radio content in a national broadcaster (RTÉ), as a context for Irish national identity and, by extension, as a context for Irish nationalism. I also review the work of *The Long Note* as a transnational product, following its travels and the reception of the programme beyond the borders of the Republic of Ireland in Northern Ireland. As a context for (trans)national folk and traditional music, geared towards and received by audiences in Northern Ireland, I discuss the inclusion of Northern Irish audiences in RTÉ’s conception of the programme listeners, and the impact of this on the programme’s construction. I discuss how the producers, performers and audiences connected by the programme managed and processed the accompanying geopolitical considerations of broadcasting traditional music on a public broadcaster in the context of a contested border, and the national and transnational identity politics involved. I reference folk and traditional music radio programming produced by British public broadcaster BBC Northern Ireland in this period, namely BBC Radio Ulster and BBC Radio Foyle. To conclude, I suggest how this relates to the mediation and mediatisation of music via the radio in the late twentieth century, and some implications of this for the discussion of mediation and mediatisation in contemporary times.

3.2 Irish traditional music and (cultural) nationalism in RTÉ

Programmes like *The Long Note* were hugely significant in creating ontologies of Irish music, of national music, and of traditional and folk music for the Irish listenership (see further chapter 6). In *The Music of European Nationalism*, Philip Bohlman describes the 'special role’ that folk music

"plays...in the construction of the nation" (2004, xix) and explains how "music is a particularly malleable means for shaping a nation's many images." Pertinently, music "marks national borders, while at the same time mobilizing those wishing to cross or dismantle borders" (Bohlman 2004, 12). Bohlman's differing conceptions of national and nationalistic music are particularly helpful in signposting the variety of meanings relating to folk and traditional music in the Irish context. As he states:

> [E]ach nation in Europe can claim repertories of national and nationalist music, but the ways in which those repertories interact with each other are specific to the nation, as well as to the particular historical moment in which music is defining the nation (Bohlman 2004, 81).

Public radio broadcasting in Ireland, of which *The Long Note* is one example, was just such a context for this: both marking the national border as well as being a context for crossing and dismantling of it, as this chapter discusses in further detail.

As per Tim Wall's opening question in his chapter in the edited collection, *Music and the Broadcast Experience* (ed. Baade and Deaville, 2016), it is important to ask how radio is connected to the nation-state. In the 1970s and 1980s in Ireland, there was a move away to de-emphasise nationalism towards individualism. Morten Michelsen et al state that, "radio is the medium of nation-building par excellence" (2019, 2). Radio was a topic of discussion for the International Folk Music Council in 1953, whose regular bulletin discussed the importance of radio for "authentic" folk and traditional music and the responsibility of public broadcasters for ensuring that only authentic music was described as folk music (1953). Nation-states across the western world in the early twentieth century achieved control of nascent radio technology and maintained that control on a largely consistent basis through to contemporary times. As Michele Hilmes explains, the objectives of state and public radio institutions were bound up with those of cultural nationalists in the same period, and the development of radio as it became a key site of cultural production throughout the twentieth century was coloured by nationalism:

> Radio was born into an era of nationalisms and marks a high point in the capture of a technology and a means of cultural production by the organs of the state... [R]adio was clasped to the bosom of the state in a way unprecedented by any other medium…[S]tate/public broadcasters defined their mission as promoting, protecting, and producing their own distinct national identities through the means of radio programming, carefully addressing their own national publics and screening out unwelcome, foreign influences (Hilmes 2004, iii).

Folk music has often been interpreted, in music studies and across disciplines, as a context for the nation - as both a marker and a signifier of national identity. As chapters one and two of this thesis set out, radio has been a significant medium for the transmission of folk and traditional music since it first came into use in Ireland and globally in the early to mid-twentieth century. As the *Late Late Show* broadcast demonstrates, such broadcasts of folk music are far from neutral and prompt debates over how a nation is musically sounded at both local and international levels. I hereby explain my usage of the terms nation, nationalism, nationalist, and national identity. All four terms are interrelated but carry subtly different meanings, attracting varied interpretations. As John Hartley explains, "Nation is a relational term; like any sign, one nation consists of being what the others are not" (2019, 156). He continues that:

> the dictionary or common-sense definition of a nation being a large number of people of common ethnic descent, language and history, inhabiting a territory bounded by defined limits, is...seriously at odds with the facts" (2019, 156).

Hartley's emphasis of a defined boundary is relevant to the discussion of the Irish context which will follow later in this chapter. Hartley explains, a nation has more to do with symbolic referents like Benedict Anderson's concept of an imagined community (1983, 7). He emphasises that, "certain institutions play a more prominent and routine role in creating and sustaining an evolving referent for the concept and its subjects. Among the more important of these are the media" (2019, 157). Until the 1970s, the vast majority of radio and television broadcasts received by Irish listeners were those of RTÉ, with some on the east coast also receiving the broadcasts of the BBC.

Bohlman's work reveals the conceptions of national music and nationalistic music to have differences both coarse and subtle (2004, 81). Importantly, Bohlman states that "the use of music to shape an image of the nation is conscious" and that "those who turn to music to shape that image do so because they recognize the power of music to enhance the power of the nation" (2004, 81). Bohlman ascribes agency to the concept of the nation in "draw[ing] attention to its borders": "In national music, reinforcing borders is not a primary theme, whereas nationalistic music often mobilizes the cultural defense of borders," he states (Bohlman 2004, 81). This assertion is relevant to the context of Ireland,

where, as I shall discuss in this chapter, the contestation of the Northern Ireland border was present as both a political undercurrent and an explicit theme in the context of folk and traditional music's mediation on the radio.

The relationship between music and the nation in Ireland has been approached from various perspectives. In this next section, I will summarise this work briefly. As Harry White states of Irish traditional music:

> [T]he parameters of Irishness itself... have loomed large not only in regard to the status and perception of Irish traditional music as a culturally authentic mode of Irish identity, but also in other domains of musical practice that excite a no less vehement discourse, in which the polemics of identity are never far away (White 2014, 373).

Early Irish radio followed a similar path with pressures of nationalism, except with added complexities due especially to the context of a contested border. The War of Independence took place from 1919-1921, with Irish rebels establishing independence from British rule in Ireland, and founding the Irish Free State (now called *Eíre*/Ireland, or the Republic of Ireland) in 1922. 2RN, the first name given to RTÉ, began in 1926, just four years after the establishment of the Irish Free State, and the first decades of its broadcasting were heavily burdened with nation-building. The state of Northern Ireland was established in 1921 with the Government of Ireland Act, 1920, as a part of the negotiations concerning the independence of Ireland from Great Britain. The border dividing the island into the two states of the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland has been contested since that time. The terms nationalism and nationalist in the Irish context, therefore, involve not just an aspiration for nation building, but also involve the added connotation of an aspiration for a united Ireland.

The links between nation building in broadcasting and campaigns for a united Ireland became particularly prominent once the Northern Irish conflict began in the late 1960s (discussed further from section 3.10 onwards). Iarfhlaith Watson, focussing on Irish language and Irish broadcasting, explains how Irish national identity changed and developed in the period 1968-98, particularly once Ireland became a member of the EEC in 1973. Watson thus explains how Irish nationalism in this period distinguished itself from nationalism in Europe:

> The emphasis on economics in Ireland reflected the move in Europe towards economic unification and the de-emphasis of national differences. This movement in Europe was toward

economic unification in an effort to move away from the nationalist tendencies which had contributed to the two world wars. In Ireland, however, the considerable intensification of conflict in Northern Ireland brought the nationalist characteristics of the traditional national identity into focus. The result was a shift within the modern ideology from disregarding the symbols of the earlier national identity to a concerted effort to de-emphasise them (Watson 2003, 6).

Watson later suggests that attacks on nationalism in the 1970s and 1980s resulted in attempts to redefine national identity rather than to reject nationalism outright (2003, 69).

These varied references and meanings existing in the Irish context are further to the focus of most of the writing theorising nationalism in music, focussed as it is on non-Irish contexts. In regard to the role of music in this construction of Irish nationalism, White describes the range of meanings attached to nationalism in Ireland over the ages:

> In Ireland, nationalism has variously signified freedom from colonial oppression, aggressive cultural sectarianism, the redemption of a ruined civilisation, and the murder of children in the name of a united fatherland. It is almost embarrassing to say so, but it is a catchword for virtually every shade of political and social behaviour, from the most benign to the most bestial, conducted under the aegis of ethnic or racial integrity (2002, 133).

And later:

> The strange history of music in Ireland, entrapped on one side by its servitude to a politically-motivated reading of ethnic culture as a nationalist ideal and on the other side by an ideology of colonial oppression and thereby repudiation of the European aesthetic, entails a different model of thought to the one which applies to music in central Europe (2002, 144).

John O'Flynn and Mark Fitzgerald similarly specify how the meanings of nationalism in Ireland differed from those in Europe:

> [T]he manipulation of collective identities to facilitate nationalist projects has not been unique to Ireland…. However...a range of factors that were specific to Ireland's cultural and political history would lead to a dominant conception of the relationship between music and nation that was at variance with patterns observable elsewhere in Europe (2014, 1).

The Irish (all-island) context of music, therefore, offers a particular example of nationalism in music in the context of public service media and a contested border that is distinctive. And, while national public radio stations are important sites for the examination of nationalism in folk and traditional music in general, the Irish national public radio system is a particular case of this.

Several broader definitions of nationalism and related terms nonetheless persist. John Hartley emphasises the importance of media to the creation and sustenance of the sign called a nation. He

states that the sense of a national community is “partly built and sustained by the quotidian rhythms of print and electronic media output, along with periodic national ceremonies which are themselves communicated through the media” (2019, 157). Nationalism, on the other hand, is described by Richard Taruskin as:

> The doctrine or theory according to which the primary determinant of human character and destiny, and the primary object of social and political allegiance, is the particular nation to which an individual belongs... Its multifarious impact on the arts, and on music in particular, has directly paralleled its growth and spread (2001).

Philip Spencer and Howard Wollman distinguish nationalism from national identity, stating that nationalism is:

> ...an ideology which imagines the community in a particular way (as national), asserts the primacy of this collective identity over others, and seeks political power in its name, ideally (if not exclusively or everywhere) in the form of a state for the nation (or a nation-state)... [N]ationalism is of crucial import in the genesis and reproduction of national identity, a less directly political and more fluid concept than that of nationalism itself (2002, 3).

In the early twentieth century, public broadcasters RTÉ and BBC Ulster were involved with multiple aspects of the production and consumption of nationalisms and national identities. They produced (and reproduced) elements of national identity. In addressing “their own national publics” they curated their own audiences; and in their “screening out” of foreign influences, they had to define what a foreign influence was in their own contexts. Public broadcasters in many contexts, including Ireland, were accountable to their national governments as well as to advertisers.

3.3 Irish traditional music and the context of cultural nationalism in RTÉ: Republicanism, Catholicism, and the Irish language

Irish traditional musicians often initially engage with musical expressions of nationalism via popular republican ballads like “*Óró sé do bheatha ‘bhaile”* [Welcome home] and “A Nation Once Again.” The chorus of “A Nation Once Again” states its clear aim for the border between the Republic and Northern Ireland to be dismantled, and the island to be united as a country again:

A nation once again,

A nation once again,
And Ireland, long a province, be
A nation once again![9]

Traditional musicians, however, often don't hear or understand the words of the song until long after first learning the melody. For example, I first encountered "A Nation Once Again" when taught its melody on the tin-whistle at a group music class run by CCÉ in Limerick, Ireland, in the early 1990s. After that, I heard it played regularly as a march accompanying dancers on to the stage at *Scór na nÓg*. *Scór* is a competition organised by the Gaelic Athletic Association based on "Ireland's traditional Irish past-times" and run in the winter-time (GAA, 2022). Similarly, "Óró Sé do Bheatha 'Bhaile" is widely taught throughout the mainstream education system in the Republic, often as a way of teaching the Irish language, as well as in classes of Irish folk and traditional singing outside the mainstream education system. The words and melodies of such popular republican ballads populate the repertoire of many Irish traditional musicians, particularly those regularly performing for dances, where the melodies are present without the lyrics. Nationalism is also present in the writings of the many Irish traditional musicians who consider Irish traditional music to be the national music of Ireland (Vallely 2011). Of course, the conceptualisations of practising musicians in the 1970s and 1980s compared to the time of writing are quite different, but in this thesis I reference both bodies of theorisations (those of musicians from 1970-1994 and those of 2023) to highlight the part of nationalism in the mechanics of programme-making and reception. Those of the time of broadcast and of the afterlife of the programme in 2021, have value.

As Allen Feldman describes, during literary tune collecting in Ireland, the local acoustic object was removed from its performance and topographical context, and folk and traditional music homogenised into a "national framework of uniform musical expression" (2002, 111). According to Feldman, this process continued with the advent of radio and recording technologies:

> Certain styles, players and/or regional traditions like Sligo in the 1920s and 1930s and Clare in the 1960s and 1970s were repeatedly recorded and disseminated by radio and phonograph and, through their commercial circulation, were elevated to a national sound archive. While the music of other regions of Ireland, which were not recorded, disseminated or commodified, fell

[9] For further discussion of the song "A Nation Once Again", see White 2002, 143 and Millar 2021, 138.

> out of the framework of "Irish music" and were not registered in the public culture, and thus were afforded an inferior or marginal status (2002, 112).

RTÉ's internal "sound archive," storing as it did the remains of recordings collected by RTÉ as far back as their earliest catalogued radio recordings in 1951 (Gubbins 2016), is considered by many musicians and non-musicians alike to be the unofficial sound archive of Ireland (as discussed further in chapter six). Though focussing ostensibly on the spotlight and shadow effect of media attention and neglect on traditional musicians and their localities, Feldman's statement also highlights the existence of a public sphere of Irish traditional music and names radio as one of its instruments. Tes Slominski has similarly named the radio as an important part of the public sphere of Irish traditional music (2019, 247). Spotlight and shadow effects are mentioned in many discussions of the impact of radio.[11] However, the part of nationalism in these spotlighting and shadowing functions has not yet been fully unpacked.

The traditional music schedule of RTÉ Radio formed a part of this nationalising impetus - both by its function as radio, but also by the multiplying effect of its high status as a state institution. Despite announcements of digitisation projects at various times in the past several decades, however, the materials remaining in the archive have become less and less accessible over time, as researchers' access was gradually withdrawn to nothing due ostensibly to dwindling state investment in the broadcaster in general and a consequent lack of investment by the broadcaster in its archive. The issue of access to archives will be further discussed in chapter 7 of this thesis, but for a brief illustration, half-day archive access to researchers was advertised on the archive website in 2005, but now that has disappeared and requests for archive visits on an informal basis are refused, even to former RTÉ employees, ostensibly due to a lack of adequate staffing to facilitate such access, but also a lack of equipment to physically play the requested (largely non-digitised) material. That the audio equipment to play RTÉ's archived material exists but is unplayable within the station due to the non-replacement of staff with the ability to service such audio equipment, is a worrying development for scholars of history and audio culture in Ireland.

[11] See, for example, Gubbins 2016.

Though the national sound archive has effectively disappeared to almost nothing due to lack of access to all but current broadcasters in RTÉ, the spotlighting effect of participation on RTÉ broadcasts has not. Since 1926, repeated archived broadcasts and even the mere mention of past broadcasts on radio have combined to elevate the status of musicians performing on RTÉ radio - with albeit varying significance over time. This elevated status has often been accessed by many musicians by listing a performance on *The Long Note* or other RTÉ radio programme in their biographies. Publicly, the RTÉ Authority in this period considered its own aims as closely aligned with the aims of the Irish nation-state, describing itself as a "cultural necessity" (*RTÉ Tuarascáil Bhliantúil/Annual Report 1988*, Editorial). The minutes of meetings of the RTÉ Authority (RTÉ's governing board) show that it concurred in its private dealings, showing that it regularly discussed the roles and responsibilities of RTÉ to accurately represent its audience (RTÉ Document Archives, RTÉ Authority meeting minutes). This was even more so the case in the context of the turbulent political and cultural identities on the island in the period. Despite continued discussion however, particularly in the context of the turbulent political and cultural changes on the island, the Authority struggled to define its role and relationship to Irish and Northern Irish cultural identity. This led to a lack of clear directives and policies to guide its staff on these issues. In discussions in this period, many Authority members stated their unease with programming involving the ideals of cultural nationalism.

In the early decades of Radio Éireann, music was perceived to be less political broadcast material than the more speech-heavy drama or current affairs programming.[12] In the period 1970-1994, traditional musical material swung between being considered similarly benign and politically neutral, to being considered a dangerous nurturing ground for nationalism. Folk and traditional music were seldom discussed explicitly by the RTÉ Authority in any of its meetings from 1974 to the early 1990s. However, the Authority regularly discussed the "green sub-culture" in programming in the station, with green being a reference to the colour on the Irish flag.[13] The following words from Thomas

[12] See Gubbins 2016 for a more in-depth discussion of music and traditional music programming in Radio Éireann from 1926-1960.

[13] For a brief history of the Irish flag, see *An Bhratach Náisiúnta/The National Flag,* 2021.

Patrick Meagher, the person credited with introducing the flag, explain the significance of the colours and their arrangement:

> The white in the centre signifies a lasting truce between Orange and Green and I trust that beneath its folds the hands of Irish Protestants and Irish Catholics may be clasped in generous and heroic brotherhood. (Meagher, quoted in *An Bhratach Náisiúnta/The National Flag* 2021, 5)

The green in the flag thus signifies the community of Irish Catholics on the island of Ireland, with white signifying their peaceful co-existence beside Irish Protestants, represented by the orange. Use of the phrase "green sub-culture" in the RTÉ Authority meetings, however, was not suggestive of this peaceful union of two communities, as Meagher suggested. "Green subculture" suggests, instead, that some programmes were produced with a divided audience in mind and catered more distinctly for Catholics and for nationalists than for Protestants or unionists. It also held implied suggestions of support for a united Ireland.

The following quote from the minutes of an Authority meeting in 1974 implies that programmes from the so-called "green subculture" served, or at least were *seen* to serve as occasions for nationalism. It also suggests that the Catholic religion was seen to serve as occasions as an unwitting conduit for nationalist sentiment:

> One member suggested that there was too close a link between the Catholic religion and what he termed the green sub-culture, which he considered to be highly dangerous. He urged that action was needed to unhitch religion from nationalism. Other members disagreed, pointing out that culture and religion were closely interrelated and that it might be damaging to unhitch them too quickly (RTÉ Authority minutes, 256th meeting, 15th February 1974)

This comment suggests the strength of cultural nationalist sentiment in Ireland at large at the time, but also in RTÉ programming. The comment suggests that some of the Authority's members thought that the station, by its broadcast of cultural nationalistic output, would be associated with nationalism and were uneasy with this. A year later in 1975, another member of the Authority, stated that their impression of RTÉ was of an "ingrowing, almost monastic community," reflecting "an Irish-Catholic-Nationalist" position and that it was "introverted." (RTÉ Authority minutes, 7th November 1975) Several issues are highlighted by these comments. First, they highlight the problematic conflation of Catholicism with nationalism that was a part of so many issues in the conflict in Northern Ireland in

the period 1970-1994. Second, the accusation of RTÉ as being introverted was a regular criticism received by RTÉ in the period.

The Irish language was also considered a proxy for Irish culture, nationalism, and Catholicism in RTÉ in the period - not always necessarily in relation to music, however. For example, in 1974, the RTÉ Authority discussed the primacy of Irish culture and nationalism in RTÉ to the Irish language. The following quotes from the meeting give a flavour of the strength and variety of opinions surrounding the language in the public broadcasting sector. Traditional and folk music programming came under the banner of "language and cultural programming" in RTÉ; thus, the attitudes outlined in the following conversations explain some of the background relating to decisions made regarding its broadcasting:

> [M]embers expressed the view that the weight of emphasis in RTÉ policy to date had been towards the Irish language and that Irish culture was being treated within a very narrow definition. It would be preferable that RTÉ programmes should treat…the totality of Irish culture in a more real sense. The Chairman said…add[ed] that it was unfortunate that a narrow interpretation of Irish culture had been so widely adopted in the community. One member strongly criticised the radio programme 'Three-O-One' …which…gave the impression that the only true Irishness was concerned with the Irish language. He also regretted that the Irish language programmes in RTÉ seemed to be linked to violence, or at least tended to promote the concept of republicanism as expounded by the IRA….
>
> The need to develop the national identity through broadcasting and to promote other traditions, as well as the Irish tradition, was agreed. It was felt that the Irish language must be cherished and fostered in the context of Irish culture, which was seen as being concerned with the past of all the people who had lived on the island of Ireland, their ways of life and their customs….
>
> One member was of the opinion that the sub-culture of the Irish language had been given too much play within RTÉ. He believed that the Authority had the responsibility to ensure that no one sub-culture would dominate other elements of the Irish culture…
>
> Another member felt that there was no crime in trying to share the richness of the Irish language with other people in our community and was of the view that, in the present crisis of identity being experienced in Northern Ireland, greater promotion of the Irish language and of the Irish culture might be of considerable help. (RTÉ Authority, 256th meeting, 15th February 1974).

These excerpts illustrate how RTÉ Authority felt pressured to contribute to the development of an Irish identity through Irish language and cultural programming. At the same time, they worried that this programming was directly connected to - feeding into, even - political conflict in the North and the Troubles (a violent conflict spanning over thirty years, and discussed previously in section 1.2).

Catholicism was associated in this period not just with nationalist desire for a united Ireland, but with certain cultural activities also. Many artistic practices considered to be "traditional" were

associated with nationalism, including the Irish language and Irish traditional music, song and dance. These associations can be traced to the activities of the Gaelic League (*Conradh na Gaeilge*), an ostensibly apolitical social and cultural organisation, which began in the late 19th century with the aims of promoting Irish cultural activities. The cultural nationalism of the time went further in conflating not just Catholicism and nationalism (the wish for a united Ireland), but also in conflating Irish traditional music with Catholicism and nationalism, i.e. the suggestion that Irish traditional music was played by, listened to and appreciated by Irish Catholics and nationalists. Programmes at the station involving the Irish language and Irish traditional music, therefore, easily ran the risk of being considered to cater for the Irish Catholic audience. This created problems for RTÉ as a public broadcaster, tasked as it was with catering for all communities in its constituency. The members of the RTÉ Authority expressed a sense of responsibility not to fan the flames of the campaign for civil rights in the north and the Republican campaign against the border dividing the island of Ireland.

References to the green sub-culture were made most frequently in the context of RTÉ programming involving the Irish language, but from statements made by the Authority, we can infer that in general, discussion of the "green sub-culture" also included Irish folk and traditional music. Until the 1990s, RTÉ failed to develop clear guidance for its programme makers or clear policies to clarify its goals and ambitions for programmers and their responsibilities to listeners in the Republic and beyond. The lack of distinct policies and unified guidance on these issues left programme-makers open to criticism by politicians, journalists and other public commentators.

Music programming in RTÉ was often used as a conduit for the Irish language, thus fulfilling RTÉ's remit for the revival of the Irish language. In 1972, the *RTÉ Annual Report* (1972, 30) stated they understood that to revive the use of the Irish language was one of the aims of the Irish state and that this work demanded cooperation from RTÉ, which RTÉ supported and continues to support. The 1972 *RTÉ Tuairascáil Bhliantúil/Annual Report* also mentions the policy to use Irish in programmes of music to connect different items, because of its understanding that audiences don't usually mind this type of embedding of Irish. RTÉ states it remembered that most of the population are not fluent in Irish, and that they thus needed to be mindful of this in their programme planning and in their

expectations of the needs of the audiences. Watson states that the use of Irish in music programmes was evidence of an interesting policy of "dispersion" or diffusion of Irish all the way throughout the schedule, including programmes in English:

> The premise is that by including *cúpla focal* (a few words) in many programmes the audience would be exposed to Irish. It was hoped that this would make Irish a natural part of everyday life. What it did achieve was to reinforce the symbolic position of Irish. (Watson 2003, 17).

and later:

> "The popularity of music programmes meant that a much larger audience was exposed to the few words of Irish spoken between the music" (Watson 2003, 17).

In discussing their use of the Irish language on *The Long Note*, some interviewees stated that though most of the programme makers would have been fluent Irish speakers at the time, they still felt a reluctance to say too much in Irish in the programme so as not to alienate listeners. There are several points to be noted in relation to the relationship of the broadcaster to the Irish language and its connection to music. In the 1974 RTÉ *Tuairascáil Bhliantúil/Annual Report*, the references to music come mostly within the section entitled *'Cláracha Gaeilge'* (Irish programmes). In the 1975 RTÉ *Tuairascáil Bhliantúil/Annual Report*, again, the Irish language section seemed to rely heavily on music programmes.

Significantly, cultural programming in RTÉ deemed "Irish" that was discussed at RTÉ Authority level was Irish language material, not Irish traditional music. Irish language material was often discussed in the context of cultural nationalism and republicanism. Irish-language regulations clearly had impacts on audiences and music programming. In my interviews and archival research on the music of RnaG, there was much discussion and material on sean-nós (old-style) singing. According to interviewees, RnaG's support of sean-nós singing had a positive impact on that tradition. For example, broadcasts by RnaG vastly increased the attendance at *An tOireachtas* competition from 1972 (reportage which was taken over by *Teilifís na Gaeilge* - the Irish language television channel also run by RTÉ - in 1996). In terms of the impact of the Irish language on *The Long Note*, Harry Bradshaw states:

> Irish didn't have a big part on *The Long Note* as it wasn't an Irish language programme. When it suited (when Micheál was presenting) they had Irish language items. And with Mairéad we regularly did. But probably 98% of Irish musicians aren't Irish speakers… (Bradshaw 2019).

Instead, presenters regularly utilised the common radio practice of "topping and tailing" the programme with the Irish language (e.g. (*Long Note*, 4th November 1974, ITMA 770-RTE-WAV).

> **HG:** Did you do much in Irish...?
>
> **MNíM:** Well, whenever I could. It wasn't a Gaelic programme. And actually Harry [Bradshaw] asked me one time, "Do you want to use your name Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh, or do you want to use Mairéad Mooney?" And I said "Ní Mhaonaigh" please. And I knew it was harder. And I said I know that's hard, but that's what I - that's my name, you know?...
>
> **HG:** Harder to say, or a harder sound, do you mean?
>
> **MNíM:** Well Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh for people is hard to say and it doesn't roll off your tongue as such, and that was one of the first questions he asked me. I suppose I was known...by a lot of people as Mairéad Mooney, but officially I wanted to use my Gaelic name. I had strong views about it... And whenever I could, whenever the time was right, if there was a chat about certain sean-nós singers...in total reverence to them, I would speak in Irish. Or if I was speaking about someone passing away, you know - "*Ar dheis Dé go raibh a ainm,"* and all of that. I'd always throw it in. At the beginning and at the end of the evening as well, I always wanted to use my native tongue.

More Irish was not used as that might have been a barrier or a discouragement to some listeners not as fluent as the presenters. A similar practice of topping and tailing of radio programmes occurred in the long-running radio programme Renfro Valley Barn Dance (RVBD), of Kentucky radio station WLW (Gubbins 2017). In RVBD, the more traditional string band music was played at the start and end of each programme and thus defined it but was replaced by popular music for the bulk of the programme. It seems to suggest that the producers thought the continued use of the Irish language (or in the case of Renfro Valley - string-band music) would put listeners off, or enough of them at least.

Minutes of RTÉ meetings in the 1980s mentioned that there was a "sensitive political attitude towards RnaG" and advised that this be borne in mind when taking budgetary decisions with regards to the station (Minutes of the 373rd Meeting, 9th February 1981). The "heavy political weight" of RnaG was suggested as a reason both for avoiding budgetary cuts as well as directing budgetary cuts towards it. In addition to the reasons articulated by Ní Mhaonaigh, topping and tailing was one of the ways presenters signalled to listeners that the programme related to the Irish language, that the presenters

were conversant in it, and that the Irish language was a key signifier of what the show was to contain (and had contained).

3.4 RTÉ musical groups as unofficial national ensembles

RTÉ was often involved in key performances of national musical identity in Ireland in the twentieth century. This was due to RTÉ being both a major cultural institute of the Irish state and the main broadcaster with responsibility for reporting on major cultural events. As a state broadcaster, there was pressure on RTÉ to represent the whole of Ireland, or at least to signpost that such representation was its intention. The role of RTÉ in curating Irish music was notably displayed in the station's hosting of the 1981 Eurovision Song Contest., The Eurovision Song Contest is a European-based song competition featuring one song from each participating member. Ireland won this contest in 1980 and as a result, RTÉ hosted the competition in Dublin the following year.[14]

As Irish traditional and folk music was considered the genre of music most representative of Irish national identity in this period, and the interval act was seen as the chance for the hosting nation to showcase their national musical outputs, in the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s, Irish traditional music was a feature of Ireland's ESC interval acts in 1971, 1981 (Timedance), 1988, 1993, 1994 (Riverdance), 1995, and 1997 (Eurovision Song Contest 2021). As it was customary that the hosting nation showcased national performing ensembles in its interval acts, the RTÉ Authority discussed these acts in the months leading up to the competition. (Irish National Ballet was set up by Joan Denise Moriarty in 1973 with funding from the Arts Council of Ireland, and continued until its funding was cut in 1989.) Discussions show that instead of Dublin City Ballet being credited for their participation in the 1981 act, it was decided that the dancers would be individually credited, to avoid consternation that the Irish National Ballet (INB) company, already in existence, was not performing the dance (Minutes of the 373rd and 374th meetings of the RTÉ Authority, 9th February and 9th March 1981;

[14] For a general description of the ESC, see Bohlman 2010.

Seaver 2013). Clearly, the RTÉ Authority were keen to avoid further claims of Dublin bias in their choice of performers from the capital city instead of those from the INB. On the other hand, no-one voiced any concern that the professional musical group, Planxty, performed the music for the act (and in fact were spotlighted as the focus of the act). The issue was discussed at the level of upper management in RTÉ, a symptom of the long-running sensitivity of rural audiences to the preference given to performers based in the capital and thus within easy reach of the station:

> Authority members considered it inappropriate to have the Dublin City Ballet participate in the Eurovision Song Contest programme when a well-established National Ballet group was in existence. Deputy DG said the matter was already under consideration and the Authority asked that its view be conveyed to the Director of Television Programmes (Minutes of the 373rd meeting of the RTÉ Authority, 9th February 1981).

Responding to this discussion, the Director General updated the Authority that apparently "the dance sequence was only incidental to a musical item being performed by Planxty, the dancers were being contracted as individuals and would be credited as such" (Minutes of the 374th meeting of the RTÉ Authority, 9th March 1981). Based on this assurance, "the Authority agreed to let the matter rest" (Minutes of the 374th meeting of the RTÉ Authority, 9th March 1981).

That musicians performing as a national ensemble should have diverse geographical origin was partly related to the need to dispel any claims of nepotism, but also the stark economic crises in Ireland of the 1980s. RTÉ was under pressure to be seen to provide its rare steady jobs in the arts to Irish people. For example, an RTÉ Authority meeting in 1970 discussed the difficulty of Irish musicians getting hired by Irish orchestras, as they hired foreign musicians instead (when apparently the Irish musician was previously performing satisfactorily in the job on a part-time basis). This was mentioned again in 1981, with a note about an English musician being hired for an orchestra job at the expense of an Irish musician (RTÉ Authority meeting minutes throughout the 1970s; RTÉ Authority minutes, 375th meeting, 1981).

Throughout the history of RTÉ, there had been an ongoing criticism of RTÉ focusing on Dublin and Cork-based performers at the expense of those around the Republic of Ireland, especially those in rural areas, as one member of the RTÉ Authority was quoted as bringing up at a meeting in 1981:

> There was a tendency for programme makers to consistently draw from the same pool of interviewees/experts in relation to current affairs, politics, economics, etc. …[T]here was an obvious bias towards Dublin-based people ...The Director-General undertook to bring this criticism to the notice of producers and programme makers with an exhortation to widen the panel of interviewees by including people from Cork, Limerick, Galway, etc. (RTÉ Authority Minutes, 376th meeting, 11th May 1981).

In the absence of an official "national" performing group in Irish traditional music (i.e. one with government funding) or with the word "national" in its title, RTÉ chose existing act Planxty to perform the interval material. Planxty were a professional group who had built up a high profile through the 1970s, including several broadcasts on *The Long Note*. The band's line-up at that point was Liam O'Flynn (uilleann pipes), Christy Moore (bodhrán), Donal Lunny (bouzouki), and Andy Irvine (bouzouki) as well as more recent additions Bill Whelan (keyboards) and Nollaig Casey (fiddle). Supporting Planxty's performance were supplementary musicians Paul McAteer (drums, featured onstage), John Drummond (bass), and a brass section (Irvine 2022; "Timedance" 1981; The Balladeers n.d.). Planxty keyboardist Bill Whelan co-composed the interval act "Timedance" with Donal Lunny. Whelan describes Timedance as having formed the basis of the music of the 1996 interval act, *Riverdance*, which became the global dance show phenomenon of the same name. Timedance also features as the opening track of commercial release: *The Roots of Riverdance*: *A collection of music from the composer of Riverdance* (Discogs 2022).

Beyond the ESC, producers and presenters in RTÉ received many requests to suggest musicians for events and festivals, with their up-to-date knowledge of musicians currently performing on the national scene. Sometimes RTÉ itself was tasked with creating an ensemble for a performance - the ESC was one such high-profile international event. However, the European Broadcasting Union provided many high-profile contexts for the staging of Irish traditional music in an international forum. Apart from the ESC, RTÉ also took part in the European Broadcasting Union Folk Music Festival, the first of which was staged in Skagen in Northern Denmark in June of 1980. Eleven national broadcasters took part in that festival, including RTÉ. *The Long Note* producer, Harry Bradshaw, produced Ireland's entry to the festival, entitled "The Life and Music of Turlough Carolan," consisting of Máire Ní Chathasaigh (harp), Michael Tubridy (flute player with the Chieftains), Ó Domhnaill (guitarist, singer and previous *Long Note* presenter), Paddy Glackin (fiddle), Liam Ó Floinn (piper).

Bradshaw broadcast a recording of the group's live performance in Denmark as part of a *Long Note* programme later that same year (*Long Note* 17th November 1980; Bradshaw Collection, "Skagen").

Earlier in 1980 RTE was also involved in the A Sense of Ireland festival. In February 1980, Glackin (the erstwhile *Long Note* presenter and then current Officer for Traditional music at *An Chomhairle Ealaíon*/The Arts Council of Ireland) organised a group of musicians to perform at the A Sense of Ireland festival, which was in part supported by the Cultural Relations Committee of the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs (January 28th, 1980). The Cultural Relations Committee was "a non-statutory advisory body" set up in 1949 and consisting of representatives of the Irish artistic community, with the remit of advising the Irish government on which artistic projects to fund to promote Irish culture abroad (Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon 2003; Donovan 1996). In the period explored in this thesis, this was achieved via the Department of Foreign Affairs (Culture Ireland/*Cultúr Éireann* 2022). Later, it was achieved by whichever Department in which the Arts were situated. (The Cultural Relations Committee was replaced by Culture Ireland/*Cultúr Éireann* in 2005, and their artistic advisory board has often included personnel from RTÉ). The festival was supported by the Cultural Relations Committee of the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs, The Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the Visiting Arts Unit of the British Council. The Irish organising committee included consultants from visual arts, theatre, music, literature, film, lectures and seminars, heritage, architecture and design, photography, crafts, radio/TV (including former RTÉ Radio presenter Sean Mac Réamoinn), and sociology.

3.5 Transnational/national broadcasting in RTÉ and *The Long Note*

Until the implementation of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement in 1998,[15] Articles 2 and 3 of the constitution of the Republic of Ireland laid claim to the territory of the whole of Ireland by including the phrase that "The national territory consists of the whole island of Ireland, its islands and the

[15] Also known as the British-Irish Agreement.

territorial seas" (*Irish Times* 1998). In theory, then, Irish state institutions were intended to cater for all the island of Ireland; in practice, however, and certainly in the context of the Troubles, this was not as simple. Public service broadcasters operate always in the context of the political realities of the current government, mindful of the political questions of the day. RTÉ's funding in the 1970s originated from the Irish government, i.e., the taxpayers of the Republic of Ireland. The station also received funding from advertising income - its listenership, in other words. Gubbins and Ó Briain (2020, 31-2) discuss RTÉ's funding model and that of its nearest neighbour the BBC, and the implications of these for musical provision in Ireland in the late twentieth century. Like all analogue radio stations at the time, RTÉ's broadcasts reached beyond the national borders of the Republic of Ireland, into Northern Ireland and overseas. As discussed in chapter two, a border on the island of Ireland established the state of Northern Ireland as a country in the United Kingdom in 1921.[16] In this way, technically, all analogue national radio stations in Ireland are transnational. As Bessire and Fisher discuss, radio "crosses borders of all kinds" (2012, 4). In Radio Telefís Éireann, however, the geopolitical border crossed was the contested one of Northern Ireland and the Republic. RTÉ's Director of Television Programmes, Bob Collins, explains the challenge the constitution indirectly presented to the personnel of RTÉ:

> [T]he responsibility...imposed on us by our Broadcasting Act is to… ensure that the programmes reflect the varied elements which make up the culture of the people of the *whole island* of Ireland. [my emphasis] (Collins 1991, 74-5).

If the Republic of Ireland claimed a responsibility for the whole island of Ireland, then RTÉ, in theory, also had a responsibility to cater for the whole of Ireland. Programming on RTÉ was produced in this context of contested borders, and in this complex context, the themes of national identity, cultural identity and language are foregrounded in the work of *The Long Note* broadcasters.

