Media and Economic Crisis

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Political economy of the Irish media

- (1) Corporate and government links
- (2) Advertising pressures
- (3) ‘Experts’
- (4) Ideology
- (5) Readers?
Good reporting

• Sunday Business Post
• Irish Times Social Affairs
• Individual journalists
• Alternative Press? Social media? Left-of-Centre Media?
• Union papers?
Two quotes

• ‘the Government will have a major job to do in educating public opinion about unpalatable economic realities and the need for civic discipline’ (IT)

• ‘The primary interest for the government to take into account is that of Ireland Inc.’ (SBP)
Significant support for fiscal consolidation

- 58% for, 10% against, 32% neutral
- Authorship: 57% financial sector/economists; 20% FG/FF politicians; 9% academics; 7% progressive organisation; 3% trade union
Spending cuts over tax hikes

- Preferred target for spending cuts: public sector
- ‘History says cut when the economy is weak’ is ‘the best way out of recession’ (Dan O’Brien)
Weak opposition to austerity

• Only 2% in favour of more spending (Keynesian)
• Progressives still seek to meet budget adjustments
• Debate is on how to implement FC, not about alternatives to it
Weak opposition to austerity

• Rhetorical pieces
• Enda Kenny: Against the ‘full frontal attack on workers, on education, on healthcare and on older people’ (IT, 2008). Then, ‘[I] now believe that the opposite is the case’ (IT, 2009)
“Balance”

- Dan O’Brien and this conference
- No pro-austerity speakers?
- Austerity is a neoliberal conspiracy (me)
6 vs. 500

- 6 students at Berkeley
- 500 additional suicides under austerity
- Why difference in coverage?
Greece/Syriza

- Germany vs. PIIGS
- Elites vs. people
- Relaying Enda Kenny’s views
Spain/Podemos

• Never hear about it
  – 20 pieces in all Irish press
  – Dan O’Brien: “populism and thuggery would fail economically” and “would undermine freedom and democracy in Spain”

• Ciudadanos?
Sinn Fein and R2W

• Sinn Fein demonised
• Strong opposition to civil disobedience
• “Violence” and the kidnapping of Joan
• Paul Murphy the Privileged Revolutionary