Specialist music programmes from RTÉ, especially *The Long Note*, garnered regular listeners in Northern Ireland, as attested to by letters to producer Bradshaw (Bradshaw Collection). Northern

[16] For a fuller explanation of this process, see Foster 1989.

Ireland has a rich tradition of folk and traditional music and held an eager audience for *The Long Note*.[17]

When asked whether he enjoyed working on the programme, *The Long Note,* presenter Glackin replied as follows:

> It was hugely enjoyable - yes, absolutely. You know, you're young, broadcasting is a very exciting place to be, and there were a lot of things happening in the country. Side by side of all of this was a lot of stuff happening in the north of Ireland… Radio mattered, you know? And Tony [MacMahon, first producer] had *made* it matter (Glackin 2019).

Glackin relates his work in RTÉ to something more than just traditional music. That Glackin mentions the impact of the programme on Northern Ireland as an example of how it mattered is instructive. Here, he highlights the potential of radio broadcasting to impact cultural and political life in Ireland beyond the strictly musical as a major factor affecting his attachment to the work.

Producers and presenters of *The Long Note* had to navigate many political and cultural considerations to include and cater for their audiences and musicians from Northern Ireland. Glackin and researcher/contributor Goan state that they made it their business to include musicians, venues, and events in Northern Ireland on their show:

> HG: Were you conscious of people in Northern Ireland listening to this programme?
>
> PG: Yes.
>
> CG: I mean I was in college in Dublin. I still lived...in Belfast.
>
> PG: And we were never offensive. But at the same time...we were very conscious of who we were broadcasting to and...at the same time I think it would be fair to say that we had a particular view of what was going on in the country. But it wasn't a political programme, we never made political statements.
>
> PG: ….we were catering to people who were into the same sort of thing we were. We didn't differentiate so the political divide wasn't - is never - in our consciousness…
>
> HG: And that would have included the musicians from the north of Ireland?
>
> CG: Oh completely. Sure we featured musicians and musicians who would have been not of a Catholic persuasion.
>
> PG: Famous people like….
>
> CG: Willis Patten and Len Graham, Joe Holmes - phenomenal singers

[17] For a detailed description of the musical traditions of Northern Ireland, see Cooper 2009.

PG: ...who were featured and brought down, recorded - the full thing.

CG: And Joe, at this stage would have been - 40 years ago - would have been donning a sash.

PG: He wore a sash.

CG: But no, it never crossed our minds. (Glackin and Goan 2019)

The provision of traditional musical material to musicians in the north of Ireland (to use the phrasing of most of my interviewees), via the broadcasts of the *Long Note* sets the work of the programme in the context of the civil rights movement by Catholics in the period (see section 1.2 for explanation of the use of descriptors for Northern Ireland in this dissertation). Glackin's comment sets his work on traditional music programming in the framework of providing traditional musical material to a community of musicians not catered for by their own public radio station due to perceived bias within that station. This impetus to stand up for the people of the north of Ireland in the period of civil rights marches beginning in 1968 was not confined to musicians working in Radio Telefís Éireann. As Ní Fhuartháin has described, Irish traditional music organisation CCÉ made many statements in the period explicitly directed towards the situation in the north of Ireland. The organisation, begun in 1951, had by the 1970s firmly established itself as an organisation of Irish cultural nationalism. As Ní Fhuartháin states, "At the opening of the convention in Mullingar in 1951 Fr. Paulinus explicitly linked the 'spirit of nationalism' with the endeavour of traditional music revival" (Ní Fhuartháin 2011, 256). The funds raised by their 1970 concert tours of traditional musicians in the USA were advertised as being directed to 'the down-trodden people of the Six Counties' (*Treoir* 11 1969, 20 quoted in Ní Fhuartháin 2011, 258).

Indeed, all *The Long Note* producers and presenters interviewed in this thesis expressed a desire to cater for the programme's listeners in Northern Ireland. They expressed clear conceptions of themselves as catering for the whole of the island of Ireland; they were fully invested in serving the community of listeners in Northern Ireland beyond the Northern Ireland/Republic of Ireland border. Like all national radio services, to ensure broadcast to the full extent of a piece of land, broadcasts reach to and beyond national borders. Thus, every national radio service is transformed by default into a transnational radio service, whether the border is acknowledged by broadcasters or considered to be

contentious. (Indeed, this question adds further complexity to the study of nationalism and transnationalism in the context of a contested border.) In the case of Radio Telefís Éireann, broadcasting beyond the immediate borders of the Republic of Ireland meant becoming a transnational radio station across contested state lines. Their ideals of providing access to the public airwaves to musicians across Ireland, which they adopted as a part of their roles as public service broadcasters, extended to the whole of the island. In the absence of audience data for RTÉ in any jurisdiction at the time, we can still guess at audience numbers in Northern Ireland from other sources. (*The Long Note* presenter Ní Mhaonaigh explains that letters were used as an estimate of audience numbers, but either they do not survive, or they are not available in any public archives (Ní Mhaonaigh 2021).) That there were many listeners to *The Long Note* in Northern Ireland is evidenced by the fact that Northern Irish newspapers often referenced the show in their publications. This especially happened when local musicians featured. For example, the *Ulster Herald* reported when local musician John Thomas Farry, from Effernan, Trillick, Co. Tyrone, Northern Ireland, featured on the programme, describing what he played and what he spoke of on the show (1985).

The wish of broadcasters to cater for an all-island audience was not exclusive to traditional music programming at the station. A similar wish was expressed by rock music broadcasters Dave Fanning and Ian Wilson in their *Fanning Session* radio programme which broadcast during the same period (Gubbins and Ó Briain 2020). RTÉ thus operated within the legislative framework, constraints and political conditions of the Republic, but its funding, listenership and, in many ways, its identity were required to operate as transnational. Defining who the listenership of *The Long Note* was and what type of traditional music they were going to broadcast naturally brought some challenges to the desks of *The Long Note* producers and presenters. The relationship of *The Long Note* to nationalism was tested out over the course of the programme's tenure.

Officially and unofficially, RTÉ broadcasters were explicitly catering to Northern Ireland audiences, following the directions of the constitution. However, the RTÉ Authority minutes show that RTÉ as an institution was keen to be seen as a neutral operator in its work, i.e., not igniting political tensions, but instead to portray itself as having a neutral stance on the Northern Ireland peace process.

The statements of high profile RTÉ personnel - e.g., the members of the RTÉ Authority - and the statements of the lower-profile programme personnel - including the presenters and producers of *The Long Note* - were at variance here. Broadcasting personnel were more specific about their wish to cater for all the island of Ireland in their work.

In the following section, I demonstrate this divergence of discourse. *The Long Note* programmes often included songs originating from Ulster and Northern Ireland, like The Boys of Mullaghbawn, described in a 1976 programme as:

> [a] very well-known song, all over Ulster. It concerns some south Armagh farmers of 200 years ago, who were transported for combination against their landlord. Combination and trade unions are peasant societies at that time were answered with the severest penalties possible. So, this is the Boys of Mullaghbawn (*Long Note*, 30th October 1976).

Presenters made references to the locations of regular sessions and lessons of traditional music, like the following:

> North of Ireland listeners can note that regular sessions are held every Tuesday and Saturday in the Master McGrath public house Lurgan, every Thursday in Martin's Lounge Cookstown, and still in Cookstown, Conway's Belfast House every Monday. Also on Mondays in the Loft, Portglenone, there are regular sessions and in addition fiddle and whistle lessons for beginners on Thursdays. The sessions held every other Thursday by the Downpatrick folk club continue right through the summer, whilst the Carrickfergus, Portrush and Down Coast, Donaghede folk clubs all reopen in September, as do the Coffee Kitchen Folk Club and the Stag's Head Singer's Club in Dublin. (2nd August. ITMA, catalogue number: 1540-RTE-WAV.)

RTÉ Mediaweb notes Willis Patten was also broadcast on *The Long Note* in its first year. Patten played the fife and was accompanied by Len Graham on bodhrán (*The Long Note* 4th March 1975). "Wearing a sash" is a reference to the Orange Order, an exclusively Protestant organisation in Northern Ireland, whose members don orange sashes each July and march down public streets in parades while playing fife and drum music. Goan's comment about the political divide not being in his "consciousness" was broadly echoed in interviews with all other personnel for the programme. (However, the details of the discussions included in these interviews often suggest that these personnel were in fact very aware of the politics at play in their broadcasting situations.) Goan's implication with this statement is that he and Glackin were interested in broadcasting Irish traditional music to whomever was interested in hearing it, regardless of their politics. Ní Mhaonaigh states more broadly that the programme was directed towards everyone on the island of Ireland and further afield - anyone

who had an interest in or played Irish traditional music. The website of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland states:

> The Orange Institution is a membership organisation of Protestants who are committed to the protection of the principles of the Protestant Reformation and the Glorious Revolution of 1688 which enshrined civil and religious liberty for all. Our members celebrate these principles publicly through our annual colourful parades (Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland website, 2021).

Holmes, however, was not known to hold sectarian attitudes, instead described as one of "an earlier generation of Ulster musicians who performed across the sectarian boundaries, and for whom it was simply music." (Cooper 2009, 4). The idea that Irish traditional music (often described as "the music") was devoid of sectarianism, separate from religious connotations and national borders, was expressed by each broadcaster interviewed for this thesis. Few broadcasters spoke explicitly of the signification by Irish traditional music of Irish national identity and by extension of the state of the Republic of Ireland with its claims to the "whole island" of Ireland. Admittedly, the signifying power of instrumental music is less than that of music involving the Irish language and/or lyrics, but even so, the topic of nationalist associations of Irish music was avoided by broadcasters interviewed in this thesis.

Anytime that *Long Note* producer Bradshaw included highland bagpipes on the programme, he received a very negative reaction from listeners, he states (Bradshaw 2019). "Not an Irish instrument" was the general comment received (Bradshaw 2019). The highland bagpipes (or "bagpipes," as they are more commonly known in Ireland) have been in use in marching bands in Ireland for over one hundred and fifty years and are widely accepted as a standard marching-band instrument in Ireland. (Vallely 1999, 16-17). However, within Ireland, they still conjure stronger associations with Scotland and Britain than with Ireland. This is partly due to the continued prominence of the uilleann pipes in Ireland - "the only indigenous pipes that have been played with any degree of continuity in Ireland" (Vallely 1999, 15). Every year, however, *The Long Note* persisted in broadcasting a recording of the winners of the All-Ireland bagpiping competition. In 1981, the competition was won by the Royal Ulster Constabulary's bagpipe band ("The Pipes and Drums of the RUC") (Piping Press 2020). The RUC were the Northern Irish police force of the time. They had strong loyalist associations and were considered by many in Northern Ireland to have functioned as an enforcer of British rule during the Troubles. Following custom, *The Long Note* production crew arranged to record them as winners of

the prestigious competition. Bradshaw describes the surprise of some of his colleagues in his decision to pursue this recording. “Someone said, that’s putting it up to you Bradshaw now, what are you gonna do now? So, I said, if *they’re* the best band in the country, so be it!” (Bradshaw 2019). Due to security considerations, the band only ever performed north of the border, so Harry Bradshaw and Ted Berry travelled up to Belfast instead to record the band. Bradshaw describes how he pre-empted any potential difficulties RÉ management might have with the programme material by waiting until just before broadcast to let the producers know who the performers were going to be:

> So, on Monday it was going out. Put the programme all together. And about 5 o'clock I went into the head of the department's office and said just in case….’The pipes and drums of the RUC’... ‘What!’ …’They’re voted the best band in the country!’ So I said, ‘we wouldn’t want to be seen as sectarian by not featuring them. They’re the best band. We only have the top talent. They are the top.’ So music knows no boundaries…. I just told them [RÉ management] at the last minute when the programme was done, you know. And we’re not sectarian anyways. So how could anybody argue with that? (Bradshaw 2019).

The broadcast received some negative reaction from listeners. “Get those Orange b******s off the air!” Bradshaw recalled reading in the audience log after the programmes aired (Bradshaw 2019). (The audience logs were a written record that the person manning the phones at RTÉ kept of audience reactions received via phone call. They were sent to programme makers after each show aired. These were ephemeral documents in nature, so no record of them survives.) In this way, *The Long Note* presented instruments and musicians that were beyond the musical boundaries of listeners of the show. It is interesting that those listeners to the show that were “seriously interested” (Small, email correspondence to author, 29th January 2017) in the Irish tradition were so incensed by hearing performances by the RUC on the national public broadcaster’s traditional music show as to phone the radio programme and make negative comments based on the type of instrument played when the context suggests that it was the musicians themselves (the RUC) and not the instruments who were the cause of the ire.

As several writers have stressed, there is no discernible ethnic difference between the music played by Northern Protestants and Northern Catholics (Feldman 2002, 122). However, as David Cooper and Mary Katharine Coghlan have discussed, many Protestants in Northern Ireland distanced themselves from what were Irish traditional music and instruments (e.g., uilleann pipes and bodhrán,

playing reels and jigs) because of their connections with the Republic of Ireland and Catholic, nationalist communities.

> Northern Ireland's neighbourhoods, schools, and community organisations often segregate rather than integrate members along political and religious divisions of republicans and loyalists, nationalists and unionists, Catholics and Protestants. Cultural symbols, including music, play an integral part in promoting identities within these geographical divides. Irish traditional music has come to symbolise a Catholic-nationalist identity for many in the region, a connotation that has led some members of the Protestant-unionist community to become disassociated from the art form (Coghlan 2012, abstract).

Though Coghlan's work, published in 2012, refers to more recent times, the explanation also holds for the period studied in this thesis. As a representative of the Northern Ireland Office's Central Community Relations Unit told the 1991 Conference on Traditional music in Northern Ireland, Whose Music? 'Traditional Music: Whose Music?' "To a large majority of the Protestant culture in Northern Ireland, traditional music is divisive … traditional musicians like yourselves, have a responsibility to address that point.' (McNamee 1991, 83, 87). A further indication of the association of Irish traditional music with Republican sectarianism by some in that time is the context surrounding the compulsory retirement of Army Lieutenant Dónal de Róiste in 1969. Senator Eoghan Harris states in Seanad Éireann debate how De Róiste frequented Donoghue's pub due to his interest in its Irish traditional music sessions and ended up speaking (unknowingly) to a subversive Republican there, and that this was part of the grounds for his compulsory retirement (Harris, 2010). In the same Seanad discussion, Senator Paddy Burke states that de Róiste was "a naive young man who, as a speaker said, got caught up in Irish traditional music and who could have been easily led." For similar reasons, many Catholics and nationalists in Northern Ireland distanced themselves from the music of the Lambeg drum and Orange marching band music because of their association with Protestantism. (Cooper 2009, 1).

When *The Long Note* did feature a recording of bagpipes on the programme, Bradshaw made pains to advertise this in unionist newspaper, *The Belfast Telegraph*. For example, after the All-Ireland Pipe Band Championship was won by several Ulster bands in 1981, the *Telegraph* reported in "Notable wins for Ulster Pipers" (*Belfast Telegraph* 1982, 9) that a recording of the championship was to be broadcast by *The Long Note.* As Bradshaw describes it, this was part of his efforts to involve Northern Unionist and/or Protestant listeners in the programme. However, as he explained, he also

sandwiched those recordings between tracks of sean-nós singing (an unmetered, unaccompanied solo song usually in the Irish language) (Bradshaw 2019).[18]

> I had a couple of contacts, he wrote for one of the Ulster papers, a strong orange paper. I'd let them know when we were going to have a bagpiper on the programme and he'd write up a spiel in the Belfast Telegraph, or wherever. But what I never told him was any time we had a bagpiper on a programme, which I knew would have a strong Northern listenership, the other end of the programme would include a sean-nós singer… And he never copped on…. But it was just a slight of hand… (Bradshaw 2019)

Bradshaw displayed a dual interest in catering for their style of folk and traditional music. However, his attempt to force these listeners to also listen to Irish language material suggests he suspected, at the very least, a distinct lack of interest in the Irish language or its associated musical forms. As Bradshaw later detailed, one of his policies with the show was to broaden "musical horizons." (Bradshaw 2019). This was the era of analogue radio, where to hear an item, listeners interested in only one item couldn't listen back to a recording provided online after a show was broadcast, as is the case in the twenty-first century. Instead, listeners in 1981 had to listen to the whole show at the same time as everyone else. As the show's producer, Bradshaw was aware of the power the running order of the show wielded over listeners and their time and attention. In this case, he utilised the power he held over the running order as a producer to force unionist listeners to "listen out" to Irish language material that was normally associated in Northern Ireland with Catholics, and a community with which, at this time, Northern Unionists held "conflicting national identities and constitutional hopes" (Brown 2004, 391).

Many musicians from Northern Ireland featured on *The Long Note*. They were either recorded by the programme team during fieldwork trips, or musicians from the North were invited to the Dublin studios to make recordings. Musicians were sourced in the usual ways - generally by their having previously featured on BBC Northern Ireland radio programmes, or by appearing at festivals and Fleadhs (Glackin and Goan 2019). This was the reason for the requirement that *The Long Note* producers and presenters would be drawn from those musicians regularly out and about and attending musical events. Len Graham and Joe Holmes, both well-known singers, and Holmes a fiddle-player also, were featured on the show. Len Graham also won the All Ireland Fleadh Cheoil English language

[18] See Vallely 2011 for a more detailed explanation of the nuances of sean-nós singing.

traditional singing competition, an important accolade - then and at the time of writing. Holmes was also a Protestant and both men had made their names as musicians by "playing out" at Fleadhs and other festivals. As Cooper has said, Holmes' "approach... and repertoire... crossed the religious boundaries and suggest that much more of the cultural tradition was shared than some may be willing to acknowledge" (Cooper 2009, 5).

Recording trips to Northern Ireland were a common occurrence in Radio Éireann. Indeed, the historical precedent set out by Séamus Ennis in his first travels around Ireland and the UK for the Irish Folklore Commission in 1937 had a lasting effect on the work of Radio Éireann. The path taken by Ennis around Ireland was repeated in his work with RÉ's Outside Broadcasting Unit from 1947 onwards, in his work bringing Brian George and the BBC around Ireland in the early 1950s, and then it was repeated by Radio Éireann in the work of Ciarán Mac Mathúna in the 1950s, 60s and afterwards (discussed in Bradshaw 2019; Gubbins, 2016; Western, 2015). Newspapers in Northern Ireland reported on recording events of *The Long Note* on a regular basis (as *The Long Note* producer Bradshaw stated, he often contacted northern newspapers to let them know of such upcoming broadcasts as a way of advertising the programme).

For example, in 1983, the *Ulster Herald* reviewed a programme of *The Long Note* featuring musicians from Northern Ireland. It reported the town of Trillick in Northern Ireland as having hosted a recording crew from *The Long Note* and listed several counties across Northern Ireland. The article described the programme as featuring "traditionalists," all of whom were from Northern Ireland, and favourably reviewed the programme in general, with mention of the local Trillick musicians:

> In this particular programme we had the particular pleasure of hearing artistes from Brookeborough, Caledon, Dromore, and Trillick. This was a follow-up to a visit made by a recording crew to the home of Mr. Frank McCann, Liffer, Trillick, where many musicians and vocalists had congregated for this unique occasion… [W]e are hopeful that the producer will let us hear more Trillick talent in future programmes of *The Long Note* (*Ulster Herald* 1983, 7).

Conducting fieldwork in Northern Ireland for *The Long Note* during the Troubles, required extra research. When visiting a musician's home in Northern Ireland for the first time, Bradshaw states he'd always find out the religious or political information he could before he'd arrive, and he chose his words carefully on his arrival, to avoid causing any offence. "So if the person was a nationalist or a

Catholic, I'd say I work in Radio Éireann and I collect songs and they'd say 'Come in!' If I was on the other side of the house the door would open, my name is Harry Bradshaw, I'm a *folk music collector* [his emphasis]… 'Come in, come in!' You got the same welcome" (Bradshaw 2019).

He also tells the story of visiting a reclusive musician one time without having much of a prior introduction to go on. After a particularly frosty reception, Bradshaw thought he'd ask one more question before he left. "Do you listen to much folk or traditional music?" he asked. "No, no, I don't" was the closed-off reply, at which Bradshaw mentally prepared to leave. "No, nothing except that *Long Note* programme - I listen to that alright." Bradshaw's heart leapt at hearing this, and he responded "'Oh, well I'm very glad to hear you say that, because I produce that programme!' 'You do?!' was the incredulous response of the musician, as if to say, 'And you're here, interviewing me?!' 'Mary' he called to his daughter, 'Put down tay for this fellow.' And that was that." (Bradshaw 2019).

That musicians and the public in general had to be frosty and wary of strangers is understandable again given the ongoing conflict, and the very public connection made between Irish traditional musicians and republicanism. As Feldman states of his own fieldwork during this time in Tyrone, Northern Ireland, "During our time in Tyrone, we were mindful of Captain Robert Nairac, who had recently been found executed in Armagh; he had posed as a whistle player in search of Irish traditional music in the local pubs that were Republican strongholds." (Feldman 2002, 111).

That the programme garnered a listenership across the religious divides in Northern Ireland was also evidenced by letters the show received from listeners, for example the following letter from a listener on the 25th of July 1991:

> Dear Mr. Bradshaw, I write to you as a fan of your programme "The Long Note" which I listen to with great interest and enthusiasm. I have recently been informed that this program is to cease broadcasting. This comes as a shock to those of us in Fermanagh who enjoy the Long Note. Although coming from a Unionist tradition nonetheless I enjoy the music. Being fond of my Scots heritage as a Presbyterian, I am also fond of Scottish tunes such as Miss MacLeod's reel ... Were this programme to be axed you would be cutting off a lifeline to a programme which unites us a [sic] positive, non-political way here in Northern Ireland. I know of many people, Protestant and Catholic, who listen to your programme and enjoy it. I close this letter by entreating you once again to try to keep the programme alive.

In his reply, Bradshaw stated that "It is most rewarding to know that listenership to 'The Long Note' is drawn from all shades of opinion and background in Ireland" (Bradshaw Collection, folder 25/11).

In 1971, under Section 31 of the Broadcasting Authority Act (1960), a directive came into force in RTÉ relating to the ongoing conflict in Northern Ireland. The directive prohibited RTÉ from broadcasting anything which might be interpreted as "engag[ing] in, promot[ing], encourag[ing] or advocat[ing] the attaining of any political objective by violent means" (*Seven Days* 1971). In its detail, it banned the voices of any members of the Provisional IRA or Provisional Sinn Féin from the airwaves.[19] The BBC enforced a similar ban in 1988, described as banning "the broadcast of statements by 'terrorists'" (Cloonan 1995, 100). As Cloonan has pointed out, this statement was directly aimed at the political party Sinn Féin and repealed in 1994, after the ceasefire of the IRA, with whom they were connected.

This ban applied both to radio and television and impacted on some aspects of music provision. Stephen Millar attributes this ban to a reluctance to broadcast Republican music: "Republican music was banned from radio during the Troubles (Cloonan 1996, 129), and one is still unlikely to hear such music performed on radio stations today" (Millar 2020, 135). Rebel songs have long been used to communicate messages of resistance, as Millar has identified (2021, 130) and these songs had a recurring place in *The Long Note*.

Ostensibly this directive was focused on current affairs broadcasting in RTÉ of the time. However, Kevin Whelan views the policy as being directed towards a wider cultural nationalism prevalent in RTÉ in the period, aimed at folk and traditional music. (The revisionism Whelan mentions refers to a particular debate in Irish historiography which challenges the nationalist view of Irish history since the founding of the Irish Free state in the early twentieth century.)

> Revisionism was deployed as a protective shield, involving censorship of the state broadcasting service from 1976, both to prevent access for perceived republicans and to filter out such aspects of popular culture as the traditional ballads, which were seen as carriers of an unrevised attitude to Irish history. (Whelan 2004, 192)

[19] See *Seven Days* 1971 for a thorough explanation by *Seven Days* presenter John O'Donoghue of the contemporary implications of the directive on the *Seven Days* programme. Broadcast on RTÉ television, 5th October 1971.

The RTÉ Authority were highly sensitive to any political missteps by their staff - especially anything that might fan the flames of the conflict. This sometimes created tricky situations for the broadcasters and the directive itself became the subject of criticism by many, including musicians. Prominent folk and traditional singer, Christy Moore, released a song "Section 31" composed by his brother Barry Moore (aka Luka Bloom) in 1983 which criticised the censorship of the national broadcaster (Moore 1983). Its lyrics "What do they think we can't comprehend here?" question the need for the Irish government to impose such blanket censorship on the national broadcaster to dampen any popular support for the IRA. As Glyn Davis points out, the imposition of such a ban also exemplified the limits of RTÉ's independence from government (1988, 40). Davis notes how Irish and UK governments grappled at the same time with the desire to influence the decision of their national broadcasters at the same time as appearing to reassert their impartiality: "[F]or the RTE as for the BBC, it would be events in the six counties which highlighted possible tension between editorial impartiality and national interest." (40). This occurred across the spectrum of broadcasting content - "even music" Davis notes (48).

Section 31 (Barry Moore)

Who are they to decide what we should hear?
Who are they to decide what we should see?
What do they think we can't comprehend here?
What do they fear that our reaction might be, might be?

Chorus:
Section 31 on the TV
Section 31 on the radio
Section 31 is like a blindfold
Section 31 makes me feel cold, cold, cold.

The pounding of the footsteps in the early morning light,
Another family waking to an awful deadly fright.
There's a body on the pavement with a bullet to the jaw,
A thirteen-year old victim of plastic bullet law.

The silence in my ears, the darkness in my eyes,
Heightens the fear, deafens the cries.
Of another brother taken in another act of hate.
A family preparing for another dreadful wait. (Moore, 2022)

Motherway describes Christy Moore's repertoire as "reflect[ing] his approach to the Northern situation, whilst also rejecting the fascist approach of the IRA" (Motherway 2016, 147).

Bradshaw tells of recording singers in County Clare at one time while the directive was in force, and asking to broadcast a singer who was also a Republican. When Bradshaw asked him for permission to record, the man responded by letting him know of his status as a proscribed person in broadcasting. In his response, Bradshaw relates his delight at the power of music as a medium to enable him to stretch the rules and get around the directive:

> I said 'I know who you are, but I'm asking you to sing, not to talk…. big difference!' So he sang a republican song….. And I broadcast him… Not many people would have known his background, but those who knew, *knew*: 'How did you get away with putting *him* on?!' And, you know, I wasn't breaking any rules - I was *stretching* the rules! (Bradshaw 2019).

Bradshaw declined to name the singer, stating that they'd since "gone legit," perhaps suggesting they now worked more strictly within the confines of the law. Bradshaw's glee at subverting a political decree from such a high level within RTÉ is partly explained by the low status bestowed on traditional music in RTÉ in the period. As Bradshaw relates, "diddle-dee-eye" was a regular term he heard used in the station to describe Irish traditional music. Bradshaw realised that the lack of interest shown by RTÉ upper management in folk and traditional music programming allowed him to slip this transgression of broadcasting a republican, singing a rebel song no less, under the radar of RTÉ management. Bradshaw recognised that the material being sung rather than spoken could provide his defence for broadcasting if caught. Bradshaw delighted in having found a way around the controversial rules that caused headaches for his colleagues in the station, flaunting the otherwise controversial rule to broadcast republicans and republican material.

As Stephen Millar has written, though the political messages of Irish republican rebel songs are transmitted in music, the meanings are clearly communicated and received (Millar 2016). The performance of rebel songs holds meaning for many Republicans, functioning as "a form of political engagement and cultural resistance within and against the British state" (Millar 2016, 75). Republican marching bands and rebel bands "use their music as a weapon to denigrate the opposing community" (Millar 2020, 5.) As Bradshaw explained, a broadcaster "could use any song within reason as long as it wasn't inciting violence. Most traditional songs are about history - so it's happened." (Bradshaw

2019). Bradshaw's idea that history is sufficiently objective enabled him to present what he considered to be historical material as a more unproblematic source of information. In this way, he was able to justify (either to his superiors or to himself in preparation for questioning) including material in his shows which involved politically sensitive material, or at least material which could potentially be politically sensitive, or considered to be politically sensitive, or liable to cause offence. However unlikely this logic would pass in today's broadcasting environment; it demonstrates how political content was able to pass under the radar of Section 31 due to its being in the form of music and/or singing. Bradshaw's account suggests that exceptions to Section 31 were allowed, especially when they weren't regular enough occurrences to garner notice. Bradshaw's comment also recalls Millar's note of Republican musicians in Northern Ireland being described either as "doves" or "hawks." (Millar 2020, 196-7)

> If you're gonna work for the doves, you're gonna be singing politics about things that happened years ago, that aren't happening any more. The same music would be used by the hawks, but they would see themselves as "this is still happening." ("Liam," anonymous musician, quoted in Millar 2020, 196)

Bradshaw's description of the Republican song he broadcast as historical, but not concerning itself with current events, thus made it acceptable for airplay on the public broadcaster. To refer briefly to republican music in contemporary times, Millar describes the scene as one that "situates itself in opposition to the state." (Millar 2020, 187). However, as he explains, different levels of opposition exist within that scene, in the form of "doves" and "hawks." Millar's informant's description of "doves" as "pay[ing] tribute to important historical events, while pointing to a future free from violence," ("Liam," anonymous musician, quoted in Millar 2020, 197) rhymes with Bradshaw's description of the musical opposition performed by the banned republican on *The Long Note*.

Personnel in earlier eras of the programme were more evasive of having political content on the show. As *The Long Note* presenter Glackin, who presented the show in the 1980s states: "We didn't tend to go there. We tended to go for a very, very broad spiel of folk song. The rebel thing wasn't really part of it." (Glackin 2019). Glackin's discussion suggests he considered rebel songs as being in the realm of folk song, rather than traditional song. This signification of political song as being a type

of folk song is also suggested by Bradshaw's response to discussion of the rebel music of the Wolfe Tones on the show: "We weren't involved in the folk thing really…"[20] Bradshaw's use of Mary Black - a well-known folk and traditional singer in Ireland - as an example to clarify that there was "a bit of overlap" between the genres of folk and traditional music is noteworthy as few of Mary Black's songs involve explicitly political themes. Bradshaw's use of the word "folk" to describe the music as opposed to ' 'traditional" in this context, is an example, I suggest, of how the label "folk music" functioned in this context as a shorthand for indicating a relationship with republican nationalism. Glackin's use of the label "folk" in this conversation also implies an opinion of the music as being of a lower quality than traditional. The context of this interview was *Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy*/Willie Clancy Summer School in Milltown Malbay, 2019, which describes itself as "a major traditional Irish music, song and dance event" (*Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy*/Willie Clancy Summer School 2021). Glackin may well have been more predisposed to the term "traditional" than to "folk" music in this context. "Traditional" designates acceptable. In this situation, the description of the music as folk and not traditional illustrates the factors involved in an unfavourable review and the resulting tensions inherent in that. The *Bulletin of the International Folk Music Council* 1953 also highlights the importance of radio regarding what could be described as authentic folk or traditional music, and the responsibility of public broadcasters for ensuring that only authentic music was described as such. (Section 1.10 gives a more thorough discussion of the distinction between the terms "folk" and "traditional" in the Irish context).

In May 1979, the band The Wolfe Tones released a single "Padraic Pearse." ("Irish Showbands" 2021). The song's title was in honour of Patrick Pearse, the leader of the Easter Rising, an armed rebellion against British rule in Ireland in 1916. Pearse was a strident cultural nationalist, an active member of several organisations focussed on the revival of Gaelic customs, such as *Conradh na Gaeilge* (the Gaelic League), and editor of weekly Irish language nationalist newspaper *An Claidheamh Soluis*. After the rising, the executions of Pearse and the other leaders were said to have turned the court of public opinion towards the cause of Irish independence from Britain, contributing

[20] Millar 2017 and 2020 give a full explanation and history of rebel songs and their use in Ireland.

significantly to the creation of the Irish Free State in 1922.[21] In the following decades of the twentieth century, Pearse's name was regularly mentioned during cultural events and practices as a way of inferring cultural nationalism and/or a sense of authentic Irishness. The following comments, published in the *Midland Herald* in 1951, are an example of how organisers of Irish cultural events in the first decades of the Irish Free State compared the standard of Irish cultural and performance material to that of its former colonial oppressor in England: "Maunsell criticised the dances….who boasted that they had the best dance band in England engaged for the occasion, a claim for which, in his opinion, neither Pearse nor [James] Connolly died." (*Midland Herald*, 17 May 1951, quoted in Ní Fhuartháin 2011, 257). The criticisms implied were first that dance organisers had not engaged an Irish band to play for the dance, but also that it was irrelevant who the best dance band in England were as Irish dance bands were just as good (or better). That Pearse and Connolly did for Irish independence was also often invoked to render irrelevant any mention of or comparisons with British musical standards. British musical standards no longer applied since Ireland had won its independence in 1921, through the actions of Pearse and Connolly in 1916 and 1918 (Pearse in the 1916 Easter Rising, and Connolly for workers' rights in the 1918 Dublin lockout.). Pearse's name was also often referenced to invoke the desire for a united Ireland, after the island was divided in 1922 into two entities. As a teacher, member of the Gaelic League, a songwriter and a strident cultural nationalist, the legacy of Pearse became a familiar presence in the context of educational and cultural activities in the twentieth century and remains so well into the twenty-first. To the present day, many educational and cultural organisations in Ireland, especially those of Irish language ethos, include references to Pearse in the naming of their buildings and institutions. For example, secondary schools *Coláiste an Phiarsaigh* (Pearse's College, Cork) and *Gaelcholáiste an Phiarsaigh* (Pearse's Irish College, Dublin), GAA park Páirc na bPiarsach (Pearses' Park, Arklow), and countless other examples. In 2016, singer Síle Denvir released an album to acclaim, *Caithréim - Music and Song from the Plays of Patrick Pearse*, on the label of *Cló Iar Chonnachta* (Cathréim 2016).

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[21] For more on this series of events, see Foster 1989, 198-199.

The Wolfe Tones band began performing in 1963 with a repertoire mostly consisting of republican ballads. They describe their shows as “a celebration of Ireland's heritage and history” and their style of music as “ballads, folk and traditional Irish music” (Wolfe Tones 2021, “Our Story”). The themes of national pride and republican identity are prominently embedded in the band's songs - in both the lyrics and the musical arrangements - as well as in their promotional materials (Wolfe Tones 2021, “Our Story”. As White states of the band:

> The use of popular melodies and occasionally of popular operatic repertoire in the service of aggressive cultural and political nationalism is...a feature of commercial balladry in contemporary Ireland. “Song of Liberty,” written and recorded by The Wolfe Tones c.1976, is an arrangement of Verdi's “Va, pensiero” which begins: “Stand beside me, and fight for old Ireland” (2002, 145).

The band’s naming of a song “Pádraig Pearse,” like their reference of Irish republican leader Wolfe Tone, continued their practice of referencing the names of Irish republican leaders who died during their military activities in a bid to eulogise them (Wolfe Tones 2021, “Our Story”)

The lyrics of the song Pádraig Pearse are as follows:

Pádraig Pearse

In Dublin town in nineteen sixteen a flame of freedom did arise.
A group of men with determination caught an empire by surprise.
Through the streets our men were marching, they rallied with their hopes and fears
And the Enda boys came searching for their leader Pádraig Pearse.

Chorus:

The poet and the Irish rebel, a Gaelic scholar and a visionary
We gave to him no fitting tribute
When Ireland's at peace only that can be
When Ireland’s a nation - united and free.

On Easter morn he faced the nation from the steps of the G.P.O.
And read aloud the proclamation, the seed of nationhood to sow.
But soon the word had spread to London of an insurrection there at hand
And the deeds of Pádraig Pearse were set about to free his land.

Chorus …

For five long days the battle rages, for five long nights the battle wore
We’ll watch as Dublin City blazes and see our men fall through the floor
Now Ireland's proud of her effort for her cause we fought with pride
“But to save more life and to save our city, we make our peace” Mac Piarais cried.

Chorus …

> Kilmainham Jail in 1916, they brought young Pearse to his death cell
> And they had tried him as a traitor - to shoot this man who had dared rebel
> He only tried to free his country of the shackles of 800 years.
> As dawn did break on that May morning, they shot our leader Pádraig Pearse.[22]

The single was released by the Wolfe Tones on their own label in 1979 (Wolfe Tones "Discography" 2021). A *Long Note* programme broadcast in October 1979 broadcast an unfavourable review of the single, and the review and its reception illustrate some of the tension inherent in the work that *The Long Note* did in introducing a public discussion of and a critique of traditional music. Shortly after the original review, the Wolfe Tones and their manager complained to RTÉ of their treatment by the station. Several newspaper articles were published stating the claims of the Wolfe Tones. Sunday Independent article quoted Glackin's complaint that the band misspelt Pearse's first name as Pádraic instead of Pádraig, describing the critique as pedantic and elitist. The journalist concluded that after consultation with Irish language scholars, either way was appropriate, as Pearse himself was known to spell it in different ways. More suggestively, Glackin was quoted in the same article to say that "The Wolfe Tones do the cause of Irish unity no good." Glackin's critique of the contribution of the band to Irish unity is neglected in his later critique of the band in an interview in 2019. Glackin described his problem with the song thus:

> It was just terrible music...Terrible. But...they took us and they rallied all their muscle in the media and we made the front page of *The Independent.* … There was a whole big controversy over it. We had to apologise to them... [T]here was a lot of muscle applied to higher-ups in RTÉ... They got all their friends in the media to write articles… [S]aying that we had savaged them… and they weren't deserving of such criticism." (Glackin 2019).

The affair illustrates several salient points with regards to RTÉ's relationship with Irish folk and traditional music, both then and now. Laudan Nooshin has identified situations where the banning of music for ostensibly aesthetic reasons, is a way of exercising political power. (Nooshin 2009, 3). The reasons given for the critique of this record seem (relating to the use of 'c' in Padraic Pearse's name as opposed to a g for Pádraig) on the surface suggest an ulterior motive for the critique of this record. The explicit nationalism contained in the Wolfe Tones rhetoric was perhaps the intended target

[22] Author's transcription, based on Brennan 2016.

of the critique. (As The Encyclopaedia of Music in Ireland described them, the Wolfe Tones have been described as “the musical wing of the IRA.”) (White and Boydell 2013, “Wolfe Tones.”)

A recurring point made by presenters of the show was their discomfort with the idea of critique as a part of the show. Ní Mhaonaigh explains the difficulty of incorporating critique into her role as a radio presenter, illustrating the difficulty of fully filling a role as a radio presenter while actively engaged in professional and non-professional performance contexts as a traditional musician:

> ...I found that very hard because I knew everyone! Like at that stage, at that stage, *every* person who played traditional Irish music knew the other one. Like it’s *completely* different now, where you could be more anonymous, you know! I knew everybody. And he used to say to me, like what do you *really* think about that? And I’d say to him, “Harry [Bradshaw, the producer] to be honest with you, these are my friends, I'm not going to be critical about them!” So I wasn’t a very good critic as such, you know. And I’d say a lot of people found that hard, in that situation, you know? Because you knew the scene! The scene was small! There weren’t many people playing that you hadn’t met (Ní Mhaonaigh 2021).

Ní Mhaonaigh later reiterates this point:

> Poor Mícheál Ó Dómhnaill...His first *Long Note*, he had to critique one of the Horslips albums and he played the cup of tea on it and one of his lines was “Not my cup of tea!” And I thought “But he has to meet these boys down the pub! No no no!” That was one of his final lines about the album, “Not my cup of tea!” I thought that was so funny, you know! I thought fair play to him. No, no, to be a critic is another hat to put on. I was just the person that was presenting. I felt it wasn’t my place to put *anybody* down, so I wasn’t good at that (Ní Mhaonaigh 2021).

While Ní Mhaonaigh compliments Ní Dhomhnaill on his skill and confidence at critique (“fair play to him”), she is clear that her doing so would interfere with her life in and relationships with others in the Irish traditional and folk music scene. Second, that the music was described on the “folk” spectrum is an indication of the explicitness of the music’s relationship with cultural nationalism. The label of “folk” designates unacceptable, “traditional” implies acceptability.

Irish-based and Irish government-funded airline, Aer Lingus, features a range of Irish-themed musical products on its in-flight entertainment system. This includes playlists compiled and presented by well-known Irish DJs. These include a myriad of channels to suit the diversity of tastes involved in transatlantic travel. One of these radio channels was curated by Wolfe Tone member, Brian Warfield, and was objected to in 2003 by a member of the Ulster Unionist Party, Mr Roy Beggs Jnr (Breen 2003). Similar debates surround the representation of the Wolfe Tones on RTÉ (radio and television) continue in contemporary times. For example, in October 2019, RTÉ produced a programme called

Ireland's Favourite Folk Song (RTÉ 2021). The public suggested a shortlist of songs, from which a professional committee drew up a shortlist, for final voting on by the public. The shortlisted songs were each assigned a solo performer or band who showcased the song and spoke about it in the accompanying television programmes. The Wolfe Tones complained about their exclusion from the list of folk groups presenting these songs, stating that many of the songs that eventually made it into the shortlist had been originally performed by them, and that many of their own originally composed songs had been popular enough to warrant inclusion on the list (Sweeney 2019). In support of their argument, the Brian Warfield, one of the members of the Wolfe Tones, cited the remediation of their songs in media such as Steve Coogan's BBC television comedy programme, *This Time with Alan Partridge*, in March 2019, in an article published in *The Sun* newspaper in 2021.

> Brian said: "It all goes back to Conor Cruise O'Brien, who was Minister of Post and Telegraphs, and his amendment to Section 31 which banned republicans access to radio or TV channels. That was lifted but RTE's [sic] ban on The Wolfe Tones remains in place." In fact, The Wolfe Tones claim they were further outraged by the national broadcaster yesterday when Ray D'Arcy invited Finbar Furey on air to share his reaction to Steve Coogan singing his tune Sweet Sixteen on *This Time with Alan Partridge* on Monday night. Although it was the two Wolfe Tones hits which sparked the most interest, the group was not invited to appear with Finbar. Brian told us: "This is a classic example of how hard RTE [sic] will work to keep The Wolfe Tones off air. It's staggering, really" ("RTÉ are Tones Deaf," *The Sun,* 2nd May 2019).

The three songs that were performed on the show were: "When you were Sweet Sixteen," "The Men Behind the Wire" and "Come out, Ye Black and Tans." This comedic clip involves Steve Coogan's alter-ego Alan Partridge's rendition of rebel song "The Men Behind the Wire," a republican song written by Paddy Mcguigan and released as a single in 1971 (Millar 2020, 112). Moving so quickly on Alan Partridge's fictional BBC show from ostensibly "neutral" folk and traditional music to such awkwardly political rebel music, its inclusion parodies the real BBC's mediating of folk and traditional music, suggestive of a general incompetence. The clip of Coogan had an immediate impact on its release in 2019, going viral. One of the reasons for its success was its comedic portrayal of BBC's ignorance of Northern Irish culture and customs, resulting in the show's producers not recognising the band's instrumentation of guitars, whistles, bodhráns and singers as a prime musical context for rebel music repertoire.

The programmes of *The Long Note* were consistently invested in showcasing the music of countries outside of Ireland as well as in connections with Northern Irish musicians and in including music from Britain and the greater Irish diaspora. This is evidenced by interviews with broadcasters but also by the archival materials and sound recordings of the programme. For example, on 24th Dec 1979 - Christmas Eve - a *Long Note* programme was broadcast with London-based musicians such as John Carty, John Moloney, Bobby Casey, Na Buachaillí [the boys], Margaret Boyle, Paddy Hayes, Brian Rooney, John Bowe, Brendan Mulcair, Paul Gallagher, and the London Musicians Group all performing (RTÉ Mediaweb 2005). Regarding official connections with RTÉ, the same could not be said of broadcasters in Great Britain. Bradshaw arranged a programme exchange with BBC Scotland at one point, for which a specific programme was made for broadcast on BBC Scotland: "The seven men of Knoydart." Due to an incident with the Northern Irish conflict, BBC Scotland retracted their agreement to broadcast this material. As Bradshaw described it, their attitude was "No, we will not broadcast Irish material when our boys are being shot in Ulster. 'No Paddys need apply.' It was just a signifier." (Bradshaw 2019.) The reaction of the broadcaster described here by Bradshaw signified to him the poor opinion that BBC Scotland broadcasters had of RTÉ in the early 1980s.

Continued attempts at programme exchange were made and described as an important contribution by the programme to relationships between musicians in the British and Hiberno Isles, as suggested by Goan. *The Long Note* opened up many relationships between Ireland and the other countries around Ireland, e.g., "opened up the whole thing off and that sort of relationship between yourselves and Scotland whereas the other programs did not do so. That was a very, very important part" (Goan 2019).

Similar suggestions of programme exchanges had been made in the Dáil as early as 1971, as per the following debate from that year:

> Many people in the Republic think they know everything about the people in the North, and yet they have never been there. They have not the foggiest idea of the real difficulties which face the people living in that tormented part of our country...A tremendous amount of good could be done by RTÉ in this regard. It is not enough to portray violence and distress; we have, I believe, a national obligation to show the people of the Republic the ordinary types of people of varying religions in the North of Ireland, people who in my view regard themselves as Irish. Since I am aware of the [technical] problems regarding the screening of RTÉ programmes in the North, I would ask the Minister if any effort has been made to come to an

> agreement with the BBC in the North so that an exchange of programmes could be arranged? It should be technically possible for the BBC to beam our entire programme throughout the Six Counties and for us to beam their entire programme throughout the 26 Counties. This kind of inter-communication would be a major contribution towards resolving the situation that exists in Ireland at the present time. We do not see or hear enough traditional Irish music, particularly on television. This can also be said of the traditional music and songs of the Northern Protestant people. We should hear more of this music on our television station if we are to regard it as a national television station (Ruairí Brugha, Seanad Ruairí Brugha. Seanad Éireann debate, Wednesday, 24 Feb 1971 Vol. 69 No. 10).

Glackin and Goan's discussions show how interested *The Long Note* personnel were in showing how Irish traditional music was related to other musics in Europe. Further evidence in the archival materials and sound recordings of the programmes of the time support their claims. For example, Ó Domhnaill, presenting the 4th of November 1974 episode of the programme lists events and the nationalities of the performers: "Beidh amhránaithe, ceoltóirí agus ó halban, ón Bhreatainn beag, ón Oileán Mhanainn agus Ceoltóirí Laighin agus daoine eile ón tír seo páirteach sa cheolchoirn seo." [There will be singers, musicians from Scotland, Wales, The Isle of Man and from Ceoltóirí Laighin [Musicians of Leinster]].[23] Later in that same programme, Ó Domhnaill included details of the life of people in rural Scotland:

> Now, the northernmost islands of Britain - the Shetlands - have given us many a good tune and indeed produced many a fine musician. And this is the time of year when Shetlanders have ample opportunity to play their music, what with all the short, dark, wintry days and frequent storms, little work is possible on the crofts or at sea. So here are two tunes which have been played for many winters round the firesides in Shetland.

Letter correspondence between Bradshaw and a listener in 1984 detail discussions about programmes on the music of Bolivia and Peru (Bradshaw to Ó hÓgáin 1984). Bradshaw describes making these programmes on the folk and traditional music of other countries as being "the odd stepping outside of Ireland… But only very occasionally, maybe one a year - a breath of fresh air you know" (Bradshaw 2019).

As introduced in chapter 1, *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* (CCÉ) is an organisation of Irish traditional musicians, founded in Ireland in 1951 which gradually became a global organisation supporting the teaching and performance of Irish traditional music, song, dance, and related musical

[23] Author's transcription and translation. For more on professional performing group *Ceoltóirí Laighin* [Musicians of Leinster], see Long 2010.

practices.[24] CCÉ, in its early decades especially, has often been described as a right-leaning political organisation with Republican associations. The main example of this was when CCÉ cancelled its flagship annual festival, the All-Ireland Fleadh Cheoil, in 1971 in protest at the internment of republican prisoners in Northern Ireland which had been introduced on August 9th of that year (Moriarty 2019). That a nationally prominent musical organisation (and the only one purporting to represent Irish traditional music at that time) made political statements illustrates the connection between traditional music communities and nationalist sentiment. This connection between the two communities, or at least the connection suggested by this decision, had repercussions for those involved in Irish traditional music in North Ireland, as it was assumed by many that all traditional musicians were nationalists and that they were either involved in or supportive of the IRA and their violent political campaign. Tony MacMahon criticised CCÉ for this live on radio (in one of his programmes preceding *The Long Note*), one of the few people to do so (Mac Craith 1972. A subsequent editorial in Treoir criticised MacMahon in return:

> You will recall his anti-national stand when Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann was cancelled at a time when the nationalist population of the six counties was under severe coercion - Tony was the only person to be found to go on radio and denigrate the Comhaltas stand: opportunism at its best, but it won't be forgotten…. Tony, your musicianship is appreciated and respected, but please don't use it as a vehicle for stabbing an organisation like Comhaltas in the back. There is one border too many in Ireland…. You have maligned many people at home and abroad. With a view to attracting the spotlight to yourself… You have taken the shilling and written tripe for the 'antis' but you have also recorded your vindictiveness for posterity (Mac Craith 1972).

The concept of "taking the shilling" originally referred to an Irish person going to work for the British Army to avail of the greater pay and prospects that offered, instead of working for the Irish army (and thus contributing to the development of the Irish nation). Mac Craith's statement demonstrates how the meaning has since been expanded to refer to anyone working on projects perceived to work against the project of Irish nation-building or reunification of Ireland.

[24] See the organisation's website (Comhaltas 2022) for further information.

3.6 BBC Radio Ulster: broadcasting to a divided community

As Ramsey argues, BBC's broadcasting services in Northern Ireland functioned to uphold the dominant Unionist culture in the region from its earliest years. This lasted until at least the 1960s, even though BBC Northern Ireland personnel were mindful of the potential for BBC Radio Ulster to aid in community reconciliation from the beginnings of the station in 1975.

> Coleman (1998, p. 10) argued that, from its beginnings, "BBC broadcasting in Northern Ireland was caught in the Unionist trap of affirming the Britishness of its public." Moore (2003, p. 91) argued that this approach lasted until the 1960s, where broadcasting on the whole "functioned to uphold the dominant Unionist culture." …Here, it is interesting to note for our present study, that in the run up to the establishment of Radio Ulster, Richard Francis, who was the Controller of BBC Northern Ireland in the 1970s, mentioned the role that radio could play in a divided society (by that point the Troubles were underway): "There can be little doubt about the part which the BBC could play in helping to heal this troubled community in the years ahead" (Francis, 1974, p. 2 as cited in Cranston, 1996, p. 45)" (Ramsey 2016, 146).

However, BBC Radio Ulster broadcaster Mullen, who broadcast on BBC Radio Ulster in the mid 1980s, stated that there was a bias in BBC against programmes of traditional music. Anything that could be described as Catholic music, or as music catering for one side of the community of listeners in Northern Ireland, was shunned as, he stated, this might be seen to promote a nationalist or republican cause. Any bias in either direction could possibly be seen to be favouring one political opinion in the station, and this would be seen as inflaming an already sensitive political context. Speaking of his own programme, Mullen states "people thought of traditional music as being from one side of the community, so there was fear within the organisation that this was only from one side of the community" (Mullen 2019). According to Mullen, the sense of responsibility not to fan the flames of conflict caused the station not to broadcast traditional music at this time, nor to develop any plans for such broadcasts. Whether or not there was folk or traditional music material that would have been particularly associated with Protestantism in Northern Ireland at the time, Mullens states, was irrelevant; this would not have been broadcast for fear of being seen to pander to one side of the community. Though there are plenty of examples of broadcasters in RTÉ preparing their radio material with Northern Irish listeners in mind, there is much less evidence of the same by BBC Radio Ulster.

While RTÉ recorded musicians north of the border in folk and traditional music as well as in popular music, the last time the BBC recorded south of the border on an official basis was in the 1950s (Gubbins 2016: 189).

In general, there was much less folk and traditional music programming in BBC Radio Ulster than in RTÉ Radio in the period 1970-1994. In BBC Radio Ulster, there were some key programmes, with performers very familiar to those in the folk and traditional music scene in the Republic, for example the professional musicians Planxty, Andy Irvine, and Paul Brady. The programmes on BBC Radio Ulster in this period that are discoverable were introductory in nature. They introduced folk and traditional music to the audience members.

One notable aspect of the reception of *The Long Note* programming was the use of the words 'our' and 'our music.' In this way, commentators positioned themselves, the broadcasters and the audience as a united community, where everyone involved had collective ownership of the music. For example, Vincent Woods, writing in the *Irish Times*, wrote: "Producer Harry Bradshaw believes that there is an urgent need to record live music and song if our traditional music is to develop and live as an element of our culture" (Woods 1982). This use of "our" was echoed in a statement by Director of CCÉ, Labhrás Ó Murchú, in his report to the 1971 CCÉ Annual Congress: "Our native music, song and dance will not be regarded as part of our lives unless it is featured on present-day media" (Ó Murchú 1971, 2). In 1978 again the word "our" was used in another editorial in *Treoir* "In a small country like Ireland, is it too much to ask [for] a community emphasis in the radio and television service?... This present dispute must be resolved without delay and the proper status given to our native music, song and dance" (Ó Murchú 1978).

In contrast, in BBC Ulster there were few similar examples of the use of "our" in broadcasting of traditional and folk music. [See *Radio Catalogue*] In BBC Radio Ulster programming, folk and traditional music was introduced as if it were one of many musics of the area. This programming seemed as if it was clearly part of the station's catering for diversity. This explains the station's programme introducing the uilleann pipes, and the introduction to popular musicians in the Republic (even if these musicians were also established in Northern Ireland, or originating from there, like Andy

Irvine, or Paul Brady. Like RTÉ, gender diversity in music programming seems to have been non-existent in BBC Radio Ulster in this time period. Indeed, this gender imbalance reflects lack of gender diversity in contemporary times still in folk and traditional music activity on the island of Ireland.

As Phil Ramsey explains, the BBC as a corporation was founded at almost the same time as the country of Northern Ireland. Within the BBC, a dedicated radio service for Northern Ireland was set up in 1924 (Ramsey, 2016). In the period 1970-1994, the contribution of BBC Radio Ulster to traditional music programming in the region is subject to varied accounts. Some interviewees stated that there were very few dedicated series of folk and traditional music programming in Northern Ireland in the period (e.g., Mullen). This was confirmed by my searches of the daily broadcasting schedules of BBC Radio Ulster in the *Radio Times* through 1975-1981. Others, however, spoke of radio programming originating from Northern Ireland as being very influential for them - fiddler, singer and *Long Note* presenter Ní Mhaonaigh, for example. The regular music on the station was jazz, classical, and popular music (Loughran and McCavana 1993). The catalogue of the BBC itself indicated that certainly in the context of the full schedule, and in comparison, with other genres of music on the air at the time, little time was provided for folk and traditional music. The material of this kind in BBC Radio Ulster mostly consisted of a mixture of one-off programmes: some introducing it to newcomers, some documentary-style programmes exploring historical musical material (commemorating the Belfast Harp Festival of 1792, for example), and some other programmes showcasing professional folk and traditional musicians and groups (Boucher in Loughran and McCavana 1993, 245). Producers David Hammond, Tony Knox and Tony McAuley, described by BBC literature as "literary producers," were very much in charge of traditional music programming and they put together "programmes of modern arrangements for this music, Horslips for example, or arrangements by the Chieftains" as the BBC Ulster archive described it (Boucher 1993, 245). Any recordings of traditional musicians, made of live performances and specifically for broadcast, that are apparent in the scant broadcasting schedule notes seem to be mostly composed of musicians that were both professional and with a connection to the region of Ulster itself. Some examples of this were Arty McGlynn, born in Omagh, County Tyrone (Falvey 2019); Andy Irvine, whose mother was from Lisburn, Co. Antrim (Irvine 2021), and Paul

Brady, born in Belfast (Brady 2022). The only publicly available notes of BBC Radio Ulster's schedules in those years are comprised of the BBC Radio Ulster's own publication, *Radio Catalogue*, which lists 120 music programmes selected by BBC archivists from the years 1975 to 1990; alternatively, a researcher can analyse the schedules of BBC Radio Ulster in the *Radio Times*. These same musicians can be found throughout the broadcasting schedules in RTÉ of the period also. In McAuley's obituary in the *Irish Times* in 2003, he was described as a "broadcaster who championed traditional musicians," with his work showcasing such performers as Enya, Paul Brady, Clannad, the Bothy Band, Donal Lunny, Christy Moore and the Chieftains in broadcasting particularly emphasised (*Irish Times* 14th June 2003).

It is unclear whether new music was produced and recorded for these folk and traditional music programmes, or whether previously issued musical recordings were collated and presented in a knowledgeable fashion for this programme. Certainly, there was little evidence of live recordings of either popular music or folk and traditional music in BBC Radio Ulster in the period 1970-1994. In addition, in all the sources viewed in the period of this thesis from the main BBC radio service and BBC Radio Ulster, the terms 'folk' and 'traditional' seem to be interchangeable. In RTÉ reportage in general, there was significant mixing of the use of the terms folk and traditional, except in the specialist music programming, where each term was used with more specific meaning (as discussed in chapter 3.

BBC Radio Ulster - the Northern Irish public radio station and one of the "regions" of BBC radio - broadcast many one-off programmes of traditional music, but my sources show no dedicated series of traditional music programmes in that period. Interested listeners of traditional music in Northern Ireland needed to tune into RTÉ to hear updates of current events in that music. As discussed in this chapter, RÉ made many recordings north of the border for their programmes, but not much was happening the other way.

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I explored the influence of geopolitical considerations on traditional music radio programming on the island of Ireland in the late twentieth century, in the context of Northern Ireland. Public broadcasting was a nexus of activity where broadcasters' opinions of and relationships with the ideals of nationalism and republicanism had to be deftly managed. The chapter examines how RTÉ programme *The Long Note* and BBC Radio Ulster programmes by Tony McAuley, David Hammond and Sam Hanna Bell included Northern Ireland traditional musicians and listeners in its programmes. It also discusses attempts by individual RTÉ broadcasters to build connections between the segregated communities of Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland, making use of music's ability to fly under the political radar for the most part to achieve these aims. It discusses the cross-border relationships that were built up via the broadcasts of *The Long Note*, and broadcasters' attempts to challenge - without completely subverting - the received codes of cultural nationalism both in RTÉ and BBC Ulster. The transnational nature of radio and the perception of music as flying under the political radar provided a context in which these folk and traditional music broadcasters could push the boundaries for community engagement. This was directly related to the characteristic of radio as an aural-only medium. The features of radio discussed in this chapter also explain how folk and traditional music programming on public radio programming contexts across the island of Ireland (i.e., RTÉ, BBC Ulster and BBC Radio Foyle) contributed to the production and reproduction of multiple national identities. In this, the chapter contributes towards our understanding of how, as Spencer and Wollman identify of the early twenty-first century, "having a national identity has come to be seen as almost natural" (2002, 3).

Traditional music broadcasts like *The Long Note*, as Feldman identifies in the following passage, impacted on conceptions of locality and nationality in the public sphere of folk and traditional music: "The transnational is closely entwined with processes of mediatisation" (Entangled Media Histories, n.d.). This was even more so the case with traditional music broadcasts by national broadcaster, RTÉ. These broadcasts also impacted on what could be considered national identity,

marginalising, as they did, localities not represented in broadcasts. In the period of 1970-1994 the tenets of cultural nationalism were a powerful trope within RTÉ and featured recurrently in institutional discourse. As archival documents show (RTÉ Document Archives), programmers in the period were clearly invested in the idea of cultural nationalism. Folk and traditional music radio programming on RTÉ in the period became an important site for the exploration of nationalism, cultural nationalism, and national identity, and aesthetic critique in Irish traditional music.

As *Long Note* presenter and producer Browne explains, non-commercial "field" recordings have formed a major basis for decisions surrounding who gets written into musical histories of the twentieth century, particularly in Irish traditional music. As an example, Browne offers the differing legacies of two pipers, Johnny Doran (1908-50) and Seán [John] Potts, both of whom were very well regarded as performers. Browne considers Doran to have a disproportionately bigger influence on pipers today due to having been fortuitously recorded by the Irish Folklore Commission just before his untimely death.[25]

> Johnny Doran would be just a name if by chance he hadn't… done the one day in the Folklore Department and recorded all those tunes. Because everyone knew he was a wizard… [Whereas] Old Seán Potts, the father of all the Potts, he was a good player, but there's no recording. So people just say 'Seán Potts, he was a great player.' But the difference between him and Johnny Doran is that you can hear it, and hearing is believing to a big extent…, you know? (Browne 2017)

The recording schemes of the Irish Folklore Commission (IFC) (described as "the Folklore Department" in the above quote) and RTÉ were the main avenues by which Irish traditional musicians (besides the few who made commercial recordings) were recorded in Ireland up to the 1980s before the proliferation of the private tape recorder. As illustrated in the diaries of IFC collector Séamus Ennis, most of the performers whose work he collected were male (Uí Ógáin 2010). In his work with RTÉ's earliest outside recording scheme - the Mobile Recording Unit - Ennis returned to his initial informants (Gubbins 2016). It followed that most of the musicians recorded in the mid-twentieth century in the main recording and collecting schemes of RTÉ's - also were male. In earlier research (Gubbins 2016), I have shown how issues of representation accompanied the practices of the earliest decades of recording and broadcasting work in RTÉ relating to Irish traditional music. *The Long Note* began several decades after this early collecting work and yet, as this chapter will demonstrate, the environment of music programming on RTÉ Radio remained overwhelmingly dominated by men. Just

[25] These recordings are now stored in the Irish Folklore Collections in University College Dublin (Irish Folklore Collection 2022).

as in rock music (Gubbins and Ó Briain 2020, 39), Irish traditional music broadcasters in RTÉ felt they were bringing the best of Irish music and musicians to their audience, and they believed this to be the case regardless of the clear gender disparities that persisted in their work. The inadvertent propagation of Irish traditional music as an authentically male genre, with a reliance on male presenters, producers and musicians, was a common trope across music broadcasting in Ireland as this chapter will demonstrate, as well as outside of broadcasting. These inequalities are currently being highlighted in Ireland through recent advocacy groups (Sounding the Feminists 2022; Fairplé 2022; Mnásome 2022; The Gash Collective 2022; Girls Rock Dublin 2022), focussed publications (Jones 2021), and longer-scale research projects (Hanlon 2023).[26]

In this chapter, I thus examine the representation of women in radio music programming of the period 1970-1994. I also consider the representation of Travellers in the programme. To this end, I focus on discussions of the life stories of Travellers and travelling musicians on the programme and explore how these discussions contributed to visibilities and invisibilities in the representation of Travellers as an ethnic group on Irish public radio. I focus my questions squarely on *The Long Note* as this was the only radio programme of Irish folk and traditional music in the period where I found Travellers to be represented. Looking at the stories of women and Travellers only in terms of their membership of those groups could reasonably be described as inevitably reinforcing their marginalisation, e.g., as if a person's membership of these groups is the most significant aspect of their individual identity. I am influenced in this reflection by the work of Tes Slominski, who states of her own work on gendered biographies in Irish traditional music that:

> It's all too easy to view [this] story through glasses tinted by only gender. Certainly a project that looked at Julia and her contemporaries primarily as case studies of how women negotiate participation in the Irish traditional music scene would be worthwhile, but methodologically, such a study would reinforce a woman musician's place as always a subject, never a self. (Slominski 2008)

To circumvent this problem, I focus on the theme of representation in detail here but also thread discussions of representation throughout all chapters of this thesis.

[26] For a discussion of gender imbalance across contemporary Irish radio broadcasting, see O'Brien and Suiter 2017. A paraphrase of this paragraph was previously published in Gubbins and Ó Briain 2020.

The specific questions I pursue in this chapter are as follows: How were women and Travellers represented - both quantitatively and qualitatively - in Irish music radio programming in the period 1970-1994, and specifically in RTÉ's *The Long Note*? And does surviving documentation of *The Long Note* radio programming provide us with any indications of how receptive and/or inclusive the sound world of Irish traditional/folk music radio was for women and Travellers in this era?

4.1 Women and RTÉ 1970-1994

A selection of print sources from the archives of RTÉ illustrate the structural origins of a hostile environment for women in music in broadcasting in RTÉ, and aptly describe the scene for the period immediately prior to this study. From 1932, women working in the Irish civil service were required by law to leave their jobs upon marriage. The RTÉ was part of the civil service until 31st December 1961 and the establishment of the RTÉ Authority became a statutory corporation (Fisher 1978, 23-5), which gave it more independence and less bureaucracy than it previously had as a part of the civil service. The "marriage bar" remained in place for civil servants until 1973, and though RTÉ workers were not civil servants once RÉ became RTÉ and left the civil service in 1961, the spirit of that law prevailed in RTÉ through the 1960s.

Television began broadcasting in Ireland in 1961. RTÉ prepared itself for its arrival with the establishment of the RÉ (later RTÉ) authority, "an authority with corporate status…appointed by the government for the purpose of providing a national television and sound broadcasting service" (Broadcasting Authority Bill, 1959).[27] With this change, RÉ left the civil service, and as Pine explains, began many negotiations on the terms and conditions of employment from that point on. A memo from Director of Music, Fachtna Ó hAnnracháin, to the RTÉ Director-General (Ó hAnnracháin 1961) coming up to this transition in October 1961 argued for the continued exclusion of married women from positions in the orchestra on various grounds including that the sight of a pregnant woman

[27] The bill, dated 1959, set up the legislation that paved the way for RTÉ.

playing an instrument was unseemly, and that their audiences couldn't possibly enjoy watching them in concert. Though pregnancy was undetectable over the radio, the RTÉ Symphony Orchestra's additional in-person concerts and television performances meant that their members were subject to visual scrutiny in any case. As demonstrated by Ó hAnnracháin's memo, a pregnant musician's physical form was a matter openly discussed in RTÉ. The sentiment on display here evidences a lack of interest in equal representation in the station vis-a-vis gender in the period just before *The Long Not*e began, at least.

> In matters of this kind it is essential to take a long term view and I am, therefore, very much against any change in the present arrangement whereby women employed on the Orchestra and Choral staff must resign on marriage. (Ó hAnnracháin, 12th October 1961)

Ó hAnnracháin's sentiments were felt more broadly, with a response to his memo suggesting that all female staff should be subject to these limits, keeping them at bay from returning to work in any permanent capacity upon marriage:

> I feel that we should now set a limit to the employment on any sort of continuing basis of married women on clerical, typing etc. duties and would be glad to have your observations. Perhaps 1st April might be set as a deadline? This need not preclude their employment for casual periods e.g. vice leave or pressure which could not otherwise be properly provided for (RTÉ Interoffice memo, J.A. Irvine to Mr. P Warren, Mr R Walsh, 2nd February 1962).

The patronising tone of the memos was applied to female musician Audrey Collins who had the temerity to attempt to keep her job upon her marriage. Despite this reluctance to reinstate her, Collins later became leader of the National Symphony Orchestra (RTÉ Photographic Archive, Image 2400/032 "Audrey Collins at Bank of Ireland/RTÉ Proms 1992).

In 1975 the *RTÉ Gazette* reported on discrimination against women across all roles in RTÉ and described a reluctance in both RTÉ's trade unions and management to address it. The Gazette detailed complaints from women across several separate areas in RTÉ as well as summarising the general discrimination felt by women in the organisation.

> Having talked to a great deal of women in RTÉ, … they all referred to a stifling of ambition; the lack of promotional outlets; dead-end, low-graded jobs and hidden discrimination. It was claimed that often when women were passed over unfairly for a promotion, management gave them a few extra pounds as a sop [standard operating procedure] (*RTÉ Gazette* May-June 1975, 3).

The subsequent issue of the *Gazette* continued to pursue the question of representation of women in various posts in RTÉ, questioning radio producers about access in their area and receiving the following response:

> Women in this area…remarked that it is seven years since a woman radio producer was appointed. This, they believed, was a 'retrograde situation.' Another said she could say with certainty that at least three well qualified women had applied for an important radio post but a man was appointed. She'd like to know the ratio of men to women in her area, because she could see no move towards equalisation…. One woman radio producer said… 'At the moment there is only *one* female sound operator in RTE Radio. The ratio in the BBC is 50-50.' She saw no great skill in placing a disc on a turntable, but these jobs had all been seen, to date, as men's jobs, she said (*RTÉ Gazette* July-August 1975, 4).

An internal RTÉ report from 1978 reveals that women made up approximately 29% of the staff (499 women out of 1713 total) of RTÉ in Feb 1978 (Michael P. Fogarty, "Industrial relations in RTÉ," RTÉ Internal documents 1978, RTÉ Document Archives).

The role of women in the station was also discussed by a committee of the Irish government examining the work of state-sponsored bodies, including RTÉ, between 1980 and 1981 (Oireachtas na hÉireann 1980, 35). The following remarks were made regarding the post of radio producer:

> Deputy Desmond: In reference to the recruitment and training of women as radio and television presenters - I am thinking of people of the competence of Marian Finucane - I should like to know how one can ensure that people of such competence are brought forward in a continuous fashion. How do you manage to do that?
>
> Mr. Sexton. - It depends on the job that is involved… The vast bulk of presenters are recruited specifically into the organisation on a talent-spotting basis. A competition is held and if it seems that a person has the kind of special talent we are looking for, we give them some in-house training but not a great deal. Many of them are tried out on the air after limited training. There is a considerable turn over in that area. Others, such as Marian Finucane, who came in as a researcher, develop very well. (Oireachtas na hÉireann 1980, 35).

Archived documents from that period demonstrate that efforts were underway at the level of RTÉ management to investigate the gender imbalance at the station. In 1979 the RTÉ Authority set up a working party to examine the position of women. Their report was published in 1981 and made several recommendations (RTÉ news release, 15th April 1981). It covered the issues of the quantitatively weak representation of women in jobs across RTÉ, and the difficulty of paths for women to access various roles (particularly producer roles). The report also commented on RTÉ's broadcast output, for example analysing the images of women portrayed in advertising and requesting a greater diversity of roles occupied by women in advertising images. Reporting in the Dáil, Senator Hussey stated that the

group concluded that "RTÉ have indeed limited women considerably" (Oireachtas na hÉireann 1980, 87). The report concluded that "a more favourable climate for the participation of women in programmes had developed, and considers that this has become evident on screen and on air, but a considerable effort is still required to achieve the desired balance" (RTÉ *Tuarascáil Bhliantúil/Annual Report* 1982, 11).[28] The report was discussed at the level of the RTÉ authority, and they officially agreed to put these recommendations in practice, but ultimately demonstrated little resolve for action (RTÉ Authority minutes, 376th meeting, 11th May 1981). One of the writers of the report announced in the meeting that "she feared the Report would die like the one on educational broadcasting" (RTÉ Authority minutes, 376th meeting, 11th May 1981), but this was denied by other committee members. Despite these efforts, the following samples of music programming over the following years suggest that this discussion of gender imbalance gained traction slowly within music programming and resulted in few substantial changes by the end of the 1980s. As one example, out of the 522 total classical performances that were recorded from 1980-1990 (either in RTÉ or elsewhere) and stored in RTÉ's sound archives, only 36 (6.9%) were composed by women (Pine 2005, CD Appendix).

4.2 Women in *The Long Note*

As introduced in chapters one and two of this thesis, *The Long Note* radio programme was the creative project of Irish traditional accordion player and RTÉ producer Tony MacMahon, who began it in 1974 under the stewardship of Julian Vignoles and the so-called "Light Music" department of RTÉ Radio. A long list of musicians followed MacMahon in the roles of producer, presenter, researcher and various other levels of involvement with the programme over the following seventeen years that it was broadcast. The combination of personnel involved in the show changed regularly (Bradshaw, email correspondence 2017). All five producers of the show over its life were male, and out of the ten regular

[28] The pages of this source were not numbered, so I add my own for indicative purposes.

presenters of the show, three were female, beginning with Tríona Ní Dhomhnaill, Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh, and concluding with Máire Ó Keeffe.

The decision-makers involved in *The Long Note* - producers, presenters, researchers - were mostly male. That women were poorly represented in the roles of producer, presenter, performers and participants is no surprise, given the dearth of women working in RTÉ at the time. As *The Long Note* presenter Peter Browne states, even though nowadays he is extremely conscious of promoting gender balance across the range of roles on the shows he works in, in the 1970s and 80s "it [gender balance] just wasn't on our radar." (Browne 2017). As Browne states, this male dominance across all sectors in RTÉ was "of its time," reflecting contemporary societal norms. "Broadcasting was a male pursuit, by and large. And part of the thing was - it just reflected life in general" (Browne 2017). Similar statements were made by broadcasters in other genres of music in RTÉ at the time. For example, according to popular music DJ Dave Fanning, the leading popular music DJ in RTÉ through the 1980s and 1990s, gender imbalance "wasn't an issue" at the time, i.e. it wasn't a topic of conversation.[29]

Several presenters of *The Long Note,* when I called on them to reflect on the gender balance across the programme, demonstrate an awareness of a gender imbalance, but also a lack of desire to address it. The following quote from presenter Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh demonstrates how she navigated her position as a female presenter on the programme:

> **MNíMh:** At the time it was unusual, to be honest with you. I think Tríona Ní Dhomhnaill was the only other woman. And both women [she and Máire Ó Keeffe] I know very well and they're friends of mine. But I thought it was kind of giving a nod to women as being, you know - why not? … I knew it was different. But I wanted it to be looked upon as, in my music… that we're all equal, you know? And I never wanted it to be any way different…. At the time, I think a lot of people were happy that it was a woman presenting it. I can't remember now in total honesty if someone said, "fair play, it's a woman presenter."

Ní Mhaonaigh's comments here suggest a mixture of feelings: pride at showing how women musicians in traditional music were just as competent and talented as men, as well as a desire not to be given any extra leeway just for being a woman working in the male-dominated slot of presenter.

[29] This paragraph, authored by Gubbins, was previously published in Gubbins and Ó Briain 2021.

*The Long Not*e consisted of mostly male performers too, with most of the women included performing as singers. The few exceptions to this were notable - Aggie White on fiddle (RTÉ Mediaweb, Ep. Title: AA11804), and Mary Bergin on whistle in 1979 (RTÉ Mediaweb LAA367), and 1980 (RTÉ Mediaweb AA1230). Mary Bergin's first album was published by Shanachie in 1979 (Ng, 2022). An examination of all the performers listed as performing on *The Long Note* programmes in the period 3rd October 1977 - 28th August 1978 reflects similar proportions (see Appendix I of this thesis). On another list of performers available from archival documents of *The Long Note*, less than 5% were women (ITMA, Harry Bradshaw collection).

Looking at all *The Long Note* broadcasts in July 1978 shows that there was seldom a named female performer in the references to this programme. One exception was Julia Clifford, who performed on 28th August 1978. Clifford was an exception amongst female performers in featuring on a commercial album with Topic Records, but though she was famed as a performer and carved a path as a professional performer in her own right as Slominski has discussed (2008), this recording and performance remained as part of a duet with her brother John Clifford. *The Long Note* often had a concentration on one artist for the whole show (RTÉ Radio Programme Logs, May 1978). Radio logs demonstrate that this showcased artist was seldom female. When women did appear, it was usually as a duet with a male musician, as exemplified by the feature on Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger, Monday 8th May 1978. Similarly, female performer Mary Cronin appeared on the show of Monday 5th June 1978 in a trio with John Carty and John Bowe (RTÉ Radio Programme Logs, June 1978).

Part of the reason for a dearth of women in the station could be explained by the lack of opportunities for women musicians to become familiar with the broadcasters that made the decisions about who to hire. As Browne explains, he got his job as a presenter by being known to producer Tony MacMahon as a performer on the Dublin pub session scene:

> PB: I would have been known to Tony MacMahon just as a musician. And...that was the era of the Bothy Band. So it was a tight musical circle...the people in it, you know?
>
> HG: So you were playing out a lot?
>
> PB: I was playing a lot at that stage and just would have known Tony, but also been part … of Slattery's on a Wednesday night. You saw them all in there...and Tony

> must have decided that this was a thing. He may also have decided in fairness to him to do me a favour (Browne 2017).

Women had more restricted access to public houses (pubs) in the 1970s and 1980s than men. Cian Molloy describes how, before the 1960s, Irish bars were “almost exclusively male-only” and that in the 1970s, it was still common to see women and children waiting outside a pub, presumably waiting for their male relatives (Molloy 2002, 80; Gubbins 2016, 163-4). For this reason, musicians without access to such “public” spaces were effectively out of contention for the jobs and opportunities that were facilitated by the networking of such a close circle of musicians. When the pub was the primary social setting of the tight musical circles from which presenters could be drawn, and the pub was male dominated, these factors made it difficult for unknown women to break into the musical scene.
In the following quote, Browne muses further on exactly why women were so underrepresented in radio programming from the period of *The Long Note:*

> PB: It's just [that] broadcasting was a male pursuit by and large. And part of the thing… just … reflected life in general. ...[I]f I'm making a new program now and particularly over in *Céilí House* [the regular Saturday night RTÉ Radio 1 programme that Browne produced at the time of the interview], we would always say gender balance…. I would never include two of one gender without doing one of the other. But I don't think it broke through in me any earlier or any later… (Browne 2017)

Though Browne describes himself and other broadcasters nowadays as being very aware of the importance of gender balance in their work, he also acknowledges witnessing discrimination against female broadcasters in the past (stating again that he did not recognise it as such at the time). The following account describes a recurring theme - the suitability of women’s voices:

> [O]ne of the things that would have been talked about were that women’s voices weren’t so suitable for the radio, … that so-and-so like John Skeehan would have had a good radio voice. But what’s a good radio voice? It’s ‘hello’ [mimics a very deep voice]. But that's just...like everything else ... like women in sport or politics.
>
> Did I have a consciousness of that in the 70s? No. I think that when I came back in through the 80s and certainly by the 90s, I would have had those awarenesses in some way. And I mean nobody *now*adays says that Marian Finucane doesn't have a good radio voice. It's just... it's of its time… There's no explanation…. (Browne 2017)

Browne explains how the very act of pulling out a list of exceptional but hitherto unknown female musicians demonstrates the point that the vast bulk of female musicians were invisible.

> I mean, you only have to look at that advent calendar that ITMA did of female musicians (IMTA 2016). And that's fine, but the very fact that you are able to find them and just name 20 or 30 musicians just means that you know, if they were there, they were invisible.

In other words, the significance of a list of exceptional women musicians demonstrates the rule that most publicly known musicians were male. Browne also offers some reasons why.

> And you know... where were they to play this music? I mean if a woman went into a snug in a pub in the '30s or '40s playing on the fiddle I can just picture, you can imagine the horror of it, it just wouldn't happen. So where were they to play? You saw them OK, in Céilí bands. You see pictures - you always see this one female piper, Mrs Kenny. There is a Mrs something or other who used to play in Dublin but and you know, like Mrs. Crotty, this is great... And of course everyone thinks Mrs. Crotty is great...but concertina was taken to be sort of a female instrument etc. etc. (Browne 2017)

Browne suggests here that the suitability and respectability of instruments were factors in the visibility of female musicians, suggesting that if a female musician played an instrument not deemed suitable, they remained invisible and never broke through to public awareness, or were not allowed by gatekeepers to break through. Browne explains why certain instruments were deemed unsuitable for playing by women for various reasons, and thus discouraging women from performing them:

> [The concertina] was just an indoor small thing, like the pipes you have to squeeze the bag, etc. The fiddle came up like this like you know [raises his arm].… Grace Toland was saying that there probably were many more female musicians than we're aware of, but they just weren't written in. Like there is a Mrs Gallavan that used to play the fiddle in Clare's… [S]he was quite something but… it had to be something exceptional and where were they going to play?... (Browne 2017)

Browne continues to clarify that he would not have actively excluded women musicians as broadcasters, but also that he and other broadcasters did not recognise a gender imbalance as a problem as such in the 1970s. Though his comments suggest that he felt an unease with the situation over the years, he and other broadcasters did not actively seek to particularly include women until a much later date; there was clearly no impetus to do so.

> [I]n broadcast terms, I can certainly say I never would have *excluded* a woman musician or anything like that. It's just on the basis of *how they played*. You'd be

> kind of *glad* of it in some way, but the whole overall political and - not just political correctness, but *actual* correctness about the whole thing - would have struck me sometime in the 80s. And nowadays, you know, it's equal and if I were looking for a female presenter, I probably would practice some sort of positive discrimination on it at this stage just to *right* that imbalance, you know? (Browne's emphases, 2017)

Another *Long Note* presenter (Glackin) and researcher (Goan) state that though women did not fill 50% of posts on Irish radio in the 1970s, nevertheless they were "well represented" (Glackin and Goan 2019).

Not only were the performers involved in *The Long Note* also overwhelmingly male, but the only available sources detailing the compensation provided to performers on *The Long Note* indicate that women were paid less than the male performers. Available accounts of payments made by *The Long Note* to performers suggest that amongst the musicians employed by the programme, females received payments on the lower end of the scale compared to males. One example arises from 1984. A set of documents connected with one *The Long Not*e programme provides a list of performers with amounts of money next to their names (Bradshaw Collection, folder 25/10, "Milltown '84"). The amounts next to the names of the male performers on the list are higher than the payments next to the female performers (bar two). Interpreting this as the amount of money each musician was paid, one performer received £75, the next £50, twelve performers received £40 or £35, three performers (including the only two women on the list) received £25 and one male received £20. In summary, out of 18 musicians, the only two women performers on the list were paid joint second lowest. One possible reason for this trend is that the male musicians involved might have had a higher public profile at the time. Another possibility is that these female musicians had less experience of performing on radio than the other (male) musicians.

A second list of names and associated payments to musicians on the programme suggests a similar situation of lower pay for the female performers. These payments related to a recording made for the programme in Lanesborough, County Longford (Bradshaw Collection, 24th July 1984). Margaret O'Reilly from Loch Gowna, Co. Cavan was the sole woman included from a list of ten musicians. Two different amounts were paid to the musicians in that list, with O'Reilly was paid the

lesser of the two - £30 (Bradshaw Collection, folder 25/10). Another example relating to the “Sense of Ireland” festival which took place in London in 1980 listed the amount of £30 each for Sarah and Rita Keane and £35 for Len Graham (Bradshaw collection, Box 25, “A Sense of Ireland”). The discrepancy here possibly stemmed from the fact that Graham performed solo whereas the Keanes sang as a duo. Of the other musicians mentioned in the line-up for this festival, nine out of the ten, plus all the members of the Chieftains band, were male.

4.3 Men and *The Long Note*: male musical bonding in homosocial bands.

As Helen O’Shea describes, there is a differential in the participation of traditional musicians in public life between that of men and women, with women appearing less, the higher the status of the activity, including radio as one example. The absence of women from the public sphere of traditional music in Ireland is more complex than just the exclusion of women from the pub, she states:

> Untangling the complex relationships between music and gender in symbolic representations of the Irish nation further reveals a strand of cultural meanings that persists in configuring ‘woman’ and ‘music’, ‘Ireland’ and ‘nation’ in ways that are disempowering to women musicians today (2008, 55).

According to O’Shea, the radio was one of the places in post-independence Ireland where traditional music was institutionalised (along with in CCÉ and the national school curriculum) (2008, 65).

With respect to historiographies of North American jazz, Sherrie Tucker’s identification of a proliferation of “male musical bonding in homosocial bands” (2002, 379) resonates widely in the context of Irish traditional music. As Tucker demonstrates, the “great man” trope is a pervasive one in the narrative of jazz historiography in North America (2002). Tucker praises the broader movement in academic writing on music “away from the focus on individual geniuses and instead toward their contexts” (O’Meally et al. 2004 quoted in Tucker 2012, 218). This “great man” narrative was also commonly deployed by the personnel of *The Long Note*. Verena Commins highlights the importance of acknowledging the male dominance in printed texts regarding Irish traditional music because “this received canon, regardless of the gender of who is playing now, continues to inform the narrative and

discourses of contemporary music making and is problematically complicated by the "gender of nostalgia"." (Commins 2021, 56, quoting Commins 2014, 204) Commins also describes Irish traditional music as a "homosocial tradition" (Commins 2021, passim).

Three recordings of the programme (publicly available in ITMA) provide several examples of this phenomena. In an early episode of the programme in November 1974 presenter Ó Domhnaill described Captain Francis O'Neill as "that great collector of dance tunes" (*Long Note*, 4th November 1974, ITMA 770-RTE-WAV). Piper Patsy Tuohey is introduced as "The genial wizard of the Irish pipes," "one of the great professional pipers of this century" and again later in the programme, as "the great Patsy Tuohey" (*Long Note*, 4th November 1974, ITMA 770-RTE-WAV). In the second transcribed programme from 16th August 1976, presenter Bill Meek describes fiddle player Tommy Potts as "One of Dublin's best," (16th August 1976, ITMA, 1505-RTE-WAV). Even though Potts was described as a traditional player, he was also afforded the opportunity to be described as an individual as in the following quote from the programme, where he is described as having such "extraordinary musical individuality that you couldn't really daub him with any stylistic label other than his own" (16th August 1976, ITMA, 1505-RTE-WAV). Meek describes accordion player Martin O'Connor as "one of the finest young instrumentalists in the country" (16th August 1976, ITMA, 1505-RTE-WAV), Séamus Ennis is "another world authority on traditional music...also one of the finest performers" (16th August 1976, ITMA, 1505-RTE-WAV). In a similar vein, Fred Finn and Peter Horan and Noel Hill and Tony Linnane are all "exceptionally talented" duos (16th August 1976, ITMA, 1505-RTE-WAV). The sole woman performer in that programme was the singer Dolina McLellan, whose introduction lacked a description of the quality of her talent, and thus comes across as a little more muted than the introductions of the male performers included: "...a Hebridean singer who has visited Ireland on a number of occasions, indeed both as a singer, and as an actress. From the Isle of Lewis, Dolina McLellan" (16th August 1976, ITMA, 1505-RTE-WAV).

Evidence of performers' associations with other "great men" of Irish traditional music was also presented to listeners, suggesting that it passed as one of the features qualifying a musician for placement on the programme. For example, when singer Diarmuidín Ó Súilleabháin was introduced as

a presenter of radio programme *Corkabout*, his status as an accomplished musician was mentioned and presenter Ó Domhnaill also mentioned his strong connection with another "great man" in Irish music and Irish radio, Seán Ó Riada. This information is all presented as evidence of Ó Súilleabháin's suitability as a presenter. "Diarmuidín Ó Súilleabháin is a man whose roots lie deep in his native Cúil Aodha in West Cork. He is himself a fine singer and was a friend of and worked with the late Seán Ó Riada." (November 1976, ITMA Ref: 770-RTÉ-WAV). Ó Domhnaill's qualifications, aptitude, and abilities and his suitability as a presenter on the schedule of a local news, current affairs, and arts show are not in question here. The warm welcome displayed to him on air, however, demonstrates the importance of fraternal relationships in the entry to broadcasting. Familiarity with one male broadcaster served to pave the way for other male broadcasters across the schedule.

As demonstrated above, women were not only under-represented in the programme *The Long Note*, but the participation of the women that did participate in the programme was qualitatively different from the musical participation of men. Their participation was not as an objectified sexual object, as has been the case of women participating in other UK radio programming of the era (See O'Brien and Suiter 2017, Gill 1993, and Wollman 1998 for more in-depth qualitative analysis of gender roles in radio). For example, archived letters between programme-makers and audience members demonstrate a familiar style of communication between the male *Long Note* broadcasters and the musicians they employed to perform on the show. This familiarity was a by-product of the close-knit community of traditional musicians in Ireland in the 1970s. The communication style between the male presenters and producers and any female musicians they were corresponding with was much more considered and demonstrably respectful, as the following set of interactions demonstrates. Two letters to the well-known husband-and-wife performing and teaching duo, Nicky and Anne McAuliffe demonstrate how the same request was differently worded at the time:

> [Bradshaw to Nicky, husband]: "Hope you're well and behaving yourself! …I know this is asking a lot but I'd be very grateful if you could give me some information, however brief it may be."
>
> [Bradshaw to Anne, wife]: "Hope these few lines find you in good health and cheers for the request that follows is asking a lot….I know you're probably not very keen on writing about yourself, but I'd appreciate if you could give me

> something to work on as we'll be broadcasting the music we recorded from you in the next few months."

The manner in which Bradshaw addresses both McAuliffe's appropriately reflects the social norms for polite forms of address in Ireland at the time. However, the mode by which Bradshaw addressed Nicky demonstrates that a much more familiar relationship between the two was allowed, with Bradshaw teasing Nicky about behaving himself. A more cautious mode of address between any male broadcaster and female performers signalled a relationship that was more courteous.

Tucker cautions us that those who write the texts from which we draw our musical narratives in television documentaries, or radio programming or otherwise did not invent these privileged narratives of musical discourses as discussed in this chapter, i.e., the producers, presenters, researchers that created the texts of *The Long Note* programmes. Neither, Tucker continues, are they responsible for the longevity of dominant desires that make these imbalanced discourses marketable to upper-level broadcasting management. Neither can they be blamed for the pub (a male-dominated space) being the main public performance and socialising venue for traditional music in Ireland in that period, and therefore the main place in which to recruit any new presenters or performers. However, these writers of histories are responsible, Tucker states, for "skilfully fulfilling these desires for familiar representations and stories." Following this logic, the creators of *The Long Note* cannot be held responsible for the male dominance of RTÉ's radio broadcasts in its earliest decades. However, that the creators of *The Long Note* continued to propagate RTÉ's established discourse of the great men of Irish traditional music, and in such a skilful manner, is regrettable. Indeed, the male dominance of music discourse in Ireland endured until only relatively recently.

4.4 Irish Travellers and *The Long Note*: invisible inclusion

Irish Travellers are a recognised ethnic group in Irish society, based on a nomadic tradition and are acknowledged as sharing distinct "history, traditions, language, culture and customs" (Pavee Point 2021). Irish Travellers in Ireland and Britain traditionally followed a nomadic lifestyle, though fewer

do in contemporary times. As Michael Hayes explains, media representation of the Irish Traveller population was largely the only arena in the twentieth century in which the settled Irish population encountered the Traveller Irish population.

> ...the Traveller-settled interface takes place more often than not through the prism that is the Irish media. Indeed it can be argued that the modern-day representation of the Travelling community as incorporated in media sources is often the only arena where the non-Traveller community has any sort of sustained contact with the Traveller community… Responses to minorities including Travellers in the public sphere in Ireland are frequently dependent on their image or the perceptions of them as communities, factors which are increasingly debated almost solely through the lens that is the modern media (Hayes 2006, 238-9).

The representation of Travellers involved in *The Long Note* counteracted that. In including, however quietly and invisibly, members of the Travelling community in their broadcasts, *The Long Note* contributed significantly to the sparse media representations of the Traveller community in Ireland in that period. In this way, *The Long Note* formed a rare Traveller-settled interface in this period.

In contrast to the patterns of media representation identified in the above discussion by Hayes, the programmes produced by *The Long Note* were unusual in the context of radio output in the period of 1974 -1991 in that they included portrayals of the Irish Traveller community in a broadcasting context in which their membership of the Travelling community was not the stated reason for their inclusion, not the subject under discussion. Just like the other musicians featured, their worth as musicians and their musical styles were the subjects of the programmes - not their ethnicity. One prime example of this type of representation was when Small (presenter) with Bradshaw (producer) included uilleann piper and Traveller Johnny Doran in their limited run of special programmes in 1988 focusing on those they considered to be master musicians. Noted piper Mickey Dunne mentioned this as a standout programme in his memories of listening to *The Long Note* (Dunne 2021). *The Long Note* also did special features on John Reilly the singer, and on Paddy Keenan, the uilleann piper of the Bothy Band, both of whom either identified as Travellers or had Traveller heritage. In his platform as a discussant of Irish traditional music over the years, producer Tony MacMahon has regularly drawn attention to the negative way Travellers have been spoken about. In 2014 for example, he describes how traditional music used to be referred to by an insulting name by businesspeople and shop people in Clare in the 1940s when he was growing up. "'T*****s' music" was the unofficial name for our

music," MacMahon states (*Comhrá* Television Programme 2014, Timestamp: 3 minutes 30 seconds, TG4 subtitles)." (T****r is a pejorative label for Travellers and for that reason I am choosing not to unnecessarily repeat it here. It is now more widely considered as unacceptable in public discourse). In mentioning this, MacMahon demonstrates the lack of respect these businesspeople had both for traditional music as well as for Travellers. He aligns both groups via the feelings of hurt caused due to this use of pejorative language, conflating the discourse of underrepresentation and underinvestment of traditional music in musical institutions in Ireland with the cause of Travellers. In this way, MacMahon includes Travellers in an inclusive meaning for the word "our music."

4.5 Travelling musicians/Traveller musicians

In a feature discussing Traveller piper Johnny Doran's life and music, Doran's life as a travelling musician was discussed. Travel around Ireland and overseas as a professional musician and as a wandering labourer of various types was a feature of Doran's story. In this segment, Doran's travel and life as a professional musician was presented in a similar way to other professional musicians on the programme. The trope of the travelling musician was well-established in Irish music history through the tradition of travelling harpers from bardic times up until the 1700s. The most well-known of these was the much-celebrated figure of Turlough Carolan, who was one of the last (blind) travelling harpists. Also mentioned in media reports of the time was the tradition of blind travelling pipers in the county of Clare, (as discussed by Willie Clancy Summer School founder Muiris Ó Rócháin in the *Irish Times* of 1977 (Ó Rócháin 1977, iv)), though this tradition was not as broadly discussed as that of the travelling harpists. Regular listeners to RTÉ Radio 1 during the harsh economic recession of the 1980s would have been used to news reports of increasing numbers of Irish people emigrating either abroad to London or moving from rural to urban Ireland for work. In a column for the *Irish Times* in 1988, Bill Meek (previous presenter of *The Long Note*), described Johnny Doran as 'A Traveller… in every sense of the word, moving through the country in his horse-drawn caravan, and living the life of the true professional musician." ("Down by the Liffeyside" in *Irish Times*, 11th July 1988,12). An *Irish*

Times RTÉ Radio 1 listing described a special documentary feature on John Doran as thus: "the second of two documentaries presented by Small on the life and music of the legendary travelling piper" (4th April, 1988).

In the broader context, the label of Doran as a "travelling musician" was consistent with the work practices of musicians from the settled community of the time - involving travel for work and performances, non-consistent work with irregular dependency on social welfare payments, and frequent trips abroad to the UK and nearby mainland Europe. For these and many other reasons, then, the description of Johnny Doran on the programme as a "travelling piper" would not necessarily have marked him out to a *Long Note* listener as a member of the Traveller community. On the contrary, descriptions like these seemed to further highlight how Traveller musicians were not at all "irreconcilably different" (Hayes 2006, 239) from settled musicians.

Though the broadcasts involving Doran and other musicians from the Traveller community did not highlight Travellers' ethnic status, they did highlight Travellers' lives and culture. In this, the broadcasts were unusual in the media context of the time, as their portrayals of the lives and culture of an Irish Traveller was in a neutral or positive light, i.e., not a negative or stereotypical light as was prevalent in other media representations.

> All too often it continues to be the case that while ethnic difference is ascribed legitimacy, the recognition of Traveller ethnicity is demeaned by the implication that Traveller cultural expression is irreconcilably different with that of other non-Traveller communities and that the Traveller community is consequently deserving of further polarisation (Hayes 2006, 238-9).

The "discourse of difference" where - as Hayes describes (2006) - the Traveller is depicted as a negative "Other" is not apparent on *The Long Note*. Though the musicians' position as members of the Travelling community was embedded in the broadcasts and not hidden, the musicians' identity as Travellers was not the subject of the discussion in any of the broadcasts listened to for this research. Instead, the Doran family's musical history, their musical style, and that of their family and friends was discussed - in similar ways to other musicians interviewed on *The Long Note*. In the descriptions of Johnny Doran's personality in one of the programmes, note was made of the fact that he would only ever drink a maximum of 2 pints a day (RTÉ Archives, 1905-RTÉ-WAV. "Music of Johnny Doran." 1993). As was usual in *The Long Note*, descriptions of a male musicians' build and appearance were

included. In the special *Long Note* programme on Doran broadcast in 1988, the programme included quotes from contemporaries stating that Doran was married with five kids - comparable in size to many Irish families of the era - and that his: "gentle and agreeable character made a strong impression with everyone he met." (1905-RTÉ-WAV). Discussion involved the decision to record him, including the circumstances of how Doran owned the pipes, how he held them, and other details relating to his musical style. His family was described as having "a long association with travelling, horses and playing." "What kind of a man was Johnny?" "Nice, thin…small, about 5'6'' a nice looking lad, prominent white teeth and the first thing I noticed were long thin fingers… He was a small quiet man, you know" (1905-RTÉ-WAV). The music and life-stories of Traveller musicians such as Johnny Doran, Paddy Keenan, John Reilly, and John Doherty all featured regularly on *The Long Note*. For example, a *Long Note* tribute to Traveller fiddler John Doherty was transmitted on 28th January 1980 (RTÉ archives/ITMA episode title AA370).

Producer Peter Browne suggests that inclusion of Traveller musicians in *The Long Note* was due to a concerted effort on the part of the first programme producer, Tony MacMahon, to give representation to the marginalised Traveller people (Browne 2017), as he describes in this extract from an interview in 2017:

> PB: But the other thing that Tony did… was...socially aware items… like, Pierce Hutchinson would be in, reading poems, … Michael Hartnett. So it was alive to that aspect of Irish culture.
>
> HG: Was that a new aspect of radio … social consciousness…?
>
> PB: In Tony's case, yes, I would think. Or something with a bit of an edge to it, yeah, there's no doubt about it…. In Tony's case it was in particular about Travellers. That was a big plank there – Paddy Keenan and all that … you know. Some of that was quite pointed" (Browne 2017).

Paddy Keenan, one of the founding members of high-profile The Bothy Band, is an Irish Traveller. Browne refers here to MacMahon's effort to ascribe Keenan similar legitimacy as a traditional musician to that of the settled musicians featured regularly on the programme. Later in the same interview, Browne describes how *The Long Note* brought Keenan and other new, young musicians to the fore of the public consciousness. As Small described his time on the programme, they "took a lot of trouble with interviews, and Harry [Bradshaw, producer at the time] was particularly proud, for

instance, of the interviews done for the documentary set of two programmes on the piper Johnny Doran" (Small, 2017). Donegal-based fiddle player John Doherty was another Traveller musician to receive regular airtime on the programme, via a *Long Note* Special on 28th January 1980.[30] *Long Note* presenter and early Bothy Band member Glackin states how he played with Doherty often as a young musician and that Doherty's style of playing influenced Glackin's very much. The close kinship connections that existed between many semi- and professional musicians in that time translated to the working environment of the *Long Note* radio programme too, to its musicians, those who produced, presented and those who listened also. As singer and listener Niamh Parsons described, musicians who recorded solo albums (like Keenan did with Gael Linn in 1975) were few and far between. For those who did, it was likely to be their membership of a band that projected them into the spotlight enough for it to happen, for a record label to take an interest in them. In keeping with the low proportion of women musicians in the programme in general and in music programming across the board in RTÉ at the time, and with the low numbers of Traveller women working outside the home in general, women Travellers were even more under-represented as performers on the programme *The Long Note.*

According to Glackin (2019), there was never an audience response (as far as he knew about it) to the playing of the music of Travellers on the show, other than curiosity. *The Long Note* presenters never chose Travellers to play for any reason other than that they would have been considered good musicians. Furthermore, they never received any negative audience reaction to these Travelling musicians.

> PG: In fact, what we got was curiosity…. They would say, that was very interesting - I didn't know that that was the way of life they had. But would pass on from that pretty quickly (Glackin 2019).

Goan, originally employed as a researcher for *The Long Note*, reiterated that ethnic status was not a part of the discourse when Travelling musicians performed on the show:

> Well, it helped that Travellers had some outstanding musicians and singers in their midst, so ethnic status or anything else was not really part of the discourse. It was just 'This is Johnny Doran - God almighty what an amazing piper!' Or 'This is Liam Weldon, what an

[30] See Cairdeas na bhFidléirí's website for a description of John Doherty's life as a travelling musician.

> extraordinary singer and force of life!' I mean if you were to have been accused of anything I might have been that you would have romanticized their differences as well as eulogising their extraordinary gifts, and it's the same with...Paddy and his brothers (Goan 2019).[31]

Irish Travellers were not the only people to have their nomadic traditions romanticised on the programme. The next quote from a programme in 1976 provides an example of this, but otherwise there was not much discussion of the ethnic status of Traveller or Gypsies:

> Gypsy music, soft lights, beakers of bull's blood, and dollops of goulash - my God the romance of it all. But now some extraordinary harp-playing in the Hungarian gypsy tradition… Of course, in Hungary there is also the music of the Magyars, the settled non-Romany inhabitants, and in fact those pieces we already played, the gypsy pieces, were taken from the music of the settled people by the Gypsies. From that settled tradition comes this dance, played on what must be one of the most unusual instruments in the world (2nd August. ITMA, catalogue number: 1540-RTE-WAV).

The special programmes relating to the life and times of celebrated piper, Johnny Doran, had a significant enough impact on the Travelling community themselves as to be utilised by writer Liam Gaul in 1993 in the compilation of the Traveller advocacy publication *Do you Know Us at All?* (Hyland 1993). RTÉ Radio 1 *The Long Note* programmes featuring Traveller musicians have been frequently referenced in academic literature on Traveller studies (Ó hAodha and Tuohy 2013, passim).

An alternative view of *The Long Note's* lack of highlighting Doran's membership of the Travelling community is that the presenters of *The Long Note* deliberately muted discussion of the ethnic status of these musicians in order not to put off either listeners or RTÉ management. In this case, the *Long Note's* elision of the ethnicity of Travellers could be viewed as a muted representation. As Nóirín Ní Laodhóg and David Collins describe:

> Travellers' identity is often 'invisible' or not acknowledged in the history of the music that does exist. E.g., they are referred to as 'peddlers' or wanderers, etc. thus depriving the Traveller community of credit for the musicians it produced. There is no reason to believe this ambiguity is a recent development. This would suggest that there were many Traveller musicians over the centuries who were not acknowledged as such (Ní Laodhóg and Collins, 96).

Looking at it from this point of view, Doran and Keenan's regular and prominent inclusion on *The Long Note* without acknowledgement of their Traveller identities, formed part of an elision of Traveller identities from mainstream Irish traditional music discourse.

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[31] Liam Weldon was a singer and collector and though not of Traveller heritage, he had a lifelong interest in Traveller heritage, and as such was often mistaken as such.

4.6 Irish Travellers and nationalism

The extent to which Travellers were (and are) excluded from the Irish public sphere in the twentieth century has been addressed by Ní Shúinéar and others. Andreas Wimmer argues:

> The privileged access to the modern state that some ethnic groups - turned into nations - enjoy is mirrored in the exclusion of those who are being declared aliens, ethnic minorities, or immigrants with no such privileged relationship to the state" (Wimmer 2006, 336)

This logic can be applied in the Irish context to the position of Irish Travellers. As noted by Tommy Fegan, an academic examination of the contribution of Irish Travellers to Irish traditional music is overdue (Fegan 2014). As Fegan observes, Irish Travellers have been excluded from due recognition of their contribution to the history and development of Irish traditional music. In addition, Traveller ethnicity has been largely overlooked in discussion of the participation of Irish traditional music in the context of a politically divided island. Such an examination of the contribution of Irish Travellers to the growth and development of Irish traditional music requires an examination of such privileged institutions as the public broadcasting system. Fegan notes that recognition of the contribution of Travellers to Irish traditional music is not requested by the Travelling community themselves:

> Finbar Furey (2009) and Mickey Dunne (2010) have deliberated on the exclusion of Irish Travellers from mainstream Irish society, but are proud of the impact that they have made to the development of Irish traditional music. Irish Travellers with whom I have engaged in this research are very conscious and proud of their identity, and they feel unperturbed about the lack of recognition others feel they merit for their contribution to Irish traditional music (Fegan 2014, 31).

Notwithstanding this, access to and participation in Irish traditional music are key elements needing consideration in discussions of nationalism in Ireland. Though the standard of musicianship and style of Irish Travellers was well recognised by key gatekeepers such as Séamus Ennis and others, Irish Travellers did not, as a rule, enjoy easy access to the historical state apparatus of the public broadcasting system. Irish Travellers, as a rule, did not appear as presenters, producers, or performers in the Irish broadcasting service. This is illustrated by the shock expressed by one of RTÉ's accountants when Bradshaw requested that a performer's cheque for payment for a *Long Note*

performance be addressed to a halting site (area designated by the state to accommodate Travellers) (Bradshaw 2019). Clearly, the participation of Travellers in RTÉ programming was not a regular occurrence - rather a notable exception, emphasising their invisibility in the public broadcasting system in general. As Sylvia Walby explains in relation to gender and nationalism:

> A key dimension along which gender regimes vary is that of the extent to which women are contained and valued within the domestic sphere on the one hand and the extent to which they are present and welcomed in the public sphere of employment, politics and education on the other (Walby 2006, 118).

Looking at how Traveller musicians were present and welcomed in the public sphere of Irish radio via *The Long Note* tells a similar story of the ethnic dimensions along which Irish nationalism affects Irish radio.

4.7 Conclusions

This chapter contributes to the overall thesis by detailing the processes and mechanisms of mediatisation with respect to the Irish traditional music of women and Traveller musicians on *The Long Note* (as well as of those who combined these groups). I detail their performances and participation on the programme. This tells us how radio practices affected access and representation for marginalised groups in Irish society of the period 1970-1994. I returned to what the answers to these questions can tell us about the mediation and mediatisation of Irish traditional and folk music in public radio in the period 1970-1994. First, Travellers experienced some inclusion and representation on *The Long Note,* but their ethnicity was mostly discreet and mostly invisible. Second, archival documents and fieldwork interviews evidence how women musicians were vastly underrepresented quantitatively and qualitatively on the programme. Lower rates of pay for women performers are indicated by the available archival sources. I suggest some reasons for the qualitatively different representation of women on the programme, related to all pathways for entry to the workplace being homosocial spaces, and relating to the supposed (un)suitability of women's voices in radio. This is significant as historical discourse suggests that women were treated equally in canon-forming broadcasting institutions of Irish

traditional music such as *The Long Note*, when the evidence presented in this chapter indicates the opposite. The lifestyles of Traveller musicians were often presented in the context of travelling musicians, where the common characteristics of professional musicians were foregrounded. I suggest that the elision of Traveller identity in these discussions was a missed opportunity to highlight how *not* "irreconcilably different" Traveller musicians were from settled musicians.

Chapter 5: Liveness in *The Long Note*

5.1 Introduction and chapter research questions

From 2002 to the early 2010s, I travelled to the United States on a regular basis from my home in Ireland to perform and teach Irish traditional music. During that time, I joined a band of two other traditional musicians and I accompanied them for some summer performances, as guest accordion player and singer. During many road-trips, we shared musical histories and experiences, and had many discussions about what constituted good tunes, songs, and performances. One of our recurring discussions concerned what made an effective tune set. (A tune set in Irish traditional music is a combination of tunes, usually of the same meter or rhythm, played one after the other without a pause.) We discussed how best to arrange tune sets in the formal, professional festival performance gig and in a more informal pub session, and what we thought were the main differences. Over the course of many informal paid and unpaid, organised and spontaneous sessions in pubs and in houses with other musicians, our makeshift band built up a bank of common tunes between us, a type of band repertoire. As time went on, we thought about this repertoire in more detail. We chopped and changed tune sets while in the middle of a pub session. We pivoted in the middle of a set as the whim took us and as we got to know each other better musically and were able to improvise a little more easily.

In the course of these experiments with tune sets, discussion often turned to the question of which ones would work best on a CD recording (this being the recording technology of choice at that time, i.e., in the pre-streaming age). We discussed how CD recordings functioned well as a musical product when tracks from them could be performed complete and live at a festival gig. We agreed that when you could introduce a performance on stage by saying "and this next set is from our most recent recording," audience members were more likely to buy the recording and any associated merchandise, leading to more income for us musicians. For the in-person festival gig performances that our makeshift band tended to get asked to play, the more up-tempo, energetic sets formed the bulk of our set-list. The tune types we thought worked best in a festival gig set list were reels (tunes in 4 4 time

signature, and the most lively in tempo), followed by hornpipes, polkas and slides, followed last by slip jigs and slow airs which provided a gentler vibe.

The tune sets we developed were usually in groups of three tunes at a time. We chose this as it was most likely to deliver a set (and later, a CD track) of between 3-4 minutes. The consensus among musicians we met at the time was that 3-4 minutes was the ideal length of an album track to attract radio play. Radio play was a primary goal of all our recording projects at the time because it was a medium which would confer the most elevated status on us as performers, we felt, and a way we could advertise our CDs to the widest possible audience. Although Napster and Myspace existed at the time, and were used and discussed by us as working musicians, we realised these platforms were mostly used by musicians in our field - not by the audiences in our field. Therefore, they didn't contribute to increasing the audiences we needed for our gigs, which in turn increased our revenue through album sales and the ability to demand higher fees in future performances. We discussed what tune sets worked best for a festival performance, for CDs, and thus for "workshopping" our performances in our informal, unrecorded, low-stakes pub session gigs which often involved other musicians. During these sessions, it occurred to me that everyday practices of musical performance (i.e. the informal, less structured session in a house, pub, or impromptu at a festival) were greatly affected by the knowledge that our music would eventually be mediated by a CD recording, a festival performance, and also by radio play. Discussions of the impact of mediation when producing a recording returned when I released a (duet) album recording in 2009 with a different musician, based again in the midwest United States. The studio engineer gave me and my co-performer strict instructions to pay close attention to the sound of our CD as played in the car before letting the studio engineer know we were happy with the sound. We gave similar attention to deciding which track to put first on the CD, as we realised that that was the one most likely to be played by radio DJs when deciding whether to play our CD on their show. Over the years, I played with many other musicians, including making CD recordings with two groups in the region. I also began to sing. For songs sung on a public stage, those with a definite metre got a better response than the unmetred songs *as Gaeilge* (in Irish) that I sang in the *sean-nós* (old style). Irish language songs were very desirable in these gigs, I was told informally by concert

promoters, agents, and festival organisers, but only to a limited extent. I understood clearly from discussions I had along the way that not all songs in the setlist should be in the Irish language. The advice was to include enough to display my fluency with the language and to give the audience a flavour of the so-called otherly sound of the language without alienating them completely. I noted to myself how this display of fluency in the Irish language increased my perceived authenticity as both a singer and an Irish musician, how my having grown up in Ireland further contributed to my perception as an Irish singer, even though at that stage I felt like a complete beginner. My school-level Irish felt not fluent enough as I was not able to have a flowing conversation. The rich poetic Irish of the song lyrics was not easy for me to understand myself, not to mind translating it for others. We were also advised to add some songs in English to the set in addition to my Irish-language songs to enable these audiences - most of whom had very little experience of the Irish language - to develop a deeper, more lasting relationship with my singing, regardless of whether they understand the language being sung or not. I felt very conflicted about this advice, as it suggested to me a hierarchy of ethnicities for the performance of Irish traditional music in the United States, i.e., that for some, Irish ethnicity held a greater value than being Irish-American. (For a thorough discussion of hierarchies of race and ethnicity in Irish traditional music in the United States, as well as of sexuality and gender, see Tes Slominski's *Trad Nation* (2020)). These discussions and my own continued performance experiences over many years spurred me to think about the impact of the process of musical mediation via CD, festival performances and other media on the everyday practices of Irish traditional musicians.

Many years later, after beginning the research for this thesis, I began to survey my conversations with musicians, listeners and producers of the programme *The Long Note* on the topic of the mediation of Irish traditional music on public radio, looking for abiding themes. Above all else, my interviewees described the show as "live." I noticed how interviewees discussed musical performances broadcast on the programme as being "live" if they were specifically performed or recorded for that programme. Up to that point, my use of the word "live" was to describe an on-stage performance of music. My interviewees excluded commercial studio recordings played on the programme from the description as live, but included recordings made by RTÉ and others, which puzzled me quite a bit.

During my conversations with stakeholders of *The Long Note*, the liveness of the show as a whole was also mentioned regularly. However, it was unanalysed and unremarked upon, as if self-evident what it meant, almost as if liveness was a natural part of the programme. I attempted to describe the concept of liveness that emerged from these conversations, but quickly ran into difficulties and contradictions. I wondered why one set of recordings was termed "live" (and deemed more favourable), and others not. The conversations sent me in many different directions. Some discussions of "live" and "liveness" by stakeholders of *The Long Note* seemed to indicate a programme broadcasting in real time, simultaneous to the time of a performance. Others implied that broadcast performances needed to have been recorded recently, preferably at a public event. Others again used live with reference to an interview with a musician. There were clearly degrees of liveness at play. A more stripped-down, in-studio performance of a commercial album, with (for example) less accompaniment was also included as a description of the liveness at use in the show. Initially I nodded in conversations, feeling as if I knew exactly what was meant by "live" only in later recollections realising I was coming up against contradictions. Upon reflection, it became clear that the accepted meanings and usage of the words "live" and "liveness" as used in *The Long Note* varied greatly depending on the user and the context. I decided to look more closely at this usage - whether consciously constructed or by accident – both in *The Long Note* as a whole and in individual performances in the programme. I asked the following questions: What exactly did a broadcaster mean when they said that *The Long Note* was "live"? Did broadcasters, performers, and listeners agree on the use of the word "live" or were differing usages in play? Why did the concept of "liveness" figure so prominently in discussions of the value of the programme? Were power and cultural capital attached to the term? And finally, what could this tell us about the mediation and mediatisation of folk and traditional music radio programmes?

In this chapter, I provide a literature review of the concept of liveness, including Auslander's (2008) discussion of acoustic instruments signifying liveness and authenticity and Turino's (2008) categorisation of musical performance into two fields of live music and two fields of recorded music. I identify how the concept of liveness was historically embedded in RTÉ programming. In section 5.4, I describe how it was interpreted, constructed, embedded, and reproduced in *The Long Note*, and in

section 5.5, I analyse this further to provide a taxonomy of the meanings of "live," "liveness," and "recorded" in the programme. I conclude by discussing the significance of this for the concepts of mediation and mediatisation of Irish traditional music in Irish public radio.

5.2 Literature review of "liveness"

With music a significant proportion of radio content worldwide and liveness a "defining feature" of radio (Chignell 2009, 87), the discussion of liveness and recording in music comes to the fore primarily in the context of radio music. But what exactly is meant by "live," "and "liveness"? The lexical database Wordnet suggests twelve different adjective and adverb synonyms of the adjective "live": (adjectives) unrecorded, exerting force or containing energy, possessing life, highly reverberant, charged with an explosive, elastic; rebounds readily, abounding with life and energy, in current use or ready for use, of current relevance, charged or energised with electricity, capable of erupting, and (as an adverb) not recorded (Fellbaum 1998). The one synonym Wordnet provides for the noun liveness - "having the property of being animated; having animal life as distinguished from plant life" (Fellbaum 1998) - incorporates several of the meanings above suggested by the word "live." The description of liveness as "actually being performed at the time of hearing or viewing," like "unfilmed, or untaped" (Felbaum 1998) best encapsulates the most common meaning in use across media and radio studies. Radio studies has, as a whole, no agreed conceptual framework (Chignell 2009, 2), yet Paddy Scannell's description of the adjective "live" has become prominent, signifying something having a "sense of existing in real time - the time of the programme corresponding to the time of its reception" (1991, 1), where an artist performs a piece of music and the audience on the other side of the radio hears it almost simultaneously. However, as my interviewees made clear to me, many more diverse understandings of the concept of liveness exist than are encapsulated by this definition. The following section of this thesis surveys the main literature discussing liveness in the fields of media studies, radio studies, and ethnomusicology, after which I will describe the historical

presence of liveness on early RTÉ, before analysing how liveness was conceptualised and constructed in RTÉ's *The Long Note*.

As stated above, insistence on liveness is a recognised feature of radio talk historically and internationally (Chignell 2009, 11). However, there exist few detailed analyses of liveness in radio music or liveness in folk and traditional music. Here I introduce some key writers on the broader subjects of liveness in radio music (Chignell, Crisell, Auslander, Sanden, van Es, Draisey-Collishaw, and Smulyan), before focussing on Thomas Turino's writing on the subject of liveness in folk and traditional music on the radio.

In television, as Karin van Es explains, programming that was simultaneously broadcast was "fairly expensive, hard to monetize and less flexible in comparison to recorded programming" and so became less frequently used (van Es 2017, 1246). Across radio media, whenever claims to real-time, simultaneous broadcasts are made, delays of some type are always present, technologically or socially, e.g., a 10-second delay to offset the risk of profanity. This type of broadcast was sometimes called "near real time" (Sørensen 2016, 97 fn1). In contemporary times, with the recent explosion of global activity in podcasting and the academic study of podcasts with a type of "time-shifted" sound (Markman 2015, 240), radio has become quite separated from its original requirement to appear as "live". Despite its potential redundancy, however, Scannell's description of "live" as indicating a real-time, simultaneous broadcast persists (van Es 2017, 1246).

Chignell describes liveness as "the quality of most radio output that conveys a sense of being live, whether or not it actually is." (Chignell 2009, 87), and as one of radio's greatest strengths – complimenting its ordinariness, its immediacy, and its contribution to a sense of co-presence. Writing for a general audience of media scholars, Andrew Crisell notes that the study of liveness and recording has significant implications for both the study of radio and music:

> [T]he relationship between liveness and recording in music poses some interesting questions. These are not only about music – notably, What constitutes musicianship? – but about radio: What kind of medium is it and what does it exist to do? (Crisell 2012, 32).

Crisell places the concept of liveness as central to the history of critique in radio, yet his definition of liveness is mostly limited to the idea of music not being recorded:

> Since much radio output consists of little else, music and radio seem to be made for each other. Yet because the essence of music is sound and radio is a sound-only medium, the mediation of the latter is at its least detectable, and the relationship has teased critics. Until it was captured on recordings music could never be other than live – and recording technology arrived just before the advent of radio. Yet radio's own value lay partly in its liveness. Should it therefore aim to relay the live performance of music to unprecedented multitudes or, less originally, to relay music that another technology had captured? In the end the medium did both, though ultimately economic pressures have meant that it is now almost wholly reliant on music that is recorded (Crisell 2009, 7).

Here, Crisell presents the options open to radio personnel as limited to "relaying" music (whether "live" or "recorded.") This is a somewhat passive description of the process of radio music programming in comparison with that discussed in this thesis. Both cases Crisell presents – the simultaneous broadcasting of music as performed and the broadcasting of pre-recorded music – are described as if the medium of radio presentation had not been a consideration in music's rehearsal and performance, i.e. not accounting for the presence of mediatisation. Crisell's description also suggests that radio personnel were passive actors in both these types of broadcasts, merely boosting the performance signal of performances which would have taken place regardless of the presence of a radio broadcast. In other words, Crisell's wording describes radio as neither changing nor forming the music relayed, and his wording does not allow for the effect that these live performances have on the radio and their programming themselves. What Crisell also fails to discuss is the many different forms of music represented on radio and the different styles of broadcasting surrounding their broadcast. As this chapter will demonstrate, "liveness" in radio music was determined by more varied factors than that identified by Crisell, i.e., whether or not another recording technology was already involved in "capturing" the music, as he describes.

The related idea of co-presence – a concept which is variously defined by the feeling of "being with" a broadcaster, or "the shared experience of radio listening" (Chignell 2009, 74) has also emerged as an area of focus for radio studies scholars in recent years. This co-presence contributes to the creation, based on the writings of Benedict Anderson (1983) and Paddy Scannell (1991), of an imagined community of listeners who do not know each other, but who feel as though they have something in common. Co-presence and liveness are also closely related to intimacy, sincerity (Scannell 2009), immediacy, and generally to themes of time. Liveness differs from immediacy in

academic discourse, as Scannell advises. However, in the rhetoric of the radio industry, liveness and immediacy are often used interchangeable concepts. Finally, the perception of radio as being inherently ephemeral, i.e. existing only for fleeting moments of time, before often disappearing to no trave behind it, is also closely connected with the concept of liveness.

In music literature beyond radio studies, liveness is often connected to the idea of authenticity, for example as in Philip Auslander's (1998) discussion of rock music in the MTV *Unplugged* series. Auslander states that conceptualisations of liveness are central to performance in a mediated culture, and must be examined, "not as a global, undifferentiated phenomenon, but within specific cultural and social contexts" (1999, 3). Liveness is sometimes constructed in a musical context, he states, to add to the perception of authenticity of the music performed (1999, 76), with live performance and acoustic instruments functioning as "signs of the real" within this discourse (1999, 98).

Like Auslander, Sanden agrees that liveness is sometimes constructed in a musical context to add to the perception of authenticity of music. He emphasises how liveness varies with regards to its specific context, and identifies human presence as a central element in it:

> Liveness is not a fixed ontological state that exists in the absence of electronic mediation, but rather a dynamically performed assertion of human presence within a technological network of communication…. [It] is a rather fluid concept, contingent upon historical context, cultural tradition, implicated technologies, and various other factors for its exact articulation" (Sanden 2013, 17).

Significant amounts of mediation, he states, are permitted within conceptions of liveness, and different meanings of liveness exist for different musickers at different times and places as well as in different musical contexts. In the same vein, van Es conceptualises "constellations of liveness" (van Es 2017, 1249) to draw attention to the range of factors involved in the composition of liveness, and describes liveness as a puzzle. Following this approach encouraged me to draw from as wide a context as possible to analyse liveness in *The Long Note* in this chapter's analysis of liveness in folk and traditional radio music, and not just the construction of liveness in the programme by broadcasting personnel. As van Es notes, liveness needs the agreement of all stakeholders, not just media institutions, to exist and "is more than just a matter of technical performance." Van Es groups the extant understandings of the live in media studies into three models: ontological, phenomenological

and rhetorical, roughly equating to “a property of technology, an audience affect or an industry discourse” (van Es 2017, 1246), and argues that each approach provides “only a single piece of a much larger puzzle” (van Es 2017, 1246). Furthermore, human involvement is necessary for an event or broadcast to be considered as live (van Es 2017, 1249): “What understandings of the live in rhetorical terms share, is that they overemphasize the power of institutions in shaping it. Media institutions are not free to label just anything as live” (van Es, 1247-9). Like Sanden then, van Es similarly outlines the requirements for human presence.

Rebecca Draisey-Collishaw’s exploration of the politics of aesthetics in Canadian radio music programme *Fuse*, broadcasting in the mid 2000s, begins by defining liveness again primarily as a temporal description, but also suggests it to be something signifying a lack of mediation. Draisey-Collishaw notes that the existence of “liveness” in the programme *Fuse* is indexed by the live-in-studio audience, “[w]ith considerable consistency…through its audible physical co-presence with performers and potential (rarely realized) to interact with musicians” (2017, 299). Liveness here also signifies energy and something unplanned, e.g., “[S]maller budget fusion programming projects may have focused on the liveness and energy of impromptu encounter…” (2017, 187) and “programming built around liveness, conversation, and off-the-cuff music making” (2017, 196). Draisey-Collishaw suggests that “edited” in this context is equivalent to “polished”, and dichotomous to “extemporaneous process” and “liveness” (2017, 199). Though “[l]iveness was an essential part of the production aesthetic*”* (2017, 235), the programme was “never broadcast live” (2017, 235). i.e., never in a real-time simultaneous process. It was broadcast “as live,” but the feeling of liveness is provided by the presence of the audience, not by dint of its being presented as if a real-time simultaneous broadcast.

Clearly, concepts of liveness impacted on the production of radio music broadcasting in many different contexts and countries. The available resources, funding, and ideologies of local broadcasters and institutions influenced the mediation of music in different ways at any one time, and each music broadcaster operated within the limits of its own national, cultural, geographical, and technological context. In India, real-time simultaneous broadcasts of public performances from outside a radio studio began in 1952. Lelyveld explains their significance here:

> All-India Radio did not have the technical resources to broadcast outside padded studios, so every performance produced for radio, at least until 1952, was a live and unique event. But no attempt was made to broadcast in the presence of an audience, aside from the necessary station personnel (Lelyveld 1994, 116).

Interestingly, in this example events were described as live without the necessity for human presence mentioned by the other writers above. The location of the nine radio studios of All India Radio also impacted on the accessibility of broadcasting opportunities for musicians:

> The location of the nine stations determined in large measure the nature of the people called to the microphone. The fact, for example, that one of those cities was Lucknow rather than Allahabad (though Kirke had proposed the latter) skewed the broadcasting to Urdu and Muslim musicians, rather than Hindi and Hindu ones. (Lelyveld 1994, 116-117)

Similar questions of geographical bias dogged RTÉ in its first decades (see Gubbins 2016). As in RTÉ, the requirement for performers on All India Radio to broadcast from a studio impacted on its ability to provide equal representation (in a geographical sense) across the country.

In the USA, liveness was also a pervasive presence in radio music , though again in inconsistent ways and meanings. Richard Peterson describes how the earliest rock music radio programmes playing phonograph records in the US were broadcast by local stations simulating live performances via their styles of introduction, song sequencing and by “pseudo-interviews with band leaders” (Peterson 1990, 104). There was no simultaneous performance, but human presence replaced this. In Susan Smulyan’s examination of Hawaiian radio music programme *Hawaii calls* broadcasting “live” (in real-time simultaneous broadcasts) to mainland USA, she connects the presence of simultaneous real-time broadcasts to the construction of authenticity on the programme: “The FDR Hawaiian radio tribute demonstrated an interest in Hawaiian music; a technological sophistication that allowed live broadcasting from Hawaii and a use of that liveness to provide authenticity… Listeners wanted to hear real Hawaiian music played by real Hawaiians” (Smulyan 2007, 66). As van Es summarises:

> Scholarly writings reflecting on the live...assume that there is a simple and rather obvious definition of liveness, namely that it concerns the simultaneity that links the production, transmission and reception of an event. However, this once again reduces the live to a technical performance. I would counter here that any ‘original meaning’ of the live is a fable. For, always a construction, the live has never not been social (van Es 2017, 1248).

In summary, the literature provides examples of the types of "real time" or "near real time" broadcasts with either simultaneous or near simultaneous broadcasts, or the presence of a studio audience, as discussed above. These broadcasts never featured in *The Long Note*, and, according to interviewees, they were never attempted. In the surviving documents of *The Long Note*, the only references to a live audience occur in the context of "field recordings" (often described as "inserts" by RTÉ personnel), which referred to recordings made outside the main Dublin studio. Neither were these simultaneous or "as live" recordings apparent in the archival material relating to the workings of the programme either; there were no references to either. The framed liveness of *The Long Note* which I will describe in section 5.3 and 5.4 was not that of radio show *Fuse* or the other programmes referenced here. In *The Long Note,* the action of the show is not framed as happening "today" at the point of broadcast of the show and there was seldom any suggestion of this. One rare exception was presented by Glackin on Christmas Eve of 1975, where the pre-recorded programme was presented "as live." Several obvious inconsistencies in the programme's format, rough cuts where the leave-taking of one performer was quickly and unrealistically interrupted by the arrival into studio of another clearly indicated to any half-attentive listener that this was clearly not "live" as the presenter claimed, but a thinly-edited attempt at an "as-live" programme pre-recorded in the ritual of many Christmas-period programmes of the time. In this example, *The Long Note* accessed many new listeners due to it being part of the Christmas schedule, a period of greatly increased radio listenership. Apart from that one example, for all of *The Long Note* programmes, their pre-recorded status was never presented as being simultaneous broadcast. As Bradshaw states of this genre of "as-live" radio programmes in RTÉ, "some people pretend it's live [laughs] and it isn't obviously." (Bradshaw 2019) A slight but important distinction existed during this production process; the presenters stated that they pretended to themselves when recording the show that it *was* live (in the sense of being simultaneous, real-time broadcasting), for various reasons, including to facilitate an expedient recording process. "No, it was never live, but you had to do it as if it was live," presenter Máire O'Keeffe explained of her work with producer Bradshaw (O'Keeffe 2019). Feuer similarly notes how "the ideological connotations of the live" (Feuer 1983, 16 quoted in van Es 2017, 1248) in television can retain a programme's "sense of flow and unity" (Feuer

1983, 16 quoted in van Es 2017, 1248) despite the presence of editing practices that disrupt temporal continuity. This application of liveness and "the live" functioned very differently to the construction liveness discussed earlier in the broadcasts of *Fuse, Hawaii Calls,* and *All India Radio*. As Draisey-Collishaw describes of *Fuse*, live studio audiences and radio listening audiences are consistently described as "distinct entities" (2017, 300) with the live studio audience often acknowledged at the ends of episodes for their contribution to active listening, or "the audience-oriented equivalent of 'jamming'" (300). Draisey-Collishaw describes heavily produced liveness of *Fuse* functioned in many ways to mask the mediating presence of the broadcaster (Draisey-Collishaw 2017, 426).

Following Sanden's work, I wondered whether the concept of liveness in this programme was active in the creation of music's meaning at an aesthetic level – and in this context I wondered if the programme's construction of liveness contributed to the constitution of these broadcasts as authentic performances. As may be now apparent, the meanings of live and liveness are intertwined both within and beyond the fields of music and radio studies, with little consensus on their meanings.

In the field of ethnomusicology, Thomas Turino (2008) takes a much different approach to the analysis of liveness in music. He harnesses Bourdieu's concept of social fields to define four fields of musical performance distinguishing between real time musical performances (participatory and presentational) and recorded performances (high fidelity and studio audio art), and includes simultaneous, real time performances in the participatory and presentational fields. In the high fidelity field, he categorises "the making of recordings that are intended to index or be iconic of live performance" (Turino, 2008: 26). Being iconic of live performance, Turino explains, means that it resembles live performance. By indexing live performance, Turino refers to something that people usually see or experience at the same time as they see or experience live performance, and so they associate it with that. Turino's description of high fidelity music covers almost comprehensively the recordings made by the *Long Note* for their programmes:

> High fidelity recordings (both audio and video) involve an ideology of dicent representation of live performance at some level – dicent in that live performance is believed to have affected the signs of liveness in the recording in some way. The ideal form of high fidelity music involves the actual recording of live performances in a ceremony or concert to be heard/seen at a later time as a representation of that event. 'Live concert' albums and videos and 'ethnographic' field recordings and films released by institutions like the Smithsonian are of this type. In

> addition, studio recordings that are meant to represent what an ensemble actually does, or could ideally do, on stage or in a ceremony are included in the high fidelity field (Turino 2008, 67).

Turino further explains that: "while high fidelity recordings are connected to live performance in a variety of ways, special recording techniques and practices are necessary to make this connection evident in the sound of the recording" (26 - 27). Turino gives many examples of how this is done (66 - 78), but the two main differences between live performances and a high fidelity recording in his view were that for the recordings, (a) there was no audience present, and (b) the frame for listening to recordings was different from the frame for attending and listening to a live event, as he explains here:

> Continuing developments in recording and playback technologies have led consumers to expect higher quality and clarity of sound… Moreover, the sound presented has to stand up to repeated listenings; this fact requires a different type of detailed attention to the sound presented and influences the selection, mixing and editing processes, as well as the processes of playing music in a studio, in fundamental ways (Turino 2008, 70).

This is where the high fidelity ('live') recordings produced for RTÉ Radio differ from Turino's high fidelity commercial recordings : *The Long Note*'s recordings were not designed to stand up to repeated listening. They were produced with the knowledge that they might be broadcast only once or twice. aptly highlight the biggest practical, ethical, and ideological challenges experienced by the *Long Note* producers: how to broadcast a programme to listeners expecting standards of high fidelity recording when the context was that of participatory music (e.g. from a regular local session), and presentational music (e.g. from a public concert). The ephemerality of radio enters the equation here.

Anje Molle Lindelof explains how in Denmark, the amount of records played on radio overtook the amount of music performed either live or specifically for the Danish public radio station (Danmarks Radio, DR) in 1963 with the opening of a third radio channel, though after that time, "live music remains an important part of DR's programming policy, as does the discourse around the value of live music" (Michelsen et al, 2018, 244). Lindelof continues to discuss the impact of changing characteristics and understandings of live music on the radio:

> Just as the instability of the understanding of "live" has been debated in scholarly discussions responding to Auslander…, the idea of rebranding the RUO as especially live from as early as the mid 1970s suggests how the idea of liveness, as something related to the sociability of the event… is not only a theoretical idea but… an ideal that becomes central to the practice of the orchestra (254).

Turino provides examples of how producers dealt with the blurring of fields, including the construction and deletion of signs of liveness (like Auslander's "signs of the real") in the studio:

> While the presentation of ethnographic field recordings often involves editing out some of the 'liveness' (overly loud instruments, talking, awkward moments, long performances), studio sound manipulation often involves effort to create signs of liveness. The ideology underpinning high fidelity recordings is that what you hear on records has been or could be performed live. In the early days of recording this was important because all 'real' music was still tied to the idea of live performance (Turino 2008, 70).

Similarly, describing how liveness was created in studio, Turino states that:

> Achieving what is perceived as a live sound in the studio involves a good deal of technological intervention… Recording in a studio is a different field of music making from live performance… The lack of visuals and aura of the musicians' presence, which create excitement and interest onstage, must be made up for through sound quality alone to end up with a satisfying product" (Turino 2008, 71).

Turino acknowledges the significance of cultural diversity to approaches to the construction of liveness, stating that "the ideological importance of, and approaches to, representing liveness will vary according to different genre frames, social contexts, and bands" (Turino 2008, 75). In Louise Meintjes's discussion of the construction of liveness in the studio, she connects it directly to the construction of authenticity, referring to discourses of the natural and the artistic that are to the fore in discourses surrounding *The Long Note*:

> Liveness is an illusion of sounding live that is constructed through technological intervention in the studio and mediated symbolically… through discourses about the natural and the artistic. To sound authentically African is to sound live. This is an ideological position sustained by the promotional engine of the music industry, and it is kept alive by African and non-African South Africans in the studio" (Meintjes, 2003:112).

The term "liveness" figured prominently in *Long Note* discourse with performers, broadcasters, listeners, programme reviewers about what made the programme so noteworthy. In the context of *The Long Note,* the discourse that it sounded "live" was sustained by mention in journalistic articles, interviewees, listeners, and broadcasting personnel. Sections 5.4 and 5.5 of this chapter will identify the sources of liveness in *The Long Note* and present a taxonomical analysis of their meaning and value in the context of the programme. But first, section 5.3 will present some historical context

relevant to the presence of liveness in programme production in RTÉ and an awareness of it in the RTÉ listenership.

5.3 The historical precedent of liveness in RÉ

Historically in folk and traditional music programming in RTÉ, recordings made by broadcasters outside the radio studios - usually called "actuality" or "field recordings" - were used to tell stories of tradition and authenticity - identifying it, explaining it, promoting it to their listeners. Making "field recordings" was an integral part of Irish radio practice, originating in 1947 with the Mobile Recording Unit (a van that travelled around the country of Ireland recording Irish traditional music and song). These recordings were discussed in the mid-twentieth century as examples of the most authentic music from that era. In his programmes, Ciarán Mac Mathúna focussed on recording who he described as "real people." The MRU recorded 'life as it really was,' as broadcasters stated. For more on the Mobile Recording Unit, see Gubbins 2016). Because of this, its broadcasts were assigned value in many ways over in-studio live performances and again over pre-recorded, more heavily edited commercial studio recordings. This set a historical precedent in RTÉ for field recordings comprising "signs of the real" that would mediate well over the radio.

Particular moments in the history of Irish traditional music on the radio illustrate the power of radio broadcasting and the willingness of its creators to shape taste and influence opinions. The following conversation involves Ciarán Mac Mathúna's complaint that he prefers set dancing to Céilí dancing, even with the lower class 'garrison town' origins of set dancing, and complains that the argument of the 'garrison town ' is used too often to explain things or to explain them away:

> For that matter, if history were to be the criterion of tradition, I wonder how many of our 'approved' ceili dances would stand the test. I don't care where sets came from; they are now part and parcel of a very live and very virile rural tradition, and they go hand in hand with our best traditional music…" (Mac Mathúna, "Trad scene," RTÉ Guide, vol 2, no. 65, n.d.).

Mac Mathúna's conversation is an example of how concentrated activity in a musical genre or location could be discursively framed as "lively," "live," "virile," and thus legitimate. Mac Mathúna thus used

the cultural and social power he held in his position as a broadcaster to bestow legitimacy on otherwise transgressive musical performances.

Through the work of Mac Réamoinn and Ennis initially with the MRU and later Ciarán Mac Mathúna, RTÉ Radio established itself as a place where the imprimatur of authenticity could also be bestowed, and where the boundaries of authenticity and the definition of "traditional" were to be decided. By the time *The Long Note* came into existence, there was a strong association in the station between field recordings of performances of folk and traditional music recorded particularly for the broadcaster RTÉ and the idea of authenticity. The ideology behind these recording visits began as one of preservation following the Irish Folklore Commission. The personnel of the MRU faced the twin challenges of preservation and entertainment, having to carefully balance the outward-facing internationalisation of the public broadcasting service and the demands of a nascent post-colonial civil service.

At the same time as the MRU was developing in the mid- to late-twentieth century, there was also a moral impetus in international radio behind the choice to broadcast live, as if it was a more truthful telling of current events (Chignell 2009). Debates about definitions and ideals of public service broadcasters came to the fore here. In MRU terms, “actuality” could be substituted for “liveness.” By the time *The Long Note* began in RTÉ, the meaning of liveness in RTÉ became broader and was associated with a broader range of functions. It also applied in more focussed, specific ways to the music being mediated*.* The practice of diversifying liveness to include studio recordings and other features and using it as a signature method of mediating traditional music in the station was taken up by Tony MacMahon and others in the time of *The Long Not*e.

5.4 The construction of liveness in *The Long Note*

In the next section of this chapter, I analyse in more detail the discourse of liveness that surrounded the production of *The Long Note.* I describe in more detail the ways in which Irish traditional music was recorded for radio, how it bore some similarities and differences to those methods described by Turino

and the others mentioned in the literature review, identifying six characteristics that were described as "live" by broadcasters, performers, listeners and other stakeholders of the programme, before categorising these in a taxonomy presented in section 5.5 of this chapter. In some respects, these categories merge, but their basic characteristics differ enough to fruitfully separate them here. As I gained access to the detailed radio logs of the programme in 1977 and 1978 (see Appendix B), I make detailed reference to those years for these discussions.

5.4.1 Breadth and Depth of Representation

My interviewees sometimes discussed the difficulty of getting good performances from their musicians for the programme, especially in unfamiliar and stressful environments like the radio studio. Producer Tony MacMahon, however, was fêted by many as having a particular ability to get good recordings - especially those from musicians previously unrecorded who would not have been used to a microphone. Listener and *Long Note* performer Parsons states that the field recordings made by *The Long Note* had a huge impact on her as a listener and musician.

> As a general listener I would say the *Long Note* would have had a huge impact, in that I heard other people who were making CDs. You see, people didn't make CDs. CDs weren't invented. People didn't make... so it would have been a live thing, and Tony was a great example of that because he would have had recordings, or he would have gone to the bother of making recordings. (Parsons 2019).

Note how the act of recording material specifically for the programme qualified its description as "a live thing."

That "the tradition" was diverse and different in each county, place, region, instrument and style was one of the drivers behind the impulse to record "live" material from every county. MacMahon focussed on including musicians who were previously unrecorded or even forgotten about in some way; he was keen to broaden the representation of the community of traditional musicians on the public airwaves. This was one of the drivers behind the impulse to record musicians from every county, as "the tradition" was considered to be diverse, different in each county, place, region, instrument, style. This perhaps suggests why wide, informed representation of musicians from around the country was accepted as necessary and why this wide coverage contrasted so much with RTÉ's

treatment of rock music and classical music. Political representatives also involved themselves in commentary on the superiority of broadcasts of in-studio or field performances (i.e., "RTÉ Tapes") over the use of commercial recordings. The stated reasons for this recommendation were to improve the accessibility of the airwaves to new, breakthrough artists without access to the sphere of commercial recording and airplay. The Broadcasting Review Committee, reporting in 1974, stated that:

> The Committee feels that broadcasting has a responsibility to try to guard against the too frequent employment of established, to the neglect of new, performers and against allocating an undue proportion of transmission time to commercial recordings.

This statement highlights the primacy awarded to field recordings in public service broadcasting in Ireland. With this statement, the committee deemed field recordings to be beneficial for its citizens and the musical environment of the state as a whole, and as part of the responsibilities of the state's broadcasting institution. A part of the task of being representative of the country as a whole included making a recording studio a welcoming space for traditional musicians, who at that time usually had no commercial recording experience. The process of conducting a radio recording of a musician, continuing the history of preservation which had become so associated with RTÉ via the MRU up to 1970, came to be conceived of as a particular skill within the industry of Irish traditional music broadcasting. For example, *Long Note* producer Tony MacMahon garnered the reputation of being able to utilise his wide musical network, developed over his lifetime, to convince reclusive musicians to come onto the show. In addition to this, he applied his broadcasting skills to help them give their best in a recording for the show. That the skill of making a good live recording became a necessity in the toolbox of a professional broadcaster of Irish traditional music demonstrates the significance of recording skills in the broadcast process in this period.

The Long Note personnel received numerous recommendations and requests to include particular musicians in the show, for example in the following excerpt from a letter from piper and CCÉ founder Willie Reynolds:

> Dear Harry [Bradshaw], Hope you are well also Robbie [Hannan, the *Long Note* presenter of that time]. We had nobody from RTÉ the other night 9th Dec. Five members of the old Ceili Band

> turned up and played to entertain the large crowd present. I have heard that conditions for travelling on Dublin were bad. Which would explain the reason for RTÉ not turning up. You know Ciaran Mac Mathuna told me at Brendan Breathnachs funeral that RTÉ would be there. Anyhow I mentioned in my last letter about commemorating Kit Kelly and Mike Keena in a future Long Note programme. I went down to see Mrs Byrne, a niece of Kit Kelly's, last week. She has plenty of recordings of it recorded on a reel to reel machine also her father Bernard Gannon accordion. Unfortunately she has no recording of Mike Keena. However there is hope of Pat Greene from Ballinalee having a recording of Mike Keena and possibly one of the two playing together which would be ideal. He also has recordings of Kilmurray a brother of Mick's. He was a great tin whistle player. I do hope Harry you will give the matter your attention. (Bradshaw Collection, box 26, folder 5, letter date: 11/12/85).

Such letters highlight the pressure broadcasters were under to represent the traditional music community as widely as possible. This drive for representation stretched to including the underrepresented groups like Irish Travellers and people from underrepresented geographical areas like the West of Ireland, but not as much, it seems from archive notes, to women. The preference for live suggests the necessity for involvement by radio programme personnel, and thus suggests a reason for the lack of women. Most of *The Long Note* personnel were men, until Tríona Ní Dhomhnaill presented briefly in the late 1970s and later on, Mairéad Ní Dhomhnaill and O'Keeffe presented in the late 1980s and early 1990s). The presence of a man in the context of 1970s Ireland already made the involvement of women performers much less likely (see Chapter 4). However, the ratio of women to men on album recordings of this time was also low. In this case, the requirement to be in some way "live" prompted the presence of a man, but did not overly contribute to the disproportionately large presence of men in the resultant programme recording.

5.4.2 Human presence

One of the ways in which *The Long Note* producer Harry Bradshaw enabled the shows' listeners to relate to the performing musicians was by including interviews. In this way, the image of a real person - a personality - was added to the music. Bradshaw explains the impact of this as follows:

> I always felt that until you've heard that person speak that character was never filled for the listener. You can see how they are and most traditional musicians were and are very good speakers… You could formulate a picture of a person. [It's] much more difficult to do if you didn't hear them speak…you had no idea who the person was...

He explains how much easier this is to achieve on radio than on television:

> Most musicians I've seen on television programmes are petrified...they won't look the camera in the eye. Television is like a radio studio times twenty... It's daunting for

> the musicians...To get a person relaxed, you get them in their own kitchen - 'tell us about your early music' - and they reminisce about their parents and their neighbours and hearing things on record… That didn't happen on television then. No... because it's like 'you're on' like a rabbit caught in the glare of lights…

To add a section where the musician spoke was easy to achieve in a recording made particularly for that programme as so many recordings played on *The Long Note* were. It was not a possibility when using commercial recordings unless the musician was drafted into the studio for a special visit, involving extra work and expense on everyone's part, even with the greater flexibility of time involved in the production of radio material compared to television programming.

As Bradshaw explains, including interviews and the spoken word of performing musicians alongside the music played was a critical component of the standard of programme, evidencing van Es's statement about the sociality inherent to liveness (van Es 2017, 1247). Additionally, as Crisell argues, liveness fulfils the desire for co-presence, a craving for human contact as it provides co-presence in time (Crisell 2012, 15). However, as Chignell states (2009, 9), in live radio, talk is spontaneous and has immediacy and this is what makes it live. But in *The Long Note*, there was not a huge amount of spontaneity in the talk, except in an "as-live" Christmas Day programme in 1978 referenced in section 5.2 which was presented as if to come across as spontaneous. Contrary to what Chignell stated, there were no "umms, ahhs" and no unscripted speech in *The Long Note*.

As *Long Note* producer Jackie Small describes, the community of participants in *The Long Note* was made up of those "seriously interested" in the Irish musical tradition. However, via the social practices surrounding the programme, its personnel invested heavily in authenticating and maintaining the social network of the programme: by being present in person on the scene - i.e., at high profile festivals and concerts in Dublin and around the country, and by engaging with the listeners of the show in person and via letters. One of the ways in which personnel met listeners was via letters, many of which were replied to by producers and presenters. Media scholars Horton & Wohl speak of audience responses as unhealthy because they are one-way (para-social) and not real exchanges: "[Mass media] give the illusion of face-to-face relationship . . . In time, the devotee – the "fan" – comes to believe that he "knows" the persona more intimately and profoundly than others do" (Horton & Wohl 1956, 216 quoted in Duffett 2013, 88-89). Bradshaw's dedication to replying to many of the listener letters he

received demonstrates how he perceived the network of relationships established by the programme as meaningful, not as one-way, para-social relationships (Horton and Wohl, 1956) and his responses to them made this so. The letters he received are filled with disclosures of private issues, for example health issues of a personal nature, as in the following example from MF to Bradshaw on 2nd June 1984: "Excuse the mess, it is the best I can do for now, with one eye" (Bradshaw Collection, box 25/1-10). One letter from listener PM includes a poem, "The Last Long Note," written for his deceased uncle who had been a fan of the programme (Bradshaw Collection, December 1983). Other letters throughout the same collection include similar details. Bradshaw's letter replies moved the letters from the realm of anonymous unidirectional fan mail to more meaningful exchanges. Presenters of the show referenced these letters on air as well as demonstrating the sincerity of their wishes to respond to them:

> And now our regular apologia for slowness in dealing with your correspondence, but a general word of thanks for interesting points raised by Mrs. Eileen Murphy of Cork, Michael Kerry of Beaumont, Mrs. Rose Brennan of Crosserlough, and Smokey Joe of no fixed address. One point that arises is that we unfortunately cannot lay on facilities for taping items or extracts from the programme. Sorry about that. (2nd August. ITMA, catalogue number: 1540-RTE-WAV.)

The harsh reality of the demands on time and resources placed on *The Long Note* broadcasters by the constant receipt of these letters was hinted at in Meek's matter of fact statement of the difficulty of replying to the many requests for copies of the performances. The demand for copies of performance was to be an ongoing issue.

5.4.3 Co-presence

The manner in which presenters spoke on the show contributed further aspects to the liveness of the show, as presenter Máire O'Keeffe describes:

> Generally Harry would say, 'We'll do it as a live programme,' but it's not live, obviously…. And he'd work the script. His craft really was looking at my script and changing it so that it sounded like I was just off the cuff, that I wasn't reading it. He was very strong on that. So …. You'd *write* something like... 'Michael Coleman then said that….he would go to the shop.' He said, 'You wouldn't say that, you'd say "Michael Coleman said he'd go to the shop."'... He was just so on the ball and made it sound like it was live ...It kind of felt...that you were nearly there in the room with them. There was a kind of a presence that Harry managed to ...construct, to craft… I think that was important, because that kept people engaged, because it felt like you were talking only to them. (O'Keeffe 2019)

A feeling of co-presence was signified by the personnel involved in *The Long Note* in various ways. As Chignell states of co-presence, it is:

> [A] defining characteristic and vital ingredient in the success of [radio] and therefore one which is often actively fostered. This is particularly true of music radio. Traditionally, DJs have built not only 'intimacy at a distance' but also a sense of shared identity and experience in their audience. It is… in the interests of the DJ to bind the audience together and to him/her to keep them listening on a regular basis. Here…we see the interrelationship between intimacy, liveness and co-presence. (Chignell 2009, 76)

It is exactly this conscious binding together of the audience, its co-presence, that is audible in the following example of a *Long Note* programme from 1975. *The Long Note* reported regularly on current musical and cultural events and engaged with its audience members. The programme from 26th May 1975, a year into the programme's life, provides a taste of its style and format, also demonstrating how the presenter Ó Domhnaill worked temporal considerations of radio into his programme scripts, emphasising its immediacy and emphemerality, key components of liveness. In the following clip, Ó Domhnaill introduces current musical and cultural events coming up in the next few days after the broadcast, emphasising the time of broadcast and requesting that listeners spread news of the time-change to other potential listeners.

> Well tonight we've a half hour's music for you that's very varied and a lot of it you won't have heard before. We've a poem and a song written by Jimmy Simmons - a man deeply concerned by the Troubles in his native Ulster. We've an unusual and very beautiful version of a well-known ballad and we'll be telling you about some interesting events coming up over the next few days. Before I go any further though, from next Monday night, the *Long Note* can be heard at 7 o'clock - just after the news. So, if you could tell any of our listeners who may not be with us tonight about that, it'd be great. But we'll start off this evening where we left off last week with the fiddle player Tommy Peoples, and some tunes he's only taken to playing in recent times. They're called McCahill's reels.[32]

Tommy Peoples later recorded McCahill's reel on his album with Paul Brady on Shanachie Records (Alan Ng 2021, #3900). As documented by listener letters in ITMA, the show held a fixed appointment in the calendars of many musicians at the time, and Ó Domhnaill's request reinforced this point, reminding listeners to think of the others also participating in this listening event. The sociability

[32] See Section 1.2 and Chapter 3 for further discussion of the Troubles - a violent sectarian conflict based mostly on the island of Ireland - spanning 30 years.

and co-presence of the audience as constructed by the programme was reinforced by the above request for listeners to spread information to other listeners.

The importance of *The Long Note* as forming part of the weekly routine of its listeners was mentioned by many participants, and this was emphasised by presenters in many ways: for example, presenter Ó Domhnaill's drawing attention to the weather at wintertime on the crofts of Scotland; Bill Meek's reading out of the actual times and dates of Chieftains gigs during the upcoming week. This provision by *The Long Note* of times and dates emphasised both the immediacy of the show and its relevance to current events as a cultural node for listeners, as well as marking the importance of its broadcast slot. In this way, a recording of the show was rendered not reusable nor repeatable as is, but rather ephemeral. Any future broadcasts after that particular timeslot would need to be edited or contextualised to make sense.

The broadcasting of field recordings and in-studio recordings were not necessarily always higher in status or prestige than commercial records. It is clear from interviews with broadcasters and listeners of *The Long Not*e that the presentation of recently released recordings alongside critique of said recordings also contributed much to its importance as a programme in their minds. The presentation of critique of these records was also remarked upon, as something which was a subject of much discussion by listeners, a reason for musicians to listen in, and a source of stress and - in some cases - regret for presenters. (The subject of critique is explored in greater detail in chapter 6 of this thesis.)

The weekly rhythms that *The Long Note* sustained began with the show's broadcast on a Monday night. As multiple interviewees described, "everybody" listened to the show "religiously" (Ní Mhaonaigh 2021) and then talked about it in Capel Street or Hughes's pub afterwards. Goan describes these conversations as the "watercooler moments" of that era, where everyone in the pub congregated to discuss what had happened on the show the previous night or weekend (Goan 2019). The programme filled a regular place in listeners' weekly calendar, described by Scannell as a "stable temporal framework" (Scannell 1996, 155). This also recalls David Hendy's statement that "time…and

the familiarity engendered over time, is one of the foundations upon which radio's intimacy is built. And not just its intimacy, but its sociability too' (Hendy 2013, 184).

5.4.4 Scene facilitation and creation of cultural node

As Pine has pointed out, radio has been a significant venue for live performance in Ireland (2005). Pine has described Radio Éireann as having been since its inception, and up to the time of writing in 2010, "the single largest employer of musicians in Ireland and the single largest source of 'live' and broadcast music." (287). One regular item in *The Long Note* was a run-down of that week's events in Irish folk and traditional music. The show covered festivals, new album releases and concerts. As Chignell states, "what we hear on the radio feels more live because what we hear refers to today's events locally and nationally" (Chignell 2009, 11). *The Long Note* used what was called liveness to construct itself as a cultural node/point of connection for listeners, performers, personnel (e.g., Ní Mhaonaigh stated that it was "better to be live" in the sense of being broadcast soon after a recording was made). One of the ways it presented this liveness was as a marker of how current the programme was, and how close it was to the pulse of folk and traditional music activity. In response to my question of whether there was ever discussion amongst *The Long Note* personnel about the show being presented "as live," Bradshaw responds by describing that the show had immediacy by reporting on current events. This suggests that one of the ways Bradshaw conceived of the show as being live was via its currency and its immediacy.

> **HB:** Well, the advantage we had was that most traditional things, apart from summer schools, are in the summer, but the normal events take place at the weekend...So I could book an OB [outside broadcast unit], we could be at that festival on Saturday, wherever it was... A day recording, then I spent Sunday at home working on the tapes and picking out the bits and pieces…. And it went out on Monday at 7 o'clock. So, the thing had only happened on Saturday, and here was a full report with music.
>
> **HG:** So, it was quite current
>
> **HB:** Yeah, up to the minute (Bradshaw 2019).

A promotional article for the programme in the *RTÉ Guide* shortly after it began in 1974 further supports this. It heralds the intentions of the producers to give listeners "an up-to-date account of music, happenings and events on the folk-scene" (*RTÉ Guide*, 12th July 1974). Three months later, a

similar message was repeated in the same publication. This time, the calibre of the people involved and the extent of their involvement in the traditional music scene was highlighted as contributing to this currency, emphasising that they were full participant members of the folk and traditional music scene:

> Each programme is made by three people, Micheál Ó Domhnaill, Sean Corcoran and Gerry Hartford, all of whom, along with myself are fully involved. They've been performers and organisers of folk-music sessions for years, and keep in touch with all new developments (*RTÉ Guide*, 18th October 1974).

That a scene existed for these broadcasters to be a part of, whose developments and activities they could cover, was also an important part of this statement. The following transcription of the programme from November 1974 exemplifies this plan in action:

> The Chieftains will be playing at two concerts in Ireland prior to leaving for a tour of America. On Tuesday the 12th of November, that's tomorrow week, they travel to Belfast to take part in the Queen's University festival. They will play at the Wicklow Hall, Queen's University at half past seven. And on the following Thursday - that's the 14th of November - they will play in the Carlton cinema Dublin at a special late night concert at a quarter past eleven (*Long Note*, 4th November 1974, ITMA 770-RTE-WAV).

Implicit in this paragraph-long announcement is the significance of radio as a source of information on arts and cultural events. As alluded to, in 1974, radio stations and programmes were critical nodes in the provision of information to followers of music and the arts. Audiences like that of *The Long Note* were “seriously interested” (Small, 2017) in the Irish music tradition and it is very likely that there was nowhere else for audiences to hear about such events apart from on the radio. National newspapers didn’t comprehensively cover events of such a niche, small scale as folk and traditional music, and when the local media (i.e. local and independent radio stations and newspapers) did cover local events, this programming wasn’t always accessible everywhere else in the country (e.g. though Clare FM may have become very informative on arts events in its county after it began in 1989, listeners in Co. Wexford may not have had access to this station, nor even been aware of its existence).

Musician and academic Seán Corcoran, writing in the *Irish Times*, supports Chignell’s view, stating that the dropping of this listing of current events from the programme format at one point was “a mistake,” because they helped to bring the programme nearer to the listener and also “they gave an impression of the liveliness of the traditional music scene in a way which direct reportage never could” (*Irish Times*, newspaper clipping from ITMA. “IN.FOLK.US. [Header] The Long Note Fading?”).

The show also acted as a place of advertising for professional musicians looking for work as teachers, e.g., fiddler Frankie Gavin, who quickly gained international fame as a founding member of band Dé Danaan in the late 1970s:

> Frankie Gavin, a Galway man who is fast becoming one of the best young fiddle players in the country, tells me that he is starting fiddle and tin-whistle classes so anybody in the Galway area who is interested in learning these instruments can get in touch with Frankie Gavin by phoning him in Galway. The number is [*provides telephone number*]. Here he is himself now playing the fiddle with the group Dé Danaan. (*Long Note*, 4th November 1974, ITMA 770-RTE-WAV)

Telephone numbers were often publicly available in this era (via the Department of Post and Telegraph's publication of a national directory of phone numbers, freely distributed to all households with phone lines in this period). However, it is notable that presenter Ó Domhnaill provided Gavin's phone number on air. This was an attempt to connect the teacher directly with students, those listeners "seriously interested in the musical tradition" (Small) and interested in learning. While still a teenager, fiddler Frankie Gavin had already been featured several times on the show and thus marked out as a performer of competence and authenticity. Crisell points out the importance of this competence of radio to communicate local news, ostensibly trivial, but of value to small communities (Crisell 1994, 14). Crisell's argument that radio music could "not 'refer to' anything in the way that speech does" (Crisell 1994, 14) however does not hold in the context of this particular music radio programme. By referring in such detailed, up-to-date ways to the community of musicians it served, the music on the programme could never be mislabelled as anything like "ideal background listening" (Crisell 1994, 14). On the contrary, Nuala O'Faolain, writing in *The Irish Times* in protest at the eventual "axing" of the programme in the early 1990s, highlighted the type of heightened listening the programme engaged from its listeners. She describes the position of RTÉ as one of a "trustee" of Irish cultural life, as "central figures in taste-making and culture-shaping in this society." (*Irish Times*, 30th August 1993, 12) She also identifies and describes the different type of listening engaged in by the avid radio music fan:

> Does nobody there know what it is like to be a fan, to be scholarly and passionate about X or Y kind of music and to look forward to the learning you do each week from what you fondly think of as your own, your special programme? Did anyone there care to put the case for radio you listen to as opposed to radio you hear? (*Irish Times*, 30th August 1993, 12).

The programme was broadcast 'live' from the *Amharclann* (theatre) in Gweedore, Co. Donegal on August 20th 1974 and the fact that it was reported on in the local newspaper evidenced its significance (*Donegal News* 1974, 14). According to Bradshaw, Tony MacMahon, at the beginning of the programme, only went out to record musicians once or twice a year. Bradshaw, however, made a point of doing it more regularly. Having been a soundman for many years before beginning his work as a producer of *The Long Note*, he knew he could get excellent recordings (Bradshaw 2019). Indeed at the start of MacMahon's work on the show in 1974, he praised Bradshaw and other sound operatives for their contribution to the value of the show: "*The Long Note* owes a debt to the RTÉ radio sound operators...The sound operators go to great lengths to set them at their ease, and this has resulted in getting the best performances from them'" (*RTÉ Guide*, unknown author, October 18, 1974). As Ní Mhaonaigh suggested, a recording of music occurring outside of the RTÉ Studio at a regular session, was rich in symbolism. A session is a participatory musical event involving the sharing of tunes, songs, and (less often) dances between Irish traditional musicians, often for hours on end. It often happens in public arenas, most notably the pub, but also occurs in more private venues, like a musician's house. Having a session outside the studio demonstrated the abundance and energy of the culture being represented on air. It also captured the "realness" of the people performing (Ní Mhaonaigh 2021), and their songs, and interviews gave further context regarding a musician's lineage.

The Long Note's representation of the energy of the Irish music scene was contrasted positively with its equivalent on BBC Radio 2 in the opinion of one listener:

> Although anyone with a serious interest in traditional music will by now have despaired of BBC Radio 2's Folkweave", it is still worth listening occasionally if only to marvel at the programme's consistent dreadfulness….[O]ne could reasonably have hoped that the producers and presenters of "Folkweave" would devote some of their time to genuine traditional music...Indeed, they could do much worse than listen to the excellent "Long Note" programme on Irish radio, which intelligently and tastefully combines archive and modern material, emphasising not only continuity with the past, but also the vitality of the present day musical scene" (Taylor, n.d.).

The listener combined the two ideas of continuity with the past (aka "tradition") and the vitality (aka "liveness") of the ongoing musical scene here.

5.4.5 Bespoke field and studio performances

Amongst the other genres of music in RTÉ where bespoke recordings were made for RTÉ broadcast, not all radio music material in RTÉ was labelled and lauded as “live” content. Only in rhetoric about the quality of traditional and folk music programmes were the processes involved in creating liveness (perceived as constructed or otherwise) highlighted and employed by programme personnel, performers, and listeners on a consistent basis and mentioned as a part of assessments of a programme’s quality. Looking through all the radio logs for the period of October 1977 to February 1978, it is clear that a mixture of material was played on *The Long Note* - some coming from RTÉ “fieldwork” tapes, i.e., recorded by RTÉ itself outside the studio; some coming from RTÉ recordings done in studio; and finally some from commercial recordings (see Appendix I). To take Monday 20th February 1978 as an exemplar, all of the other music programmes across the station in the period involved commercially released albums (save for those of Ciarán Mac Mathúna with *Mo Cheol Thú* and Seán Ó Murchú with *Céilí House* and the private tapes made by CCÉ and broadcast in short Tuesday afternoon programmes of thirty minutes or so). In other words, the programmes comprising the genres of jazz, classical and popular music did not seem to depend so heavily on RTÉ Tapes (“live” recordings, as personnel called them) as folk and traditional music programmes did (RTÉ Document Archives, Radio Logs, boxes 006-8).

The creation of “live” recordings (either in studio or from “capturing” them in the field) for broadcast was a big objective of *The Long Note*. That *The Long Note* made recordings of musicians specifically for their radio broadcast was often discussed as a signature of its quality among radio music programmes and radio programmes in general. As is apparent from Appendix II (RTÉ Radio Programme Logs, February 1978), *The Long Note* stood out on the station’s schedule for including material recorded by RTÉ. Radio logs were lists of music played on the station that RTÉ was required as a public broadcaster to maintain for the administration of royalties. According to these logs, on 20th February 1978, only three radio programmes included music - *Preab San Aer*,[33] *Music on the Move*,

[33] *Preab san Aer* roughly translates as “Spring Up” and was an Irish language show aimed at young people, presented by Máire de Barra and Pádraig Ó Méalóid and produced by Tim Lehane (RTÉ Photographic Archive 1978).

and *The Long Note* (RTÉ Radio Programme Logs, February 1978). Of the 29 pieces of music broadcast during these three programmes, only five were recorded by RTÉ staff during in-person performances by musicians and all of these were played on *The Long Note* (out of its nine tracks in total). These "live" recordings made specifically for *The Long Note* required personnel, studio time, and payments for the musicians. If they were conducted off-site, they also required transport, subsistence, possibly fees for setting up an external studio, and accommodation. All of this meant that "live" recordings signified a significant expense of time and money for RTÉ.

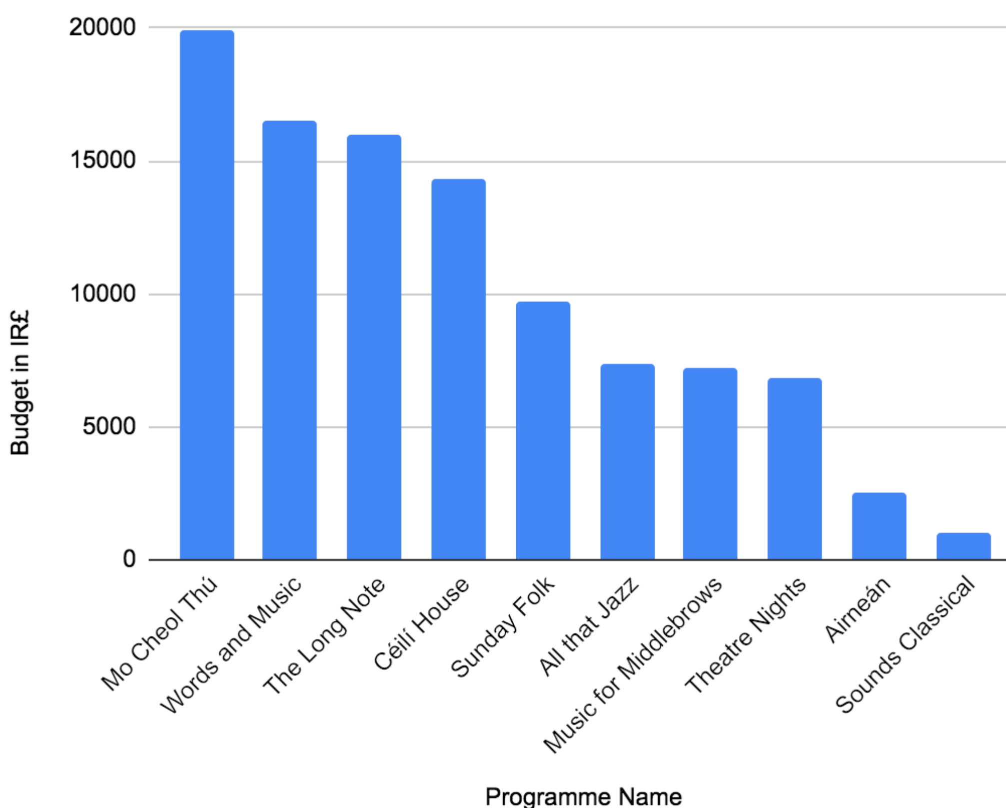

Table 5.4.5 Annual budget of the RTÉ Music Department in an unnamed year, probably around the early 1980s (Table by author, based on data from Bradshaw collection, File 25/11. "Materials taken from an unmarked lever Arch File.").

As the above chart demonstrates, *Mo Cheol Thú, Words and Music, The Long Note* and *Céilí House* were the four most expensive radio programmes of the station in this year. The phenomenon of "liveness" provided by these "RTÉ Tapes" made for and used by the programmes *Mo Cheol Thú* and *The Long Note,* represented a significant investment of time and money by RTÉ. This type of

investment in field recording is, at the time of writing, no longer practised by RTÉ. As Bradshaw explains, it came to an end around the early 1990s, as part of cost-cutting measures which Bradshaw ascribes to fear of competition which began with local radio:

> I remember way back before the arrival of local radio…. They were getting worried at that stage. And there was a general meeting of staff. What are we going to do? I said, I think we should continue to do what we do well. Because no local station can compete with us in what we do well. For example, we employ 28 actors. We have 2 orchestras, a symphony, and a concert, programmes like the kind of work I do. I can book a sound man. I can go to any part of the country and delve into the local… I think how we survive is we do even better – we put even more resources into our unique brand. [But] the days of collecting traditional music are gone, you know? … They went the other path – of what's cheap… You're only as good as the local station DJ, unless you're doing something unique (Bradshaw, 2019).

In the RTÉ document archives, the strange situation exists that most of the people who contact the archive to view its materials and/or listen to its sound recordings are traditional musicians (Talty 2018). This suggests that lack of access to its sound archives is an issue that mostly impacts on traditional musicians. It also suggests that traditional musicians are somehow, as a group, more aware than others of the archived recordings held by RTÉ, or that making listening visits to sound archives is more of a regular practice amongst traditional musicians. However, taken alongside the snapshot of the radio schedule in February 1978 and the drastic difference in recording types broadcast by *The Long Note*, it especially suggests that out of the musicians recorded in the history of RTÉ, either (1) RTÉ made more bespoke recordings of traditional musicians than of other genres, or (2) the musicians for whom these live, bespoke radio recordings were of most value were those interested in folk and traditional music.

The prominence of field recordings demonstrated in the broadcasts of *The Long Note* was not confined to that programme. In my research, I found examples of in-studio performances by musicians across many different genres in RTÉ radio - not just in folk and traditional music programming. The archival documents I surveyed involved all genres of music in RTÉ. However, the practice of recordings of music made particularly for use in broadcast by RTÉ radio on a regular basis does seem to have been more a feature of folk and traditional music programming than in other genres in the station. The production of bespoke recordings came to be one of The Long Note's unique selling points. Other folk and traditional music programmes in the station used a mixture of commercial

recordings (as did *The Long Note*), some used exclusively “home-produced” recordings (like *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, Céilí House*, and *Mo Cheol Thú* (presented by Ciarán Mac Mathúna)), and some used wholly commercial recordings (e.g., *Binneas* (presented by Máire de Barra), *Tabhair Dom do Lámh* (presented by Bill Meek) and some other programmes, like *The Mitchelstown Programme*). Those who used wholly commercial recordings seem to have used a mixture of ‘folk’, country and cognate musics, as opposed to that type of traditional music focussed on in *The Long Note*, favouring solo instrumentalists and sparse accompaniment (RTÉ Document Archives, Radio Logs, boxes 006-8).

In the following newspaper article, critic Seán Corcoran described how he valued live material or material pre-recorded specifically for that programme over material already available on commercial records. Material pre-recorded specifically for the programme added ‘depth,’ according to Corcoran.

> To have to rely totally on material available on record means that a programme like this will lack depth and will simply whet the listeners’ appetite and leave him unsatisfied…Thom Moore’s pieces on the songs of the American Civil War had the same problem. To illustrate his topic he had no option but to use existing recorded songs and the performances on many of these was quite poor. This would not have mattered very much if *The Long Note* were not a *music programme* and I feel that the pieces would have been better presented as a full documentary in some other slot…. (Corcoran, n.d.)

The general existence of these live elements in the show was a major part of its importance and success as a show of Irish traditional and folk music. Performer and *Long Note* presenter Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh also emphasised the interest and significance of this form of broadcasting to the show:

> **HG:** How important was it to have field recordings - like, live recordings - on the programme as well as the album stuff and the archived stuff?
>
> **MNíM**: I think that was *very* important. God, it would be *very* boring if it was just the albums... Like, albums have a place. And actually it made the albums, maybe stand out, or a track would stand out because it was so well sung, or so well played…[T]o hear the real people chatting about the real...songs they got from their grandmothers or… their lineage... I thought that was *really* important. And it kind of...showed how rich a culture we have... That we are not depending on commercialism to keep this thing alive. That the thing is thriving as we speak. This live - … this is happening down in Sliabh Luachra as we speak. This is happening up in Donegal as I’m talking to you …This is where the session is on a Monday night. This is where the session is on a Tuesday night. We happened to be there on a Wednesday night. This is what happened - you know? That kind of thing. The country was hopping with music... So, you get that feeling… [A]lright here’s an album, but guess what? … [G]o a wee bit down the road on the fiddle and here’s him playing, scratching away and … just playing great tunes, you know?

Several relevant themes are notable in Ní Mhaonaigh's conversation here. First, her mention of the programme's weekly calendar of musical events highlights its immediacy, a point made in most of my discussions with interviewees for this thesis (and discussed further in section 5.4.4). Radio was a crucially important cultural node in this era, connecting listeners to current events in the world of traditional music in varied geographical locations. This was a vital service especially for listeners in rural areas, and between groups of listeners in different rural areas (see section 5.4.2). Several interviewees stated that the biggest impact Irish language station RnaG had on its listeners was in connecting speakers of different dialects around the country and enabling them to understand one another. In a similar way, *The Long Note* connected the "serious" listeners of Irish traditional music with others on the island of Ireland and beyond. Keeping listeners informed of the timetable and geography of current events was one way in which they did this. Third, Ní Mhaonaigh describes the ability of the programme to source and mediate "live" (as she describes it) content for its programmes as evidence for the distance of folk and traditional music ("the thing," in Ní Mhaonaigh's verbal shorthand) from commercialism. Ní Mhaonaigh emphasises the point by implying how each performance from a commercial album that was broadcast on the programme could be replicated in live (albeit "scratchy") form, invariably in one of the public, live music events spotlighted by the programme. Ní Mhaonaigh's description of a fiddle player as "scratching away and … just playing great tunes" also highlights the importance she placed on traditional musicians being able to produce a viable commercial album at the same time as continuing with their local (less commercial) musical lives. Fourth, Ní Mhaonaigh's discussion of the music played on the show as a "thing," "thriving" gives it an aura of a living entity, as being not just "live" but also "alive." This remark provides insight into the power behind the theme of liveness, suggesting a connection with a representation of a living entity (e.g., "a living tradition"). Fifth, Ní Mhaonaigh is careful not to discount altogether the importance of the commercial album. The commercial album has its place, though clearly from this conversation, it provided a lower tier of experience than what could be experienced by attending one of the events that occurred "live," as if on a continual loop, every Monday or Wednesday in a certain geographical place as described here.

This emphasis on gathering live recordings of traditional musicians for later broadcast does not seem to have been replicated to the same extent in other genres of music in RTÉ broadcasting at that time, as can be gleaned from preliminary research on choral music in RTÉ as well as from popular music in the station in that period also. Live performances of classical music concerts seem to have been the closest that RTÉ came to this, although the primary function of these classical events was as a concert for the paying audience; by contrast, traditional music tapes made by *The Long Note* were regular recordings of live performances specifically for broadcast. Giving primacy to field recordings and other embedded features of liveness throughout the programme seems to have been distinct to the genre of folk and traditional music in the Irish radio scene. As Bradshaw described how, when he first arrived in Radio Éireann from the Éamonn Andrews studio in the 1960s, all material broadcast was both "pre-recorded" and "live" (Bradshaw 2019). By this, Bradshaw meant that the material was recorded by RTÉ specifically for use on that programme, and that RTÉ folk and traditional music programmes did not use commercial recordings.

These recorded performances, though described as live, were not always recorded in one take. In some cases, repeated takes were recorded until the desired musical standard was produced. For example, a *Long Note* producer's flip back notebook contained 10 pages of notes about a recording session with two well-known uilleann pipers, Sunday Oct. 18th, 1987 and Thursday 22 Oct. '87. The handwritten notes included details of the set recorded and the quality of the take: for example, "ropey," "so-so" "stop odd" "The plains of Boyle (Slips of tempo)" " Marches retake <- (no)" "Dodgy just barely usable" "The Shannon Breeze. (Struggle)" "No." "No!" "Not really" "Good at last" "Keep" "Use" "OK." These notes clearly detail how, in this case, recordings of a tune or set of tunes were repeated until an acceptable take was produced, for example: "Ok at last take." "1 slip. End of C60 side 1. Last tk." (Bradshaw Collection) Other notes again suggested edits that might need to be done in the studio to prepare music for broadcast, e.g., "Start? Fade up." and "Squeaky but usable" (Bradshaw Collection).

In addition, when it came to the speech that presenters added to a programme, scripts and repeated takes were considered a natural part of the pre-recorded nature of the programme. Bradshaw

explains in the following quote how the programme was constructed and his understanding of what it meant to be "pre-recorded":

> **HB:** They'd have a finished script, and we'd go into a booth. And they would read the script. I would have a very odd comment but just maybe a word or a fact that I knew was wrong, or whatever. But just tiny touches. We'd play the music. We'd time everything. I'd keep a track on any news that would come in, give them the news. Finalise it by lunchtime. Have a cup of coffee and go into the studio. And that was the treadmill of it, do you know?
>
> **HG:** Go into the studio then to do it live?
>
> **HB:** No it was recorded, it was pre-recorded…. So put the whole thing together then...And if you had bits and pieces of tape or whatever - [it'd be] difficult to do that in a live situation - but you could do your editing as you went along… So, pre-recording helped. And if somebody didn't read a script really well, you could say, do it again, you know, and you'd get the best out of it (Bradshaw 2019).

This dialogue clarifies how the discourse around the repetition of presenter introductions was different to the discourse around the repetition of musicians' performances. It is important to note here that Bradshaw still considered the programme as "live" in many ways. His comment here demonstrates his awareness of different meanings in use for the word. He did not describe the programme as a whole as "live" - just individual aspects of it. Performances could be described as "live" even when repeated to achieve the best take, or when edited ("fade up") to elide mistakes or blemishes; the same did not generally go for a presenter's scripted remarks framing that material. In contrast, Small did describe his speech as being "live" (Small, email correspondence 2017). Chignell states that "the pre-recorded programme can bring radio close to an artform" (2009, 47), but he separates pre-recorded shows from the identity of liveness to a greater extent than was done by Bradshaw in *The Long Note*.

Performances recorded in the radio studio were widely used in the programme for various purposes. Flute player Catherine McEvoy appeared on the show on the 7th of July 1975 with an in-studio performance. She was described on the show as being "sa bhaile arís ar laeithe saoire ó Birmingham" (at home again on holidays from Birmingham) (7th July 1975, 1820-RTE-WAV, ITMA, author's transcription). McEvoy's parents, originally from Roscommon but then living in Birmingham, accompanied her. Presenter Bill Meek listed a number of cities in England where Irish emigrants had settled in previous times; his description of McEvoy as a member of the Irish diaspora, returning on one of her regular family holidays drew a connection again between the show and its Irish diaspora in

a way a commercial album could not. Though RTÉ Radio was available in Britain at the time (and indeed some listeners based in the UK wrote into the programme), the reception was not always great quality in different locations. Thus, McEvoy's appearance and conversation was likely aimed towards listeners on the island of Ireland. As UK-based flute-player Michael Walsh has described, RTÉ Radio was available on 567 Medium Wave radio and 252 Long Wave. Through these stations, programmes like *Céilí House* and Ciarán Mac Mathúna's *Mo Cheol Thú* were maintained as important parts of his family's cultural life, as new generations of his family grew up in Manchester (email correspondence, December 2021). The live-in-studio performance by McEvoy reminded Irish-based listeners of the Irish diaspora, lots of whom continued to play Irish music like Walsh and his family. In-studio visits by musicians such as McEvoy made the diaspora real and tangible for the listeners of *The Long Note* in Ireland while also acknowledging those listening from further afield.

Finally, another purpose of in-studio performances was to demonstrate points made in the more academic discussion pieces that sometimes appeared on the show. A regular presenter of those sections of the programme was Mick O'Sullivan (in later years more widely known as an academic and commentator under the Irish version of his name, Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin). In one programme for example, O'Sullivan introduced the different rhythms prevalent in Irish traditional dance music, and Paddy Glackin played the fiddle to demonstrate the musical examples he described. This fit into the growing academic discourse in the field of Irish traditional music and for which *The Long Note* was providing a regular and welcoming context.

5.4.6 Immediacy

One oft-cited characteristic of *The Long Note* was its immediacy - its relevance to what was going on "right now," i.e., at the time of broadcast. There are copious examples of this in the programme's production and reception. As the following discussion from Ní Mhaonaigh implies, though none of the shows were broadcast in real time from the RTÉ studios or from the field, they were still described as "live" if they were broadcast shortly after the programme was recorded:

> By the end of '88, we were getting really busy with the band. And like I was travelling more out of the country and recording more on tape for Harry [Bradshaw, producer]. And it wasn't

> ideal for any of us. Because it's better to be live and to be telling people what's happening tomorrow night or the following week. So, I had to kind of bow out then (Ní Mhaonaigh 2021).

In this situation, the description of "live" emerges from the programme content being close to its date of first broadcast. As Appendix I demonstrates, from October 1977 to August 1978, only eight programmes in that year were repeated. Two *Long Note* documentary-style programmes on the music of Séamus Ennis and Tommy Potts, for example, were repeated at the strategic times of late July 1978, presumably covering the summer holidays of the presenters. But these programmes fell into a different category to those weekly programmes, being called instead "Specials" as they focussed on the music of uilleann piper and collector Séamus Ennis and fiddler Tommy Potts respectively. (A similar category name of "Special" is still in use at the time of writing on RTÉ Friday night chat show programme *The Late Late Show* to describe programmes focussed on one central theme.) Bradshaw also referenced the immediacy of the recordings, the "up to the minute" nature of the broadcasts and the information being provided:

> The advantage we had was that the normal traditional things take place at the weekend. So, I would book an OB [Outside Broadcast Unit], we could be at that festival on Saturday. Spend the day recording. Then I spent Sunday at home working in the tapes and picking at the bits and pieces. I'd ring the presenter. It was up to the minute and that gave it the advantage of being on a Monday - we could cover weekend events (Bradshaw 2019).

Reportage on current events contributed to the sense of immediacy associated with the programme. Sean Corcoran notes the importance of the inclusion of current affairs reportage within the scene of Irish traditional music to the status of the programme:

> The dropping of the news items was a mistake because they helped to bring the programme nearer to the listener and also gave an impression of the liveliness of the traditional music scene in a way which direct reportage never could. Perhaps the programming of *The Long Note* needs a little sharpening. P.J. Curtis tells me that special portrait programmes on prominent musicians and singers on a regional basis are planned starting with Johnny Doherty, Hughie Gillespie, Frank Cassidy and Neili Ni Dhomhnaill of Donegal which augurs good for the future (Corcoran, n.d.).

The immediacy of the programme was further boosted by the programme's presenters mostly being professional or semi-professional traditional musicians themselves, and thus very connected with current events in the world of Irish traditional music. As Mícheál Ó Suilleabháin stated, the programme was "watching the professionalisation of the music… it was watching things like

fashionability" (2005). The repeated appearances of a small group of professional musicians in these logs from October 1977 - August 1978 supports this assertion. Semi-professional groups like Planxty and The Bothy Band (involving Glackin, Mícheál Ó Domhnaill, Tríona and Maighréad Ní Dhomhnaill, Donal Lunny, Christy Moore, Liam Ó Floinn, Paddy Keenan and others)were regularly featured on the programme.[34] In 1979, a 40-minute programme specialising on the Bothy Band was broadcast, playing the band's music and interviewing its members. *The Nationalist (Tipperary)* newspaper reported on the programme from Monday 4th June. The paper responded positively to news of the band's reformation, demonstrating how national radio station RTÉ was one of the few avenues where interested fans could hear updates on professional bands in Ireland:

> It was nice to hear them reassure that they had not split up but were taking a few months off to do their own thing, so to speak. I am sure their return will be eagerly awaited (*The Nationalist (Tipperary)*1979, 14).

RTÉ Education Officers preferred schools to turn on their televisions to watch a live broadcast at a particular time instead of utilising a VHS tape of a previously broadcast programme. In their opinion, television broadcasts were more impactful than recordings of TV made by an audience member and played after the original broadcast time (using VHS or equivalent): "Impact of a live programme: Education Officers felt that live programmes had built in impact and immediacy. The same programmes on tape tended to be seen as texts and utilised in short sections; the children heard a live programme in its entirety." (*Radio Scoile* report, 1975, 5) Here, the scheduled time of a broadcast carried meaning, which was lost when the programme was played outside of that time.

The programme also prided itself in being a site of debut listening, i.e., where listeners could hear a newly released album for the first time. In 1974, of course, streaming and digital sharing of musical recordings did not yet exist. In *The Long Note,* presenter Ó Domhnaill made use of this marker of *The Long Note's* immediacy in the following programme intro:

> Agus tá fáilte romhaibh chuig clár na hoíche anocht [And you are very welcome to the programme tonight.]. ...[S]traight away I want to play for you a piece of music from a record I

[34] See Appendix B of this thesis, which lists all the logged musical pieces played on *The Long Note* from October 1977 to August 1978.

> got only this morning. The group is Planxty, this is their third LP, and it'll be in the shops in a week's time. (*Long Note*, 4th November 1974, ITMA 770-RTE-WAV)

The presentation of a record on the programme for the first time, i.e., giving a record a launch on Irish public radio, was also a characteristic of "liveness" on the programme. For example, Alain Stivell's new LP was played on the programme on the 7th of July 1978. As a commercial album produced in a studio, the presentation of this album on the programme had an aura of "liveness" about it, as it was new material. In saying something about current activity in the world of folk and traditional music, it carried the quality of immediacy and contributed to the sense of liveness of the programme. According to performer Parsons, the show was a vital arena for hearing new releases. "You know... what I mean by 'De Dannan would have a new album'? You'd be only dying to hear the new - in your case tunes, in my case songs. Whether or not you knew the tune, it was their *take*" (Parsons 2019).

5.4.7 Ephemerality

According to Bradshaw, the presenter of *The Long Note* was changed every year and a half, in order to keep things fresh, i.e., to stop a presenter from repeating themselves, and to stop things getting boring for listeners. This, he stated, contributed a liveness in the sense of being new and different: "[E]ach person brought something different to the microphone. And that kept it kind of fresh, and live" (Bradshaw 2019). As revealed in informal conversations with listeners and as detailed in exchanges of musicians' letters in ITMA, because of this ephemerality and the part it played in listeners' lives, *The Long Note* broadcasts became a staple item in the calendar of many musicians. Often, the tapes from which the programmes were first transmitted were wiped after their first broadcast so that the tape could be reused. As apparent in listener letters in ITMA, broadcasters received numerous requests from listeners for copies of shows and sometimes had to refuse. Broadcasters sometimes discussed these conversations on the show itself. These features all increased the sense of emphemerality, that there was only one chance to listen to it – at the original time it was broadcast. These features also increased the co-presence of the programme, reminding the listeners that they were in the same boat as countless unnamed others with a shared serious interest in Irish traditional music.

Kate Lacey informs us that "[radio] is where we find, for the first time, people adapting their everyday routines to the rhythms, demands and attractions of that media flow." (Lacey 2018, 18). In 1975, there was no listen-back option apart from home recordings on tapes, which were relatively expensive at the time. Most listeners had to mark the radio programme in their diaries and sit down to listen to it every week. Ó Domhnaill drew attention to the time of the year and the weather and how this influenced the creativity and music-making of the next performers features:

> Now, the northernmost islands of Britain - the Shetlands - have given us many a good tune and indeed produced many a fine musician. And this is the time of year when Shetlanders have ample opportunity to play their music, what with all the short, dark, wintry days and frequent storms, little work is possible on the crofts or at sea. So here are two tunes which have been played for many winters round the firesides in Shetland (*Long Note*, 4th November 1974, ITMA 770-RTE-WAV).

Bradshaw states that Irish traditional music in RTÉ in the 1970s was categorised as a genre of music that was inherently ephemeral in nature, and furthermore, that this greatly affected the way it was treated and the respect given to it as music within the organisation: "In radio the general kind of feeling was [that] we'd serious programmes – opera and politics and whatever – and then you had a lower tier, things that were ephemeral, didn't really matter. Well, one of those was traditional music." (Bradshaw 2019)

5.5 Analysing liveness in *The Long Note*

5.5.1 Taxonomy of liveness

Baade and Deaville provide a useful steppingstone towards theorisations of liveness in stating that there is a tension on radio, more so than any other medium, between liveness and other "unaligned temporalities" (Baade and Deaville, 23). During this research, I found that the descriptors of "live" and the rest ("not live") mapped well onto the terms "single use" and "reusable." (These ideas in turn overlap very much with the ideas of "permanent" music and "impermanent" music, as used by composers working with Hollywood films in the 1940s (Marshall 2022, 57 fn 98), but there is no

scope within this thesis to explore this connection further). In this next section, I will discuss a few more important sources of discussion of liveness in RTÉ and give some introductory notes on liveness, before outlining a taxonomy of this term and briefly exploring its relationship with the concept of authenticity.

In general, in RTÉ parlance, "live" suggests anything that was intended for one-time-only use and "not-live" as anything that was reusable. Single use suggests that the recording was made specifically for a particular programme, thus carrying a stamp of temporality in some way. An aura of authenticity accompanied this. Single-use recordings carried the association of tapping into the ever-changing current of traditional music. Collector-produced recordings (e.g. by professional collector Tom Munnelly or Séamus Mac Mathúna) are an exception to this single-use metaphor, being both reusable but still carrying an aura of authenticity because of the imprimatur of the collector. For example, the recordings Munnelly made on a personal basis of singer John Reilly in the 1960s, or the recordings he made in his post as collector of folk song for the Department of Education (later the Department of Irish Folklore at University College Dublin). Single-use recordings carry a lot of immediacy and currency. Single-use recordings were often attached to a particular broadcast date in some way (See for example the episode of *The Long Note* from 4th November 1974, which gave the times and dates of upcoming Chieftains concerts. When repeated, a particular introduction would be needed to put the recording in context. These performances captured a snapshot of a changing tradition. I suggest that these elements of liveness granted authenticity to those single-use recordings. My category of "Single-use recordings" also includes those recordings made without permissions forms, potentially limiting the ability of broadcasters to reuse them, and (in later decades) of RTÉ to issue CD compilations, and archive visitors to listen to them.

By contrast, a recording made in a studio, e.g. as part of a commercial album, produced as a reusable item, was a performance captured in a different way. The process of being reusable over time changes its significance in some way. It is no longer an instantaneous representation of tradition in full flow. In this way, studio album recordings were generally unusable as "live" recordings for the purposes of the programme. As discussed in section 5.2, these recordings were produced (as Turino

states, “to stand up to repeated listenings” (2008, 70). They have no immediacy, and no clear connection with any particular date or time of year. By their ability to be broadcast in any period, they are not tied to any one period of time. In this way, they lose some of the liveness attached to recordings made as one-offs. They can be appropriately replayed on numerous occasions after their first broadcast. Within RTÉ they are called “inserts,” pieces of sound recorded by RTÉ and stored in their archive for placing within future programmes. As audio files, they (crucially) lack the surrounding introductory remarks that would render them complete as broadcastable material; they are intended for ease of inclusion within other programmes. The prominence of first transmission dates amongst the metadata of recordings in RTÉ’s internal sound archive catalogue (named “Mediaweb”) adds further weight to the significance of first date of broadcast to the meaning of musical recordings made by RTÉ. “Inserts” on the other hand, generally have no first transmission date included in their metadata. Of course, there are exceptions to this theory of single-use signifying live and authentic; reusability something else. Reusable music can still be live if it has other sources of authenticity, for example the imprimatur of a professional collector like Tom Munnelly. Created as a recording for preservation, a collector’s recording becomes timeless, outside of time in some way. Its permanence and recorded status does not diminish its authenticity or its ability to represent tradition. Strangely, its authenticity acts as a reason why it could be considered “live.” One signifies the other.

The concept of liveness was also verbalised and categorised at the level of the RTÉ Authority, RTÉ’s governing body. The following terms were used in the minutes of a 1980 meeting in a conversation describing live programming (RTÉ Authority minutes, 362nd meeting, 12th May 1980).

- “All live” programming
- “Recorded-for-live” programming
- “Normal programming” (for transmission within a short time after production)
- Outside broadcast events coverage (live or near-live)
- On-air promotion

The annual reports published by RTÉ commented mostly on current affairs and issues in broadcasting also highlighted the importance given to broadcasting considered to be live across the

station. Commenting on the recent election coverage, the 1981 report complimented the "immediacy" of information that had been made available on radio that year (1981 RTÉ Annual Report). (This description of outside broadcast events coverage as live or near-live is similar to the "near-real-time transmission" described by Sorensen [2016, 3, in van Es, 1247].)

The following are my conceptualisations of liveness, based on data from *The Long Note* and discussions with participants. In order of liveness (and by extension, in order of their perceived authenticity):

RTÉ Recordings

1. Recordings of real-time, simultaneous broadcasts: The ultimate form of liveness is the real-time, simultaneous broadcast of material, i.e. music or general programme material being broadcast as it is transmitted, or at least with a negligible delay in transmission (e.g. a 10-seond delay to thwart profanity), e.g. Sorensen's near real-time liveness (2016, 97, fn1). This almost never happened in the period of *The Long Note*'s tenure, either from the studio or the field, though live broadcasts were conducted in RTÉ at that time, both in studio and from the field using the roadcasters, mostly for sporting events.
2. Reusable if permissions arranged: Material recorded recently by RTÉ outside its studios at an RTÉ event or a non-RTÉ event (i.e., capitalising on an event already happening, e.g. the Willie Clancy Summer School, WCSS). Payments and existence of permissions for repeat play were important factors affecting whether the performance/broadcast was to be considered live or not, as they indicated whether further broadcasts were imagined at the time of performance. Those without permissions were more likely to be seen as one-off performances, more live, and more representative of the tradition at that moment. Those with permissions were more likely to be considered useful as "inserts" and thus less "live", less authentic.
3. Live, reusable. (Or "were live" instead of "as live".) Recorded by RTÉ in studio/field some distance of time and now re-used regularly as archived recordings with new introductions. Again, permissions were required for repeats and this explains how live or not the recording can be considered to be.

4. Recent and RTÉ studio recordings: Material recorded recently in the RTÉ studio and intended for a particular broadcast was also considered to be "live" in that it occurred within a certain acceptably short period of time of the broadcast. This performance was considered "live," either because of its immediacy and the association of it reflecting current activity in the folk and traditional music scene, or because of the method of recording, eg. If a track was recorded "in one take" and not edited afterwards.

Non-RTÉ recordings

The next level down on the hierarchy of liveness is that group of recordings not made by RTÉ broadcasters, and thus not stored in their sound archive.

5. Recordings made by collectors specifically as a form of preservation (e.g., Munnelly's recordings of Traveller singer John Reilly) or from the field at an event not arranged for the purposes of collecting, e.g. a festival or concert.
6. Live, single-use. Commercial album recordings played for the first time on the show (contribute to discourse on current recordings and commercial activity).
7. Not live, reusable. Commercial album recordings – generic
8. Live & reusable. Commercial album recordings where the lineage of musicians or material is considered important. Considered to be live if connected to the present in some way (e.g., if their influence on a current album is the reason for their inclusion).
9. Not live, reusable. 'Classic" commercial album recordings - other end of the spectrum from live. Gather a timelessness, and in this way add not a snapshot of tradition, but rather represent Irish folk and traditional music in a more canonic fashion.

Sometimes if a recording made specifically for *The Long Note,* i.e. created as a single-use broadcast, became very popular with listeners, it was rebroadcast many times by the programme, and even across different programmes in the station, thus becoming a reusable "was live" recording. Not all musicians were happy to have the performances they recorded for the show to be continuously rebroadcast, however, particularly the case when a commercial recording also existed. For example, Paul Brady and Andy Irvine released an album of songs in December 1976, including the track "Arthur

McBride." Paul Brady appeared in RTÉ studios as a guest of *The Long Note* to promote the album, and that in-studio version of the song became extremely popular with listeners. Presenter Bill Meek stated on the programme, "As I've said before, no single item on *The Long Note* over the last twelve months has attracted a greater response." (2nd August. ITMA, catalogue number: 1540-RTE-WAV.) Indeed, as producer Bradshaw elaborates, bootleg copies of this performance became available on the street for £1 a copy, competing for sales with Brady & Irvine's commercially produced album (Bradshaw 2019). Brady thus wanted RTÉ to stop playing their studio-recorded version of him performing Arthur McBride in favour of the version on his commercial album instead in order to encourage sales of that instead. Brady's live performance was so successful as to undermine his own commercial studio performance. In this case, *The Long Note*'s practice of prioritising live one-off performances in order to highlight their connection with current activity in folk and traditional music was so successful that it undermined the sale of the commercial record it was meant to promote.

5.5.2 A hierarchy of liveness in RTÉ

The following are some production contexts occurring in the making of *The Long Note*. They are arranged in order of potency of liveness, from those performances most considered to be live and authentic to those least considered to be live, and thus with the least amount of authenticity attached to them.

1. Music performed outside the studio (i.e., "in the field") as the programme broadcasts simultaneously (the next most common performance context described as being "live"). This type of live performance came into existence once the RTÉ "Roadcaster" began broadcasting regularly in the 1980s but was not a common occurrence in music broadcasting. It was mostly reserved for sports broadcasting, which had been embedded in the schedule of RTÉ from its earliest decades. This primacy given to sports broadcasting was due to the combined centrality of the Gaelic Athletic Association (national Irish sporting organisation) to public life in Ireland, the high value placed on up-to-date scoring and results, and the ability of radio broadcasting to provide this mobile, on-site service. Some music competitions were occasionally broadcast live

(e.g., the Dublin *Feis Ceoil),* but on a much more limited basis. In general, live outside broadcasts made by RTÉ were exceptions rather than the rule.

2. Music performed in the studio as the programme broadcast in real time to listenership (the performance context most commonly conjured by descriptions of "live" broadcasting). Again, this rarely happened in the context of *The Long Note*.
3. Music performed outside the studio (i.e., "in the field"), with the programme broadcast at a later stage, possibly after some edits in the studio. Often broadcast alongside performances from other recording situations and commercial recordings. This context of performance began when the RTÉ Mobile Recording Unit began in 1947.
4. Music performed inside the RTÉ studio ("live in studio"), with the programme broadcast at a later stage, possibly after some edits in the studio. Often broadcast alongside performances from other recording situations.
5. Home recordings produced outside of an institutional or broadcasting context by non-RTÉ personnel and included in an RTÉ programme, as it had been gifted or donated to the RTÉ presenter, producer, researcher, or staff. Often this material was broadcast alongside other performances of the types mentioned above. E.g., Munnelly's recordings of Reilly's singing.
6. Home recordings produced in an institutional or broadcasting context that was not that of RTÉ, but included in an RTÉ programme. Sometimes these recordings were gifted or donated to the RTÉ presenter, producer, researcher, or a related staff member. Often this material was broadcast alongside other performances of the types mentioned above. An example of this is recordings made by Séamus Mac Mathúna as part of his broadcast-programme-making work with Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann.
7. Commercial recordings produced outside of RTÉ and included in an RTÉ programme, as had been gifted or donated to the RTÉ presenter, producer, researcher, or staff. Often this material was broadcast alongside other performances of the types mentioned above. E.g., Bothy Band recordings.

Separate from the above were other factors influencing the perceived liveness of the programme, including who made the recording, where it was done, what event, festival, whose house, and why. All these other features could be collapsed into a measure of the authenticity of the recording. Thus, in some instances, authenticating factors could thus increase the amount of liveness perceived to exist in a piece of music, and vice versa.

5.5.3 A metaphorical gauge of the health of a living musical tradition

Measures and discussions of the value of liveness were at play in all RTÉ radio traditional and folk music programmes in some way via their production contexts in this period. As discussed in Section 5.4, *The Long Note* insisted on the presence of liveness in many ways. Liveness in *The Long Note* was present in the production of RTÉ recordings, reportage of current events, critique of current albums, debut listening, tracing lineages, playing collectors' recordings, etc. *The Long Note* curated liveness more than other programmes of the time like *Mo Cheol Thú, Preab San Aer* and others, based on RTÉ Document Archives' radio logs of the period. What makes *The Long Note's* insistence on liveness notable is how it maps to markers of authenticity. The connection between liveness and authenticity was notably discussed by Auslander, who examines liveness in the context of rock authenticity, by Sanden, who stresses the cultural contingency of the concept of liveness, and later Turino. As Turino states (77):

> [T]he uniqueness of the high fidelity field is defined by ideologies of authenticity, connected to live performance on the one hand and the special demands of making recorded music that can represent people, live performance, and be captivating through sound alone on the other."

"Live" recordings were utilised as tools of legitimacy and authentication in certain arenas, and I will now explain some of these arenas.

5.5.4 The public sphere

Newspaper reviewers and listener letters regularly proclaimed liveness as one of the strengths of *The Long Note*. For these journalistic listeners, the programme filled a different function to the practical one provided by programmes playing albums recorded in a studio. Neither was it about advocating for working musicians, providing employment by keeping record off air (as Lindelof explains was the case

in the Danish broadcasting corporation in the late 20th century, 2018, 243). The show's careful presentation of music produced specifically for that programme was described by commentators as a demonstration of Irish public broadcasting radio's investment in the health of the musical traditions it represented. Like regular news reports about events around the country, live performances for radio were considered to contribute to representation and cover the underrepresented portions of the Irish traditional music community. This afforded greater representation of musicians across Ireland – not just those near the studios in Dublin or those who could finance a studio album. For example, listener Michael Monaghan describes the worth of the programme in his letter to the *Irish Times* in 1991, on the threatened axing of the programme as thus:

> I believe the programme fulfils a number of very useful roles; it gives unrecorded musicians a platform and the listeners a chance to hear musicians not available on record…most importantly, it would seem to have a commitment to the continued health of traditional music and song. Producer Harry Bradshaw believes that there is an urgent need to record live music and song if our traditional music is to develop and live as an element of our culture. Up to 1981 the programme had been recorded weekly with 52 different programmes during the year. This put a strain on producer and presenter as well as standard and so, last year the 'Long Note' team went on the road for the summer, visiting Wexford, Clare, Fermanagh and Cavan. The material recorded in these areas formed the core of many programmes broadcast in the subsequent series. This is one of the most important developments in folk music programming in RTE [sic], a recognition of a long-obvious reality; that the roots must be cultivated if the branches are to extend. It is not surprising that it is 'The Long Note' which is setting this precedent because over the years it has been distinguished for its innovative approach and treatment of specialised topics (Michael Monaghan, *Irish Times*, 1991).

This commentary echoed (much of it word for word) commentary made previously about the programme by Vincent Woods, writing in the *Irish Times*, August 2nd 1982:

> A Toot on the Flute
>
> Since its inception, RTÉ Radio has produced a consistently high standard of folk music programmes. In recent years, however, as a result of increasing populism the standard of programmes has dropped considerably. One series stands out as an example of what can and should be done: 'The Long Note' which is broadcast every Monday night at 7.00pm. Producer Harry Bradshaw believe[s] that there is an urgent need to record live music and song if our traditional music is to develop and live as an element of our culture. Up to 1981 the programme had been recorded weekly with 52 different programmes during the year. This put a strain on producer and presenter as well as standard and so, last year the 'The Long Note' team went on the road for the summer, visiting Wexford, Clare, Fermanagh and Cavan. The material recorded in these areas formed the core of many programmes broadcast in the subsequent series. This is one of the most important developments in folk music programming in RTÉ, a recognition of a long-obvious reality; that the roots must be cultivated if the branches are to extend. It is not surprising that it is 'The Long Note' which is setting this precedent because

> over the years it has been distinguished for its innovative approach and treatment of specialised topics (Vincent Woods, *Irish Times*, August 2nd 1982.)

The argument for the importance of broadcasting material considered to be 'live' was begun even earlier, however, when musician and academic Sean Corcoran's *Irish Times* newspaper column commented that the programme in a recent period had begun to lack depth because of its reliance on recorded albums instead of field recordings (Seán Corcoran, *Irish Times*, 25th August 1980). Although not always the case, public support for a programme in the form of a letter-writing campaign or a positive review could result in a show previously destined to be ended or "rested" being kept on instead. As Ciarán Ryan's research on popular music television show *No Disco* notes, a well-timed positive review of an RTÉ show could mean the axing or the keeping on of the programme ("This Ain't No Party Documentary," 2021, 09:28). Radio reviewers in this period wielded power in relation to the shows they critiqued.

Recordings of live performances particularly for *The Long Note* programme came to be described as a natural feature of a vibrant folk and traditional music scene and as an important function of a public broadcaster in relation to music and cultural life in Ireland. Live recordings made by the programme specifically for broadcast were discussed as "source" recordings. For example, one listener who wrote into *The Long Note* programme asking for recordings of the concerts made at the Willie Clancy Summer School that year justified his request as follows:

> While I … agree with your view that musicians of today can't do anything that has not been done before, we have to get our influences from some quarters, and might as well go as close to the source as possible for said influences (Bradshaw to Lynch, 1986, Bradshaw Collection).

According to this listener, even though the recording of musicians from 1987 was not considered as authentic as, perhaps, recordings of musicians from the early 1920s, like those of influential fiddlers Michael Coleman, Paddy Killoran and James Morrison, they were as close as possible as that listener could get.

5.5.5 The authenticity of liveness

The Long Note was considered to be an arbiter of quality, as is clear from discussions with listeners and from the many extant listener letters. For example, one listener wrote to the programme, naming a few albums made by fiddler Seán Maguire and asking, "which of the above recordings [the personnel

of *The Long* Note] would recommend and whether and which records have distasteful piano accompanying." (Listener letter, 23rd August 1979, Bradshaw Collection). The idea of authenticity has been central to discussions of the representation and dissemination of Irish folk and traditional music, but this was particularly so in the pre-1994/pre-Riverdance period that this programme covers. As Titon argues, "authenticity [has been discussed] as the attribute of an object and as the expression of an aboriginal self. Authentication is not quite either of those. Rather, it involves a process in which an interpretive community validates a story." (Titon 2012, 230). The interpretive community in this situation is the personnel and listeners of *The Long Note.* In the decades in which *The Long Note* broadcast, ideals of authenticity and tradition became a source of tension and conflict within that musical community. This was exemplified by controversial debates at the Crossroads conference – a gathering of academics, folklorists and those interested in Irish traditional music – in 1996, a few years after *The Long Note* finished broadcasting. This conference was one of the first academic-style conferences on Irish traditional music, and was prompted, the organisers stated, by "an unsettling crisis for the nineteenth-century ideologies of 'revival', 'authenticity' and 'tradition' (Vallely et al. 1999, 5). As discussed previously (Gubbins, 2016), both Nicholas Carolan and Luke Gibbons have commented on the broadcasting of Irish traditional music and on how mediation impacts on the authenticity of music considered to be traditional. The next paragraph illustrates the authenticating power of radio reviewers like those in high status programmes like *The Long Note* in the eyes of those making commercial records.

In 1985, a recording engineer wrote to *The Long Note* complaining about its poor review for an album released that year, *Noel Hill and Tony Linnane i gCnoc na gCroí* (Noel Hill and Tony Linnane in Knocknagree), which the writer, Gerry MacBride, had been involved in producing in their studio. The writer asked *The Long Note* to reconsider the album, pointing out several facts he considered distinguished it from other albums coming out in Irish traditional music at that time, including "the fact it was recorded 'live' in Knocknagree and not a studio atmosphere...now the norm (MacBride to Bradshaw 1985)." The album is now considered a classic in the canon of Irish traditional music, widely lauded for the innovation it displayed in including the sounds of the dancers and the energetic

sounds of the audience, as well as the high quality of the musicianship on display. Vallely describes it as “an outstanding production of thrillingly interwoven, balanced music, social dance, rural artistic ethos and technology that stands timelessly as universally appreciable collaborative art.” (2011, 348). In his reply to MacBride, producer Bradshaw stated:

> Your letter goes on to say “no mention of the ‘spirit’ of this L.P. was made.” Does ‘spirit’ communicate itself to the listener on his record played on radio, or is such an abstract only in the minds of the people who were at the original session? Dangerous ground to tread. Perhaps your statement “having heard these tapes for hours on end…” may explain your intimate involvement with the record, will the casual listener feel as passionately about it? It is very difficult to convey repeatedly to a radio listener, the excitement and atmosphere generated by a dancing session without running the risk of the recording sounding contrived and pretentious (Bradshaw to MacBride 1986).

Bradshaw’s reply clarifies the thought put into the process of conveying musical excitement over the air by *The Long Note* programmers, and displays the power of the programme’s producer and presenters to influence opinion. That the engineer wrote to complain about the review at all illustrates the status bestowed on these reviews and their reviewers in the world of Irish traditional music.

The creation of recordings on the programme necessarily resulted in broadcasters having to make a choice about who to include and who to exclude, i.e., gatekeeping. Just as had been the case with RTÉ’s MRU in previous decades (see Gubbins, 2016), the personnel of *The Long Note* needed to be able to diplomatically exclude musicians from the recording process. This is made clear by the following comment to producer Bradshaw by a local unnamed collaborator while arranging a recording session: “My next move is to arrange a reliable taxi man who can collect them all together thus cutting down on the number of people who’d be in the group for the recording.” (Bradshaw Collection, 18th February 1985). Bradshaw’s comment highlights how deft diplomatic skills were needed to make choices about performing musicians without offending others. It also illustrates that this task was discreetly discussed between broadcasters.

The following conversation discusses Mac Mathúna’s complaint that he prefers set dancing, even with its lower class 'garrison town' origins and complains that the argument of the 'garrison town ' is used too often to explain things or to explain them away:

> 'For that matter, if history were to be the criterion of tradition, I wonder how many of our 'approved' ceili dances would stand the test. I don't care where sets came from; they are now

> part and parcel of a very live and very virile rural tradition, and they go hand in hand with our best traditional music…" (Mac Mathúna, "Trad scene," RTÉ Guide, vol 2, no. 65, n.d.).

Ciarán Mac Mathúna demonstrates how concentrated activity in a particular musical genre or location can also bestow the label of "liveness," and that this can be used to legitimise certain types of musical performances that transgress the boundaries of previous musical practices. The strength of that musical scene was discursively framed as "lively," so bestowing legitimacy on otherwise transgressive musical practices. Just as Mac Mathúna had wielded his own cultural power to frame set dancing as legitimate in 1959, Tony MacMahon used "live" recordings to legitimise and authenticate on *The Long Note*. For example, the programme of 3rd January 1978, repeated on 3rd July of the same year, was a "Profile of Christy Moore" (RTÉ Mediaweb, accessed December 2005). This programme type is quite representative of a *Long Note* "Special," in that it focussed on the work of Moore, using a mix of Moore's commercial recorded albums and RTÉ studio recordings of him, alongside collector Tom Munnelly's field recordings of Traveller and singer John Reilly, who had greatly influenced Moore.[36] Before his death in 1969, Reilly was recorded by Irish Folklore Commission collector, Tom Munnelly. Munnelly's work focussed heavily on preserving the English language song tradition, a process he described as like being in "a feverish race with the undertaker" (Munnelly 1975, 3-4). Munnelly recorded Reilly in 1967, and after Reilly passed away in 1969, these recordings were broadcast on *The Long Note* on 26th May 1975. They were compiled into a *Long Note* "Special"[37] which was broadcast on 30th January 1978 and repeated on 5th February 1978 (RTÉ Archives Radio Logs, 30th January 1978; *Irish Times* 4th February 1978). By the summer of 1978 the recordings had been released in the album *John Reilly - The Bonny Green Tree: Songs of an Irish Traveller,* with Topic Records (Meek 1978; Feintuch 1985). The 1978 *Long Note* "special" on Moore placed his commercial solo folk albums next to his recordings as a member of traditional "supergroup" Planxty, but also to Munnelly's recordings of solo singer Reilly. The symbolic work of Munnelly's field recordings highlighted the influence of Reilly's unaccompanied singing on the more heavily commercialised products of Moore and the presence of Reilly in Moore's lineage. Through this work, Moore is drawn as not just a folk

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[36] For more detail, see Appendices B and D of this thesis.

[37] A *Long Note* "Special" was a programme dedicated usually to the work of one artist or band only.

musician, but as a musician who straddles the musical labels of folk and traditional, drawing on traditional singing of Reilly, and operating in the folk context. In placing Moore’s work next to that of Reilly (on one side of the spectrum) and Planxty (on the other side), a symbolic path of legitimacy was laid from the more authentic solo singer Reilly, to the traditional solo singer Moore, to the commercial band Planxty.

The set-list of the Moore “Special” programme was as follows:

Performer	Title	Publication data
Christy Moore	January Man	RTÉ Tape
Christy Moore	Crickle Wood	Mercury Records
Christy Moore	Raggle -Taggle Gypsy	Tara Records
John Reilly	Raggle - Taggle Gypsy	Tom Munnelly Private Collection
John Reilly	The Well Below the Valley	Tom Munnelly Private Collection
Planxty	The Well Below the Valley	Polydor Records
Christy Moore	Ballad of Timothy Evans	Polydor Records
Christy Moore	Sacco & Vanzetti	Polydor Records
Christy Moore	Lanigan’s Ball	Polydor Records
Christy Moore	Wave up to the Shore	Polydor Records

Table 5.5.5: Information from radio logs of music performed on *The Long Note* programme 3rd July 1978 (RTÉ Document archives, Radio Programme Logs)

The solo studio performance of Moore demonstrated his credentials as a performer, i.e., his ability to produce a live performance with minimal accompaniment from other musicians, in the manner of a folk singer. Placing Moore’s performances as a solo singer and a band musician next to the singing of Reilly highlighted the similar repertoire in use by the three groups and drew the listener’s attention to

the connections between the unaccompanied singing of Reilly and the more commercial musical performances of Moore and Planxty, connecting the traditional with the commercial and legitimising both musicians in the process. (Interviewee Ní Mhaonaigh, who presented *The Long Note* in the late 1980s, separated out the more traditional from more commercial activity in her statement that recordings of sessions showed the "independence" of traditional music from commercialism.) Thus, live recordings were utilised to make separate points within the programme on different occasions. The usage here also drew the listener's attention to the many tangible connections between the musical genres described as folk and traditional, blurring the boundaries between those genres. . In highlighting the diverse and multiple connections between Planxty, Moore and musical influences on these groups like Reilly, the programme suggested that if authenticity was to be found in the performances of a traditional singer like Reilly, then it was also to be found in the performances of Moore and Planxty. *The Long Note* programme itself acted as a reference point, presenting itself as an authenticating source. The material was carefully crafted and presented to make the connections between pieces seem real and natural. That a line existed from Moore's more commercial band music to the singing of an unaccompanied Traveller singer, fed the narrative that Moore's music was authentic. This strategy of authentication (tracing a lineage to an authentic singer) has clear parallels with Auslander's discourses of authenticity in rock music of the same era (2008). The live context of the radio programme facilitated discussion of a musician's lineage. This was an important element of the discursive work done by the programme.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter asked how liveness worked as a mechanism to mediate Irish traditional music for its listeners. It discussed how the *Long Note* radio programme constructed a range of types of liveness that were distinct from those employed by other genres in RTÉ. The concept of liveness in Irish traditional music in RTÉ in the period was heavily produced and obstructed. Regarding music, Irish traditional music and the medium of radio, this taxonomy tells us that liveness in *The Long Note* validated Irish

traditional music on RTÉ radio, new activity, and commercial activity that could demonstrate a lineage with other authentic performances. It invalidated other types of performance. Liveness was an index of authenticity in the public sphere, and one of the mechanisms by which the preeminent Irish national musical tradition was discursively produced. Liveness (and therefore its taxonomy and hierarchy) was a key element of Irish traditional music programming in this era. Adopting a working theory of liveness was also a method musicians used to help them navigate the changes between private, public and professional performance contexts that were necessary to maintain their identity as traditional musicians. Power and cultural capital were attached to these meanings and uses of liveness. Unspoken hierarchies of values affecting acceptance of a style, or method, or musician by a community or group of listeners were in effect; knowledge of this hierarchy and power to manipulate it was also attached. The programme existed to mediate the performance of Irish traditional music and to validate certain styles and methods over others. As well as informing listeners on current events, items discussing style in Irish traditional music, as well as the inclusion of book publications and lecture series contributed to a growing academic discourse on the topic of Irish traditional music. The programme *The Long Note* itself filled an important part of this discourse.

To conclude, liveness was manifested in this programme in different ways, all of which comprise the show's 'rhetoric' of liveness. Prompted by Auslander, Sanden and Crisell's theorisations of liveness in music and on the radio, I have shown that liveness in this programme was a rather more fluid concept as apparent in the literature review of other radio music formats, flexible within this milieu and defined within the parameters of the genre and show. It was ascribed to different types of activity and contributed to the creation of musical meaning in this radio programme. I have demonstrated that it was indeed, as Sanden states, "a dynamically performed assertion of human presence within a technological network of communication" (Sanden 2013, 17). Overall, the exploration of liveness is one clear example of how RTÉ work related to Irish musical discourse and debate in that period. It also shows the impact of radio mediation on discourse in Irish traditional music.

In this chapter, I developed a model of a spectrum of “live” and “recorded” sound in radio music in general. I analysed material from *The Long Note* and how it relates to this model. I looked through programme production documents (using data and metadata), listened to audio recordings of *The Long Note* programmes (i.e., the texts), and sifted the data and metadata of their afterlives (reception). I collated and analysed these instances of “live” and “recorded” sounds in the programme and their surrounding discourses and discussed their implications. I considered how these findings relate to the themes foregrounded elsewhere in this thesis - including the discursive construction of a national musical tradition (O’Shea 2009), the relationship between public and private performance in Ireland in this era, and the construction and subversion of genre in music institutions. I showed how the presentation of the show and of individual musical performances within the show as either live or pre-recorded was one of the mechanisms by which Irish traditional music was mediated and became mediatized in this period. In so doing, this chapter contributes to the examination of *Radio Éireann*’s programming and its relationship to Irish musical activity, ideas and discourse in that period, and beyond RTÉ and Ireland to discussion of the mediation and mediatisation of music on radio and other technologies, and wider discussions about the influence of media activity on musical, social, and cultural practices.

David Hesmondhalgh identifies the history of radio as containing hitherto unhighlighted experiences of musical culture, involving concepts like sociality and community that were central to the philosophy of *The Long Note*. Hesmondhalgh sees this as provided by the “backgroundness” of radio programmes.

> Rather than blocking such experiences of musical beauty and wonder, radio’s ‘backgroundness’ arguably produces these qualities in the everyday, even if corporate commercialism can nullify its potential to do so. Might streaming be marked by similar contradictions? (Hesmondhalgh 2021, 12-13)

However, as I have discussed, *The Long Note* foregrounded these elements of sociality and community, through its pursuit of liveness and authenticity. For the programme makers of *The Long Note*, I suggest that the inclusion of live performances and the embedding of various forms of liveness

throughout the programme format was their closest model of translating what they know of as oral transmission to the mass media format of public broadcasting.

In reflecting on how these programme makers in RTÉ constructed “signs of the real” within folk and traditional music, I suggest that the liveness in *The Long Note* was constructed and interpreted as something beyond the mere implication of authenticity set up by the historical precedent of the MRU in the period before *The Long Note*, and indicated a desire to transmit “the shared experience of a continuous past” articulated by Gibbons (Gibbons 1996, 72).

Chapter 6: Conclusions

6.1 The original contribution of this thesis

The central research question of this thesis is how musical practices and discourse were mediated and mediatised in the period 1970-1994 using the long-running Irish traditional music radio programme, *The Long Note* as a continuous source. A number of sub-themes emerged from the discussion, including cultural nationalism and the position of music radio as an index for the nation; unequal representation of gender and ethnicity; the growth of a critical discourse on aesthetics in Irish traditional music; as well as the construction of liveness in the programme and its intersection with the idea of authenticity in music.

Chapter Two identifies some of the broader institutional forces surrounding the basis of production and reception that existed in the period, notably a perseverance of old divisions between the Departments of "Serious" and "Light" music within RTÉ and a developing discourse of tradition versus innovation in the station. There was also a continuous risk of political scrutiny because of the broadcasters' public service obligations, with the pressures of the triumphs and challenges, and the risk of being used as a metonym for the Irish nation. Irish traditional music was sometimes confused with serving the course of the Irish language revival, which was one of RTÉ's mandated aims as a broadcaster. Irish traditional music was produced generally without a wider language policy of any type due to the persistent attitude of upper RTÉ management that Irish traditional music was a subsection of Irish language material.

Chapter Three investigates the pressures of nationalism, specifically manifestations of cultural nationalism on *The Long Note,* and how producers navigated those pressures while making the programme. Interviewees were conscious that they were shaping and sharing images of the Irish nation, though management deemed their work to be part of RTÉ's Irish language remit in many ways. Programme personnel had to carefully negotiate their association with republicanism (described as a "green subculture") in the course of their work. They navigated a changing understanding of Irish

traditional music as variously traditional, innovative, historical, and republican. This demonstrates how the mediation of traditional music in this public broadcaster came with added conditions due to these political associations. In addition, the performers regularly involved in *The Long Note* stood in as national musical ensemble in ways (e.g., Planxty performing in the Eurovision interval act and at the Skagen Folk Festival).

Chapter Four focuses on the social relations involved in this programme, notably those of gender and ethnicity. It demonstrates some imbalances of representation of women and Travellers in the production of the show and explores some reasons for this. The chapter examines issues of quantitative representation and pay as well as qualitative issues of representation. I demonstrate that some of the routes to broadcasting (e.g., the pub session scene) were such that conditions for entry into broadcasting were more favourable for men than women and for settled musicians rather than Traveller musicians. The chapter also provides some context to show how gender and ethnicity imbalances were normalised on a wider scale in RTÉ in that period.

Chapter Five interrogates the aesthetics of broadcasting of Irish traditional music on *The Long Note,* drawing heavily on material from interviewees, producers, listeners and presenters. It contributes to discussions of liveness in music and on radio by demonstrating how liveness was constructed on this programme in a manner very different from that in other discussions of liveness or of radio music in the relevant literature. In the chapter, I suggest two separate taxonomies to explain the phenomenon of liveness in *The Long Note*. I suggest that the drive towards these types of liveness is partly explained by the drive towards authenticity. The programme was positioned as a reference point for authenticity, an arena where authenticating activity happened, and as an arbitrator/gatekeeper. As Dennis Dutton states, the distinction between authenticity and inauthenticity is context-dependent (2003, 1), and is connected to our understandings of the origins of a work of art (2003, 263). Most importantly, there are different types of authenticity at play in different contexts – some nominal authenticity. Another significant type of authenticity was expressive authenticity. The authenticity at play in *The Long Note* was more akin to the expressive authenticity categorised by Denis Dutton: "[T]he concept of authenticity often connotes something else, having to do with an object's character as a true expression

of an individual's or a society's values and beliefs. This… sense of authenticity can be called expressive authenticity (2003, 259)" The liveness that was constructed by broadcasters, performers and listeners of *The Long Note* were not a nominal authenticity, concerned with the veracity of the source of music, but were more concerned with the values and beliefs connected to the music in this programme.

This thesis has demonstrated how *The Long Note* was an important arena for the discursive construction of Irish traditional music in the period 1970-94 with respect to the categorisation of music, and the representation of gender and ethnicity. Its relationship with cultural nationalism and with respect to the aesthetics of mediation and mediatisation would benefit from further enquiry. Broadcasters demonstrated awareness of these associations and successfully deployed skills to manage or avoid them. This is significant for many reasons, including because it illuminates the practices of mediation and mediatisation for Irish traditional music directly prior to the first performances of Riverdance in 1994, the explosion of global interest in Irish traditional music and steady growth of mediating activities that followed.

Traditional and folk music programming in RTÉ is shown to have been produced from within a complex web of musical structures and relationships. Any direct managerial influence on this genre of production in the period studied was viewed through the prism of the station's stated revival of the Irish language. The revival of the Irish language, one of the goals of the Irish state from its founding, was taken on board as a goal of RTÉ, and was a politically sensitive topic affecting programme formation. The broadcasting of folk and traditional music in the station came to be viewed through this prism, regardless of whether Irish language material was included in the programming or not. This was in contrast to the context of programme production in BBC Ulster, where folk and traditional music was introduced to audiences in a manner similar to world music of the time, i.e., as if an unfamiliar "other." Apart from a few exceptions, programming of folk and traditional music at BBC Ulster did not normally get past introductory programmes of the music for new audiences.

1. Gender imbalance was an issue across the genres of rock music, classical music, and traditional music in RTÉ public radio broadcasting in the late twentieth century.

2. In chapter four, I investigate the metanarrative(s) in Irish music radio in the late twentieth century concerning gender and ethnicity. I analyse what the radio sources in this period say about the social categories of woman and Traveller, and about the designations of professional or amateur musician. The key concepts running through the chapter are access and representation: I investigate who was conceived of as a professional in radio music in this period by interrogating who had access to *The Long Note*, who was represented on their shows, and how. I explore the gender and ethnicities in the music that was presented as national on the public radio station RTÉ. I demonstrate how the programming in this period was dominated by men and members of the settled community, with few exceptions. The chapter demonstrates the underrepresentation of women across all types of work in RTÉ. The chapter outlines discussions of this issue at the level of the RTÉ Authority as well as in the Irish parliament in a special committee which examined the work of RTÉ as a state-sponsored body. Focusing on the primary case study of this thesis, *The Long Note,* I demonstrate a significant underrepresentation of women in its producers, presenters, researchers, and performers. The available archival sources also suggest that when women did feature on the programme, they were underpaid compared to their male counterparts.
3. Broadcasters had to tread carefully around considerations of nationalism when broadcasting on topics of traditional and folk music in RTÉ's *The Long Note*. These topics arose especially in contexts of collecting recordings from Northern Irish musicians, when broadcasting music ostensibly aligned with Protestant religious communities (e.g., bagpipes, British Army broadcasts), and when dealing with politically-themed songs.
4. "Liveness" was a key aesthetic goal of management, producers, presenters and listeners in RTÉ in the period 1970-1994, and a key mechanism of the production of radio programming of traditional and folk music.
5. "Liveness" was a key mechanism by which *The Long Note* producers mediated traditional and folk music.

6. The mediations of liveness in *The Long Note* were conceptualised in several ways, including the method of recording (in one take), its immediacy, the presentation of recently produced albums, providing a snapshot of current performing activity, and the inclusion of news and current affairs in the folk and traditional music scene.

This thesis has demonstrated how *The Long Note* was a significant arena for the discursive construction of Irish traditional music in the period 1970-1994. The thesis shows how the programme makers negotiated expressions of cultural nationalism, representations of gender and ethnicity, and aesthetics of liveness via the programme. It suggests a new taxonomy for the production of liveness in mediated traditional music. While this taxonomy was created in reference to the medium of radio, it can also be applied to other music media and in contemporary times. This thesis is grounded in the field of ethnomusicology, but it also draws from and contributes to the fields of radio studies and broader music studies. The taxonomy put forward in chapter five contributes to the construction of an interdisciplinary theoretical framework for the analysis of music radio.

6.2 Liveness in contemporary radio

Van Es rightly claims that a broader understanding of liveness is imperative for understanding new emerging forms of liveness on social media in contemporary times: “Approaching the live as a construction helps to account for its diversity.” (van Es 2017, 1248) However, I suggest that these varieties of liveness were proliferating, as exemplified in *The Long Note*, long before the advent of digital media in the 1990s. Contemporary radio liveness in Irish traditional music differs from that of *The Long Note*. But does liveness on the radio still exist as a concept driving meaning in the context of folk and traditional music, however they may be rendered vague and complex by today’s more complex manifestations of what is considered to be live performance, as argued by Sanden? (2013, 18) Crisell states that the traditional type of liveness is a now-obsolete feature of radio programming in contemporary times (Crisell 2012, xi-xii). I would argue, however, that discussions about the worth and prominence of liveness and other historical manifestations of the word have not been discussed as

much as their significance would suggest in radio and broadcast programming. Indeed, the COVID-19 era has only spotlighted the specific character and qualities of liveness as even more important now in the production of sound. The significance of liveness to the Irish musical scene continues to be debated at the time of writing, with the ebb and flow of COVID restrictions and easements, and as the Irish arts community lobbies the government to begin work to resurrect the night-time economy. As music journalist Toner Quinn states, "[E]veryone's idea of a great night out involves a live performance somewhere along the way. The live experience brings dynamism and energy, something unique you cannot get elsewhere" (Quinn 21st September 2021). However, as van Es notes, many contemporary expressions of liveness in contemporary media do not necessarily refer to the liveness apparent in broadcasting from the 20th century as discussed in this chapter. (van Es 2017, 1246) In many ways, the extent and quality of liveness relating to contemporary forms of communication has come to the fore at the time of writing. The convergences of different media formats in the first two decades of the 21st century essentially muddy our modern definition of what and when something is a live radio broadcast. The shift to digital modes of communication in Covid times put into sharp focus the characteristic of liveness in broadcasting and across internet communication in general. In recent years, the production of live media (in the sense of being done "in one take" and/or in front of an audience) is accepted as something considerably more complex than was the case previously. Crisell states that several features in the contemporary broadcast media replace traditional liveness, including the ubiquity of pre-recording and 'constructed as live' presentations and other features which aspire to be part of the present. (Crisell 2012) In today's media environment there are many forms of radio which all converge: 'traditional' live radio on analog and digital broadcast formats, podcasting, internet radio, as well as Facebook videos of live radio broadcasts, social media commentary accompanying live radio broadcasts and continuing after the radio broadcast ended. The value to traditional musicians today of the liveness produced by *The Long Note* is demonstrated by the high proportion of archive visitors who are traditional musicians, as commented on by archivists.

6.3 Limitations of the research and other matters

Like any ethnographic study, this study is irreproducible. Time has moved on and public discourse on many of the topics mentioned in this dissertation has opened up. Consequently, my interviewees would have different, more developed thoughts and responses to my questions about national identity, representation of gender and ethnicity, and the aesthetics of radio music programming and Irish traditional music, were they to be interviewed now. Furthermore, even the archival research presented here is becoming more difficult because of the increasing difficulty of access to broadcast archives brought about by the EU-wide implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (2018). During this research, access to the RTÉ Archives narrowed from initially being a relatively open, relaxed arrangement where I could book a workspace in the RTÉ Document Archives every few weeks, to a much more limited situation where two days per year was the limit allowed for external academic researchers. COVID restrictions applied in 2020 removed RTÉ archival access altogether and has still not been reinstated at the time of writing in 2022. Most of the archives I used in this project lacked any catalogue of their radio sources - including ITMA, BBC Radio Ulster and the main BBC sound archive via the British Library. Indeed, where once there existed relatively open public access to the archive, BBC NI Community Archivist Niamh Baker reported in 2017 that "the role of the community archive has…changed" (email correspondence with author, 9th Nov). The idea of calling any of these physical collections of radio materials "archives," prioritising as they do the needs of their current broadcasters, is to stretch the definition of an archive. And though the BBC widely advertises its digitisation of archival sources and online provision of sources (BBC 2022), only 98 of the "more than 10,000" programmes the BBC states are available on the site dating from the period studied (1970-94) with "music" in the metadata include audio. These ninety-eight programmes were in turn made up of only four distinct radio programmes (*Desert Island Discs*, *A Letter from America by Alastair Cooke*, *The Reith Lectures*, and *Kaleidoscope*). Overall, the dire state of archives of radio material indicates that further opportunities for fruitful historical research in public radio archives are either vulnerable to further retractions of access, or indeed are approaching their logical end. Hilmes

urges that "a truly cross-cultural historical approach to radio has much to teach us… neither radio nor television developed in a nation-bound cocoon, despite the dominant discourse (produced so strongly by the broadcasters themselves)" (2002, 15). Truly cross-cultural, transnational research requires transnational access to broadcast archives, however, and this work practice is becoming increasingly difficult.

The research I have presented here is only made possible because a selection of recordings and related print material of that programme – and, indeed of Irish traditional music programming on RTÉ in general – were deposited in ITMA in Merrion Square in the centre of Dublin, an archive which is open to the public 5 days a week. Though not all this archive's holdings are immediately available due to sometimes needing digitisation and cataloguing first, material is steadily being made available to interested researchers, especially in response to requests. In the past, RTÉ archives used to offer researchers a half-day of access to its own internal broadcasting archives in exchange for a fee, but this service is no longer available. Thus, to my knowledge, ITMA is the only place in Ireland where significant amounts of historical RTÉ radio recordings (i.e., recordings from the pre-streaming era) are accessible to the public for listening.

Where access for researchers to RTÉ Archives had previously existed via a relatively open and transparent process, however, this is no longer the case. This affects radio scholars and our research. Sounds as forms of historical record especially, especially, are dwindling. In the case of this research, being able to listen to the content actually created and broadcast and not just reading a script (if one was recorded and available) offers us a richness of data about the people involved; about the live performance; about the aesthetics of the music being discussed; and about the formatting of the show, where it sits in relation to the aesthetics of the music played, and the sounds discussed. Remediation of past programmes tells us a lot about the persistent value of radio programmes to broadcasters and musicians in contemporary times. This is also reflective of the wider traditional music community. As discussed in chapter one's literature review, few works on historical radio in Ireland concern music – a telling indication of the scarcity of access to the sources. Radio mediations of folk and traditional music remain relatively under-theorised, though this thesis addresses that gap. As producer Bradshaw

phrased it (Bradshaw 2019), what happens to music and musicians when they lose their collective memory, via the loss of an archive? Loss of archival access has vast implications for our research and our musical practices. If increased investment were made to the processes of cataloguing and digitisation, much broader research would be enabled on this unique body of cultural material.

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Report on accommodation requirements in Radio Telefis Eireann, July 1974. Appendix B: 'Mock-up' drawings for Stage 2. General Services Department, 11th July 1974." Accessed in RTÉ Document Archives, Box named "RTÉ Documents 1974," March 2018.

RTÉ Gazette. 1975. "Is RTÉ a man's world?" May/June 1975, 3-5.

RTÉ Gazette. 1975. "Is RTÉ a man's world?" July/August 1975, 3-4.

RTÉ Authority Meeting minutes.

1974

256th meeting, 15th February 1974

268th Meeting, 7th September 1974 (An Cheathrú Rua, Conamara)

270th meeting, 4th October 1974

1975

7th November 1975 (vol. 10)

1979

RTÉ Working Party on Women in Broadcasting, 1979 - from RTÉ Authority.

9th April 1979

1980

362nd Meeting, 12th May 1980

1981

374th Meeting of the RTÉ Authority, 9th March 1981

375th Meeting of the RTÉ Authority, 1981

376th Meeting of the RTÉ Authority, 11th May 1981

RTÉ Documents 1976

"Radio Scoile: Report add Findings on the Pilot Broadcasts and Recommendations," 1975: 5. [Yellow folder, with the following notes and markings on the cover: "Mairin Carthuir; Radio Scoile 1976; CAO Library; 07.03.84; 11, 406; 634.19 (417)."]

*Radio in the '80*s, Working Group 2, "How will people use and perceive radio programs?" June 7, 1976. Chairman: Henning Wicht. Rapporteur: William Siemering.

RTÉ Interoffice memo, 12th October 1961. From Fachtna Ó hAnnracháin to Director General, cc. Mr. [J.A.] Irvine. RTÉ Document Archives, Folder: HIST/1960s/010 "Employment of Married Women in Radio Éireann 1961-62."

RTÉ Interoffice memo, 2nd February 1962. From J.A. Irvine to Mr. P Warren, Mr R Walsh. RTÉ Document Archives. Folder: HIST/1960s/010 "Employment of Married Women in Radio Éireann 1961-62."

ITMA Archive Documents:

Harry Bradshaw Collection:

Box 26/Folder 5
Letter from Gerry MacBride to Harry Bradshaw and Robbie Hannon, December 1985.
Letter from Harry Bradshaw to Gerry MacBride. 7th January 1986.

Box 25/Folders 1-10.
Correspondence between Maura Feeney and Harry Bradshaw, 25th March 1984 and 2nd June 1984.

Box 25/Folder 11
Letter from Maigh Leacht, Coill an Choilligh, 18-2-85.

Box 25/Folder "Skagen"
Taylor, John A. n.d. "Take a tip from the Irish" Clipping from unidentified newspaper of John A. Taylor's letter to the newspaper. Signed, "John A. Taylor, Cambridge."

Unknown box
Letter to Harry Bradshaw from John Lynch, Skibbereen, Co. Cork, 20 November 1986.
Letter to Harry Bradshaw: Athlone 11/12/85.
Letter from Harry Bradshaw to Sean Ó hÓgáin, 28 May 1984.

Seán Ó Riada Archive, University College Cork.

Pg. 144. Item 584 "21 April 1971 Printed report, in Irish, on the policy of R.T.É. In regards to the Irish language." https://libguides.ucc.ie/ld.php?content_id=31773019. Accessed 13th September 2021.

Appendix A1: Information Sheet

Research Project Title:

The mediation of Irish traditional music in Irish public broadcasting, 1970-94.

Invitation Paragraph:

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

What is the Project's Purpose?

This research will describe the representation of Irish traditional music in RTÉ, one of the key sites for musical activity, ideas and debate in Ireland in the twentieth century. The central question I ask in this research will be: what was the relationship between Irish traditional music and RTÉ in the period 1970-1994? I have selected some radio programmes as case studies, and I hope to write about musical experience in Ireland in that period. I will ask how RTÉ produced and presented their Irish traditional music programmes, and how these programmes were received by the listening public. More generally, I am asking about the place of broadcasting institutions as gatekeepers of musical knowledge and values. I will be conducting the research from Sept '16-Aug '19.

Why have I been chosen?

The aim of the research is to find out as much as possible about RTÉ's music programming from 1970-1994. You have been asked to participate because I feel that you had some involvement in this as a broadcaster, producer, technician, presenter, or keen listener, or as someone involved in the development of Irish traditional music in general in that time period. I think you are particularly knowledgeable about the era and I would like to listen to what you have to say about it. You are one of a number of people (I estimate between 10 and 20) that I will be interviewing for this project.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep (and be asked to sign a consent form) and you can still withdraw at any time without consequence. You do not have to give a reason.

What will happen to me if I take part?

I will interview you and make an audio recording of the interview so that I can transcribe it later. How long the interview will take and what questions I ask will depend on you to a large extent, on how much time you have available, and on how much you have to say about the topic. I hope to discuss your involvement with or experience of RTÉ music programming, in as much depth as possible. I will ask a mixture of closed questions that require specific answers (e.g. about the dates of your involvement with music and/or broadcasting in this era), and some more open questions that ask you to think about broader aspects of your involvement and experience.

Will I be recorded and how will the recorded media be used?

Yes, I will record the interview so that I can forget about taking notes, and also so that I can listen to you better during the interview and have an actual conversation. I will use the audio recordings of our conversation made during this research to help me transcribe the interviews. Beyond that, I will not use the audio recordings unless you give me permission to do so on the consent form (Q5). In this case, the audio recordings will only be used for illustration in online publications, conference presentations and lectures. No other use will be made of them without your written permission, and no one outside the project will be allowed access to the original recordings.

What do I have to do?

Please read this information sheet and the consent form carefully, and think carefully about your answers. You will do the interview with me on an agreed date, time and place that suits your schedule. If you wish to review the transcript before you give consent for me to use it, I will send it to you by email or post. I will ask you to read it and return it to me within a timeframe that you and I agree together. If you don't then return it within that timeframe, I will assume that you are happy to have the material on the transcript attributed to you, and that I can use it in my research publications. (This is explained again on the consent form.)

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

The main disadvantage of being involved in this research is how much time it will take out of your schedule. I predict that your travelling to and from the interview, reading this information sheet, doing the interview, reviewing your transcript afterwards and returning it to me will realistically take up a total of 4 hours of your time, on average.

You might be worried about being recorded and saying something in the interview that you might later regret. Please be assured that you have the option of reviewing the transcript of your interview before giving your final consent. You may also decide not to continue taking part in this interview at any time.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

There are no immediate benefits for you, apart from the chance to spend some time talking about the history of Irish traditional music, music in general, broadcasting, and Ireland in the late 20th century. I would love to discuss your part in this history and I hope that you would also enjoy taking part in such research. I hope that this dissertation and the resulting publication will contribute significantly to the writing of this history, amongst other things. This PhD carries on research I previously published on the related topic of the earliest programmes of Irish traditional music in Radio Éireann - you can read a copy of this in the Irish Traditional Music Archive in Merrion Square, Dublin (free and open to the public), or in the Library of University College Cork. If you would like to play some tunes together afterwards, or share some songs over a cup of tea, that would also be fine by me!

What if something goes wrong?

You are free to stop your involvement in this project at any time without having to give a reason. If you have a complaint about how I treat you during this research project, you may contact my supervisor, Dr. Simon Keegan-Phipps (see contact details at end). Should you feel that your complaint was not handled to your satisfaction, you may contact the Registrar and Secretary of the University of Sheffield.

Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?

If you are happy to be, you will be quoted and identified in this research. You have the option of reviewing the transcript of the interview for review before you give final consent, to help you decide on this. In this case, I'll send you the transcript, and you may select sections of the interview that you would prefer to be kept confidential, or that you would prefer not to be attributed to you, or that you are happy to be named as saying.

What type of information will be sought from me and why is the collection of this information relevant for achieving the research project's objectives?

I will ask you about your involvement with or knowledge of RTÉ music programming, in as much depth as possible in the time we have. I will ask a mixture of questions that require specific answers (e.g. about the dates of your involvement with or knowledge of music and/or broadcasting in this era), and some more open questions that ask you to think about broader aspects of your experience and knowledge. This information is central to my being able to answer the question of how Irish traditional music was mediated by RTÉ in this period.

What will happen to the results of the research project?

This research will be published in a Ph.D. dissertation, which will be made freely available online through the University of Sheffield's open access publications system. This will not include the transcript of your interview, but it may include quotes from your interview (unless you choose otherwise on the consent form). Further articles drawn from this dissertation may be published in journals and other avenues of publication. Information collected in this research may be used to support further research in the area in the future.

Who is organising and funding the research?

The research is part of a Ph.D. programme I am undertaking through the University of Sheffield. I have received a 3-year, fully-funded University of Sheffield Faculty of Arts and Humanities Doctoral Academy award to undertake this project.

Who has ethically reviewed the research?

The Department of Music in the University of Sheffield.

Thank you very much for considering taking part in this research project!

Contacts for further information:

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Appendix A2: Participant Consent Form

Title of Research Project:

Mediating Irish traditional music in Irish public broadcasting, 1970-1994

Name of Lead Researcher: Helen Gubbins

Name of Participant: ________________________
Please initial box

1. I confirm that the nature of the research project has been explained to me and I have ☐

   had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any ☐

   time (including at any time in the future) without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.

3. I give permission for Helen Gubbins to quote from my interview responses in the ☐

   publications that result from the research. I understand that I will be identifiable (i.e. named) through quotes used in these publications.

   OR

4. I give permission for Helen Gubbins to quote from my interview responses AFTER ☐

   I have reviewed the transcripts of the interview. I understand that, in such a review, I will be able to request that any part(s) of the transcript be (i) anonymised, or (ii) deleted. I understand that, where neither (i) nor (ii) has been requested, I will be identifiable (i.e. named) through quotes used in publications. I intend to return the reviewed transcript within …………………………..weeks of receipt. If I do not return the transcript within this agreed period, I understand that it will be assumed that I agree to quotation of all and any parts of the transcript, as in 3.

5. I give permission for Helen Gubbins to include any transcript or audio recording of ☐

   this interview or subsequent demonstrations (subject to terms of 3. or 4.) on any online published material relating to this project and in conference and lecture proceedings, and recognise that Helen Gubbins will retain mechanical copyright of any creative content only.

6. I agree for the data collected from me (subject to terms of 3. or 4., and 5.) to be used in future research. ☐

7. I agree to take part in the above research project. ☐

______________________	________________	________________
Name of Participant	Date	Signature
______________________	________________	________________
Lead Researcher	Date	Signature

Once this has been signed by all parties the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form, the letter/pre-written script/information sheet and any other written information provided to the participants. A copy of the signed and dated consent form should be placed in the project's main record (e.g. a site file), which must be kept in a secure location.

Appendix A3: List of Interviewees

1. Jackie Small, email exchange, 29th January 2017.
2. Peter Browne, Dublin, 17th Nov 2017.
3. Neansaí Ní Choisdealbha, RnaG Casla, 23rd April 2018.
4. Caitlín Ní Chualáin, RnaG Casla, 24th April 2018.
5. Gearóid Mac Dhonncha, RnaG Casla, 25th April 2018.
6. Máirtín Tom Sheáinín Mac Donncha, RnaG Casla, 26th April 2018.
7. Seán Ó hÉanaigh, RnaG Casla, 26th April 2018.
8. Brian Doyle, ITMA Dublin, 2nd May 2018.
9. Paddy Glackin, Milltown Malbay, 11th July 2019.
10. Cathal Goan, Milltown Malbay, 11th July 2019.
11. Brian Mullen, Milltown Malbay, 11th July 2019.
12. Harry Bradshaw, Dublin, email communication 2nd February 2017; personal interview 31st October 2019.
13. Niamh Parsons, Skype, 18th September 2019.
14. Máire O'Keeffe, Skype, 15th December 2020.
15. Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh, Skype, 18th May 2021.
16. Mickey Dunne, Zoom, 2nd July 2021.

Other informal conversations and interviews referenced

1. Peter Browne, July 2005, Radio producer, RTÉ, Dublin 4.
2. Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, July 2005, Professor of Music, University of Limerick.
3. Paul Wilson, January 2017, Curator, Radio, The British Library, London.
4. Niamh Baker, November 2017, Broadcast Archivist, BBC Northern Ireland Community Archive/National Museums Northern Ireland.
5. Michael Talty, 9th April 2018, RTÉ Document Archives, RTÉ, Dublin 4.
6. Tina Byrne, 23 May 2018, RTÉ Document Archives, RTÉ, Dublin 4.
7. Michael Walsh, December 2021, email correspondence.

Appendix B: One year of *Long Notes*[38]

List of *Long Note* radio programmes, 3rd October 1977 - 28th August 1978[39]

Date	List of performers, types of recordings played, and other notes
Monday 3rd October 1977	Paddy Glackin, Mary Bergin, Peter Browne, Darach Ó Catháin, Nioclás Tóibín, Mairéad Ní Dhomhnaill
Monday 10th October 1977	Bothy Band Special. A whole programme on the Bothy Band's newest record on Mulligan Records, 103. "Out of the Wind Into the Sun"[40] Recorded June 1977.
Monday 17th October 1977	Planxty & Andy Irvine, Polydor & Mulligan records.
Monday 24th October 1977	Breton tunes. From an album. Also, Jack & Fr. Charles Coen.
Monday 31st October 1977	Paddy Taylor, Peadar Mercier, Nóra Nic Dhonncha, Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, John J. Kimmel, Jackie Daly
Monday 7th November 1977	Looks like an exchange of recordings with the BBC - certainly they played 5 BBC tracks here, including "The Whistling Thief" by Bess Cronin. Playing of Jenny's Welcome to Charlie" (of which the tune "The Long Note" is an alternate version). Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, Nóirín Ní Riain.
Monday 14th November 1977	Tommy Potts (RTÉ Tape). Mixture of other albums and RTÉ recordings follow it. Incl. Paddy Keenan, Peter Browne, Creagh, Low Rowsome, Steeleye Span, Ewan McColl.. Ní Riain & Súilleabháin (Seoithín Seo).
Monday 21st November 1977	Whole programme was RTÉ recordings of Paddy O'Donahoe, Michael O'Donahoe, Denis Doody, Peter Browne, etc.
Monday 28th November 1977	RTÉ tape recordings of Bill O'Malley, Joe Bane & duets. Nóirín Ní Riain & Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, Sonny Murray, & album of Nioclás Toibín (Gael Linn album).
Monday 5th December 1977	Jimmy Crowley, Jolyon Jackson, Seán Ó Riada & Ceoltóirí Chualann, Séamus Ennis, John Kelly, Ní Riain & Súileabháin, Keane sisters.

[38] Some programmes need further analysis in order to fill in missing information. This work is still underway.
[39] Content directly transcribed from RTÉ Radio Logs, Boxes 006-8.
[40] https://www.irishtune.info/album/BB+3/

Monday 12th December 1977	Tríona Ní Dhomhnaill, Paddy Keenan, Frank Harte, Seosamh Ó hÉanaí, group of prof. Musicians, Paddy Glackin solo, etc.
Monday 19th December 1977	Long Note: including Nioclás Tóibín, Seán Ó Riada, Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, Nóirín Ní Riain
Saturday 24th December 1977	Céilí House Christmas requests (i.e. all RTÉ tapes). Includes Mary Bergin "reels."
Monday 26th December 1977	
Monday 2nd Jan 1978	Looks like a programme focussing on Christy Moore, including commercial recordings and RTÉ tapes (.e.g. January man). Includes a recording of John Reilly from the private tape collection of Tom Munnelly. Contains selections of Christy Moore albums: 1 of Whatever Tickles Your Fancy (1975), three tracks of Christy Moore (1976), and Cricklewood (1979). (Repeated on 3rd July 1978 according to radio logs.)
Monday 9th January 1978	Joe Holmes, Len Graham, Frankie Gavin, De Danaan, . Mixture of RTÉ tapes and commercial records.
Monday 16th January 1978	Involves Paddy Glackin and Donal Lunny
Monday 23rd January 1978	Long Note includes private tape of Seán Ó Riada from Éamon de Buitléar, as well as a CCÉ tape of Tomás O Coisdealbha (Costelloe).
Friday 27th January 1978	Includes Tabhair Dom do Lámh (Bill Meek presenter, with Paddy Glackin musician). Also includes RTÉ Singers
Sunday 29th January 1978	Includes a repeat of 23/1/78 at 4pm as well as Ceolta Tíre
Monday 30th January 1978	Planxty "The Well Below the Valley Oh"

Tuesday 31st January 1978	
Monday 6th Feb 1978	
Monday 13th February 1978	
Tuesday 14th February 1978	
Wednesday 15th February 1978	
Friday 17th February 1978	
Saturday 18th February 1978	
Sunday 19th February 1978	
Monday 20th Feb 1978	Preab san Aer (Máire de Barra, Pádraig Ó Méalóid) (5 recorded tracks); Music on the Move/Brendan Balfe (15 recorded tracks); Long Note (4/9 tracks recorded) (repeat of 26th Feb 1978?). Nic Jones, Kevin Burke, Bothy Band (Strayaway Child).
Tues 21st Feb 1978	Music Man (Vincent Hanley) (9 recorded tracks); Craoladh na Scol (7 recorded tracks, 1 RTÉ recording); Clár CCÉ (3 recorded, 3 "private tapes); Music on the Move/Brendan Balfe (14 recorded tracks)
Wednesday 22nd Feb 1978	Binneas (Máire de Barra) (8 recorded tracks)
Fri 24th Feb 1978	Tabhair Dom do Lámh (Bill Meek) (7 recorded tracks)
Sat 25th Feb 1978	Mór Dhíbh (11 recorded tracks); Céilí House (10 live tracks, 1 commercially recorded track); Jazz World (9 recorded tracks)
Sunday 26th Feb 1978	Includes Mo Cheol Thú (4 live tracks, 5 commercial album tracks). Also Óró Domhnaigh: 6 recorded tracks except for title track, RTÉ recorded

Monday 27th Feb 1978	
Tuesday 28th Feb 1978	11 RTÉ tracks, 2 commercial on Long Note. Mostly Micho Russell & Paddy Glackin (one Len Graham). 2 commercial - Bagad Kemper and Munroe.
Monday 6th March 1978	All RTÉ recordings of Tommy Potts & Seamus Ennis
Monday 13th March 1978	All RTÉ recordings of Tommy Potts & Seamus Ennis
Monday 20th March 1978	Mostly four tracks from the new Kevin Burke recording "If the Cap Fits"
Monday 27th March 1978	Mixture of album & RTÉ recordings. Joe Burke & Charlie Lennon. Seosamh Ó hÉanaí. Seamus Ennis.
Monday 3rd April 1978	Scottish focus - mixture of BBC recordings & commercial albums.
Monday 10th April 1978	Mixture of RTÉ, commercial and BBC recordings.
Monday 17th April 1978	All RTÉ recordings.
Monday 24th April 1978	All commercial recordings. Matt Molloy, Tommy Peoples, Paul Brady. (with Seoithín Seo RTÉ tape). Also 3 tracks from a compilation album of Breton musicians: https://www.discogs.com/Various-Ils-Se-Meurent-Nos-Oiseaux/release/3792799 More Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger
Monday 1st May 1978	All RTÉ recordings of Ewan McColl & Peggy Seeger
Monday 8th May 1978	All RTÉ recordings of Ewan McColl & Peggy Seeger (i.e. more, not a repeat of 1st May 1978).
Monday 15th May 1978	Iarla Ó Lionáird, singing Aisling Gheal (recorded for Gael Linn). Ó Riada & Ceoltóirí Chualann. Dé Dannan recording. Cathal McConnell, Robin Morton.

Monday 22nd May 1978	Commercial recordings of Andy Irvine & Planxty but also RTÉ tapes.
Monday 29th May 1978	All RTÉ tapes. Martin O'Connor, Micho Russell, Thure Hardilen & Stem Anderson, Eamon McGivney, James Kelly.
Monday 5th June 1978	Commercial records, and some RTÉ tapes including Bothy Band. Bobby Casey.
Monday 12th June 1978	Commercial records (including 14-year old Ó Lionáird singing Gael Linn's Aisling Gheal).
Monday 19th June 1978	All BBC recordings, including Simon Doherty, Denis Murphy, Maggie MacDonagh, R.J. O'Mealy, Nioclás Tóibín, Labhrás Ó Cadhla, Willie Clancy, Aggie White, Frank Cassidy, John Doherty, Ballinakill Céilí Band, Thomas Moran, Tomás Ó Ceannabháin.
Monday 26th June 1978	Mix of commercial "world music" recordings from South African record company Gallo records, as well as some recordings from the private collection of Dave Abbott Performers described as "Tonga Tribesmen, Zulu Tribesmen, Shangaan women, Swazi women." Also RTÉ recordings of Willie Clancy and a MÓS-led group of musicians.
Monday 3rd July 1978	Looks like a programme focussing on Christy Moore, including commercial recordings and RTÉ tapes (.e.g. January man). Includes a recording of John Reilly from the private tape collection of Tom Munnelly. Contains selections of Christy Moore albums: 1 of Whatever Tickles Your Fancy (1975), three tracks of Christy Moore (1976), and Cricklewood (1979), (Repeat of Jan 2nd 1978 according to radio logs and to Mediaweb.)
Monday 10th July 1978	Broadcast of Ewan McColl & Charles Parker's Radio Ballad Singing the Fishing, first broadcast by the BBC in 1960.[41]
Monday 17th July 1978	Includes Comhaltas recordings of Tomás Ó Coisdealbha again. All other tracks were commercial recordings, many by Gael Linn, as well as a BBC-recorded track.
Monday 24th July 1978	Repeat of 6th March 1978 (All RTÉ recordings of Tommy Potts & Seamus Ennis)
Monday 31st July 1978	Repeat of 13th March 1978 (All RTÉ recordings of Tommy Potts & Seamus Ennis)

[41] Full transcript of the radio ballad available here: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/601d943f3b66f8616eac3746/t/6075f91daa82f90764f41b81/1618344232526/Singing-the-fishing.pdf. Other details available here: https://mainlynorfolk.info/ewan.maccoll/records/radioballads.html accessed 1st October 2021.

Monday 7th August 1978	All commercial recordings: Gael Linn, Tara, Topic, Mulligan records. Nóirín Ní Riain, Christy Moore, John Reilly, Dick Gaughan.
Monday 14th August 1978	All RTÉ tapes. Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin presenting. Mostly MÓS: solos, duets with Nóirín Ní Riain & Paddy Glackin.
Monday 21st August 1978	Mostly commercial albums: Mulligan, Folkways, Topic, Polydor, Gael Linn, Perides, Ram Records. Some RTÉ tapes. Singers: David Hammond, Jimmy Crowley, O.J. Abbott, Frank Harte, William Andrews
Monday 28th August 1978	All commercial album recordings. Including Clannad, Gheorge Zamfir (Romanian pan-pipe musician, "master of the pan pipes").

Appendix C: Detailed music log of one day on RTÉ Radio, Monday 20th Feb 1978[42]

Time	Title as reported in newspaper[43]	Time	Programme title as noted in RTÉ Written archive "Radio Logs" and Presenter	Presenter/Length of track/other info.	Artist	Title	Composer/Publisher
		.30	**Station opening**				
7:30	*News*	:30	*News & Weather*				
7.33	*The Living Word*	.34	*The Living Word*				
7.35	*Morning Call*	.36	*Morning Call*				
7.55	*Weather*	.55	*Weather Forecast*				
8.0	*News and the Papers*	.0	*News and It says in the Papers*				
8.30	*News*	.30	*News Headlines*				
9.0	*News and The Papers*	.0	*News/Weather and It Says in the Papers*				
9.15	*Morgan on Monday*	.17	*Morgan on Monday*				
10.0	*News*	0.0	*News Summary*				
10.2	*The Gay Byrne Hour*	0.2	*The Gay Byrne Hour*				

[42] Source: RTÉ Radio Logs, RTÉ Document Archives.
[43] *Irish Independent*, 27th February 1978:18.

10.58	*The Living Word*	0.58					
11.0	*News*	1.0					
11.01	*Here and Now*	1.01					
11.45	*The Way We Are*	1.45					
12.0	*The Angelus*	2.0					
12.1	*News Headlines*	2.1					
12.4	*The Way We Are* (continued)	2.4					
12.30	*Nuacht*	2.30					
12.33	*Soon After Noon*	2.33					
1.0	*News*	.0					
1.1	*Harbour Hotel*	.1					
1.30	*News*	.30					
2.0	Sponsored	.0					
3.0	*News*	.0					
3.3	*Knock-at-the-Door*	.3					
3.20	*Highways and Byways*	3.20					
4.0	*Cinnlinte Nuachta*	.0					

4.1	*Music Magazine*	.1					
4.30	*Preab San Aer*	.31	*Preab San Aer*	Maire de Barra agus Padraig O Mealoid[44]			
		.20			Gwendahl	Joe Cant's Reel	Trad. arr Gwendahl/Sacem/EMI 064 13075
		.45			Jean Michel Jarre	Oxygene	Jean Michel Jarre/Britico Black Neon Mus./POI 2001 721
		.45			Space	Magic Fly	Ecama/Britico, Heath Levy/PYE 7N 25746
		.20			Jonathan Richman and the Modern Lovers	Egyptian Reggae	J. Richman/Modern Love Song, Warner Bros. Mus/Beserxley BZZ 2
		.45			The Rah Band	The Crunch	Richard Hewson/Rondor, Tin Lid Mus./Good Earth
4.45	*Frankly Speaking.* The week: Is Limerick as bad as it is painted by journalists	.45	*Frankly Speaking*	This week: nature and its changing environment[45] - Pat Butler			
		.58	Promos				
5.0	*News*	.0	*News Headlines*				

[44] Correct spelling: Máire de Barra agus Pádraig Ó Méalóíd
[45] *Irish Times*, 20th February 1978: 17.

5.1	*Music on the Move*	.03	*Music on the Move*	Brendan Balfe			
				0.20	Eric Delaney	Fish & Sticks	Delaney/Chappell/PYE GGL 0191
				3.04	Donna Fargo	Happy Together	Bonner, Gordon/Robbins/W.B.K. 56442
				3.20	Jamie Stone	Our Story	Care Corcoran/Rebel Mus./EMI INT 545
				3.00	Kenny Johnson	City Lights	O'Brien/Murray/Johnson/Chappell/EMI INT 545
				3.00	Red Hurley	Angel in Your Arms	T. Woodford, C.Ivey, T.Brasfield/MCPS,Bocu/RH
				2.30	The Muppets	Borneo	Donaldson arr. J Kiveskin/FH&D MCPS, Britico/21
				2.00	Buddy Holly	It dosen't [sic] matter anymore	Anka/Robert Mellin/MCA EMTV 8
				3.40	Dickie Rock	Almost like a Song	A. Jordan H. David/MCPS, Sunbury/SOLO 151
				4.10	Soundtrack "High Society"	Now you has Jazz	Cole Porter/NCB, Bie/Capitol LCT 6116
				1.00	Don McLean	Redwing	Arr & adpt. McLean/Benny Bird/EMI INS
				3.02	Horslips	Sure the boy was Green	Trad. arr. Horslips/Emma Mus./MOO 14
				3.20	Hoyt Axton, Linda Rondstadt	Lion in Winter	H. Axton/Rondor Mus./AMLH 64669

				3.15	Bruce Roberts	Me & My Love	Roberts, Bayer, Sager/Cop Con/Elektra IC 520
				1.00	Ted Heath Band	Listen to my Music	Heath/MCPS/Decca PPS 4408
				2.00	Do[46]	The Champ	Gillespie/KPM P. Maurice/Do
5.55	*Sportsnews*	.55					
6.0	*The Angelus*	.0					
6.1	*Cinnlínte Nuachta*	.1					
6.2	*Weather*	.2					
6.20	*Farm Diary*	.20					
6.30	*News*	.30					
7.0	*Programme Signpost*	.0					
7.2	*The Long Note*	.02	*The Long Note*	Peter Browne (repeat of 26/2/1978)			
				1.29	Nic Jones	Jackie Tar	Trad. arr Jones/Leading Note Mus./Trailer LER 2091
				1.50	Do	William & Nancy's Parting	Do./Do./Trailer LER 2027
				3.17	Do	Edward	Do./Do./Do
				2.15	Kevin Burke	Hornpipe & Biddy	Trad./-/RTE Tape

[46] This signifies the repetition of the entry just above it, in this case, "Ted Heath Band."

						Martin's Reel	
				4.12	Bothy Band	The Strayaw ay Child	Trad. arr. D. Lunny/Mulligan Mus. MCPS/Mulligan Lun 013
				3.20	Nic Jones	Green Mossy Banks of the Lee	Trad. arr. Jones/ - / RTE Tape
				2.27	Do	Little Heathy Hill	Do./-/Do
				1.57	Kevin Burke	John Stenson's Reels	Do./-/Do
				2.13	Kevin Burke & Peter Browne	The Earl's Chair & The Hunter's Purse	Do./-/Do
				2.13			
7.45	Imprint	.45	Books and Bookmen	Kevin Casey			
8.0	Europe	.0					
8.30	Nuacht	.30					
8.45	Music Room	.45					
9.30	Tracht	.30					
10.0	News	0.0					
10.15	Sportsne ws	0.15					
10.20	Addendu m	0.20					
10.50	Open Line	0.50					

11.0	News	1.0					
11.45	Late News	1.45					

Radio na Gaeltachta[47]

1.00 Ar Bhuille an Se
1.30 On tSean am Anall
7.0 Nuacht
7.30 Cuairt an Lae
8.0 Cill Airne na Loch agus a Mhuintir
8.30 Anseo is Ansiud
9.0 Nutcht, Reamhaisnes na hAimsire agus Clabhsur

[47] Note: Many Irish language words were misspelled in newspaper printing in this period, usually omitting the *síneadh fada* (Irish language accent, diacritic). For example, the last programme of the RnaG schedule should be written *Nuacht, Réamháisnéis na hAimsire* agus *Clabhsúr*.

Appendix D: Some *Long Note* episodes featuring or relating to issues concerning Travellers

Year	Day, date	Performers, types of recordings played, and other notes	Source of info.
1975	26th May	"John Reilly a Traveller from Boyle Co. Roscommon sings a full version of 'The Well Below the Valley' Recording made by Tom Munnelly"	RTÉ's Mediaweb, episode title BB3281
1976	16th Aug	Liam Weldon features, singing The Blue Tar Road, a song criticising Dublin corporation for their eviction of Travellers	RTÉ's Mediaweb, episode title AA5333
1977	Monday 10th Oct	A whole programme on the Bothy Band's newest record on Mulligan Records, 103. "Out of the Wind Into the Sun"[48] Recorded June 1977.	
1978	Monday 2nd Jan	Christy Moore (Repeated on 3rd July 1978 according to radio logs.)	
1978	Monday 30th Jan	Planxty album singing John Reilly's song: "The Well Below the Valley Oh"	
1978	Monday 3rd Jul	Christy Moore "special" (including recordings of Traveller & singer John Reilly)	
1980	Monday 28th Jan	A *Long Note* tribute to Donegal Traveller and fiddler John Doherty.	RTÉ's Mediaweb. Episode title AA370.
1980		Johnny Doran Special	

[48] https://www.irishtune.info/album/BB+3/