

The Guildford Four and the Miscarriage of Justice



Also:

ESB: Car chargers in bleak areas putting women at risk

Responsibilities of Wealth: Lessons for today's oligarchs

Donald Sutherland: It's not easy being told that you're ugly

Trump/Netanyahu: There may be trouble ahead for Netanyahu

Letter to my Younger Self. Trigger Happy's Dom Joly.

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Going Forward: A New Challenge

The Covid-19 pandemic has taken its toll on us, like it has on many other magazines, organisations and businesses globally.

Unfortunately we are faced with a landscape that has irreversibly changed since the Big Issue first hit the streets in 1995. To meet this challenge Ireland's Big Issue must also change.

We have reluctantly decided, albeit with a heavy heart, to host the magazine digitally only for the foreseeable future.

From now on, Ireland's Big Issue will focus our support on the Irish Homeless Street Leagues. This volunteer-driven, non-profit has been using the power of sport to transform the lives of men and women who've found themselves affected by social exclusion all across Ireland - north and south. By continuing to support the magazine online you'll be helping to develop resilient individuals and stronger communities, connecting people and promoting equality and diversity, inspiring and motivating those affected by social issues.

We will also be adjusting the content to reflect the times we live in whilst endeavoring to provide an informative and enjoyable read.

We thank you for your support to date and ask that you continue to help us. As there is no charge for Ireland's Big Issue we do need your support to continue highlighting the issues that impact our lives and bring you a truthful, balanced view of what is happening in our world.

For as little as a cup of coffee (€3) you can subscribe.



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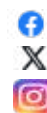
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In the wake of the 1974 Guildford pub bombings, four innocent individuals were wrongfully convicted and sentenced to life in prison. Their case became a notorious miscarriage of justice. Liz Scales explores the full story and the legal battle to prove their innocence.

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Letter to my Younger Self - Dom Joly

Each issue, we ask a well-known person to write a letter to their 16-year old self. Here it's the turn of Dom Joly (57), best known as the star, producer and director of the acclaimed practical joke comedy series Trigger Happy TV which is now 25 years old!

Hello sixteen-year-old me. How are things in 1983? It's me/you writing from forty-one years in the future. Yup, we've invented time travel...only kidding. I know that you have the attention span of a gnat so I'll get to the point.

Headline...things are actually going to be pretty good. In fact, if I told you the things I've done in your future, you'd bite my arm off.

You travel the world (108 countries and counting) marry someone lovely, have amazing kids, and get pretty famous at, can you believe it, comedy? Who'd have thought it? I know that, in your world, there are only about ten professional comedians working right now and five are racist and five are in The Young Ones. Comedy doesn't



seem like an option to you. You still think you want to be a writer or a diplomat. News flash... you end up being both.

But currently you're a confused proto-Goth stuck at a boarding school in Hertfordshire that you hate. As you know, the school was originally set up to run India. There must have

currently you're a confused proto-Goth stuck at a boarding school in Hertfordshire that you hate.

been a moment, around the time of Indian independence, when they must have considered packing it all

in. Then, like Liz Truss (you'll find out) they just ignored logic and ploughed on. Just a heads up, as I'm sure you already know. You will never run India. But you will meet and become friends with Robert Smith from The Cure... insane right?

Looking ahead. I'm afraid Mum and Dad are about to get divorced and this will hit you in a way that you will not understand for ages. On the plus side, the panic

attack and anxiety that you will suffer rather badly from until way into your thirties will very much help in your authenticity as a Goth.

Pretty soon, you're going to join a band as a singer. You'll love doing this more than anything you've ever done. You'll play concerts, find a purpose and even tour the east coast of America. Sadly, this will be your first experience of the cruel vagaries of showbiz as you will be kicked out of the band with no explanation and this will make you even more depressed (again, great for the Goth stuff, less so for the life stuff). But remember that, to be an artist of any form, you need to suffer. This is the cruel fuel of creativity.

You will go to London University for the wrong reasons (chasing a girl) and you will hate it and

barely turn up. Personally, I probably wouldn't bother. Just throw yourself into life. Get three years ahead of everybody. You know that thing

Dad always told us about how you have to get a job to pay for the things that you want to do? Turns out that's bollocks. In the coming world, you can get jobs that are more fun than your actual life. You already know that you are only good at things you



Dom in his hidden camera comedy series 'Trigger Happy TV'

love doing- you have zero pointless work ethic. This is going to work out pretty well for you, but in a fairly hectic, roundabout way.

I know you are already starting to worry about your weight. Let me tell you this. Looking back at photos of you now, you are a God. Know this, nobody knows anything and everybody is faking it. Don't be intimidated by anyone.

Know this, nobody knows anything and everybody is faking it. Don't be intimidated by anyone.

Fake it until you make it... everyone else is. Maybe lose the Goth look though, it makes me wince a touch looking at it and you're spending a fortune on eyeliner. Oh, and lose the crimpers, stick to straighteners. Trust me on this.

What else? You're going to do OK although maybe you need to concentrate on one thing rather than jump around from political producer to diplomat to comedian to travel writer, to

columnist, to radio presenter.

Maybe appreciate success more and don't kill the Golden Goose. It doesn't come around that often. Trigger Happy TV is the show that's going to make you successful and you need to be really proud of it. In hindsight you knock it on the head too soon and move on. You're an impatient person and you know that. Maybe you have ADHD

(you don't know about this yet).

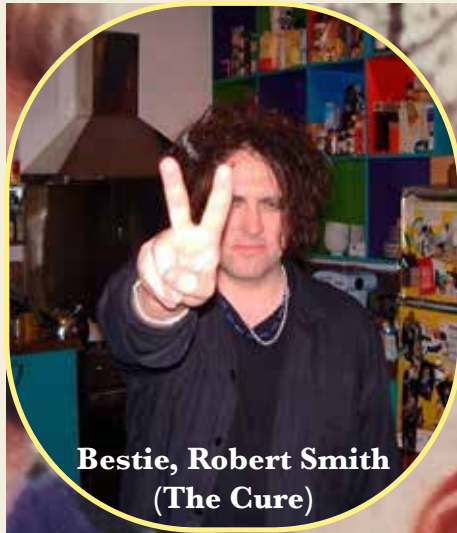
Remember this. Never make any massive career decision right after you've finished doing something (like a TV series). Take a break, go on holiday, relax and then make that decision a couple of months later when you're more on a level.

Advice? Don't smoke...total waste of time. Buy as much property as you can in London and never sell it. The thickest person you've ever met is way richer than me because he bought a two-bedroom flat in Notting Hill in 1985. It's high time we stopped making thick people rich but it's

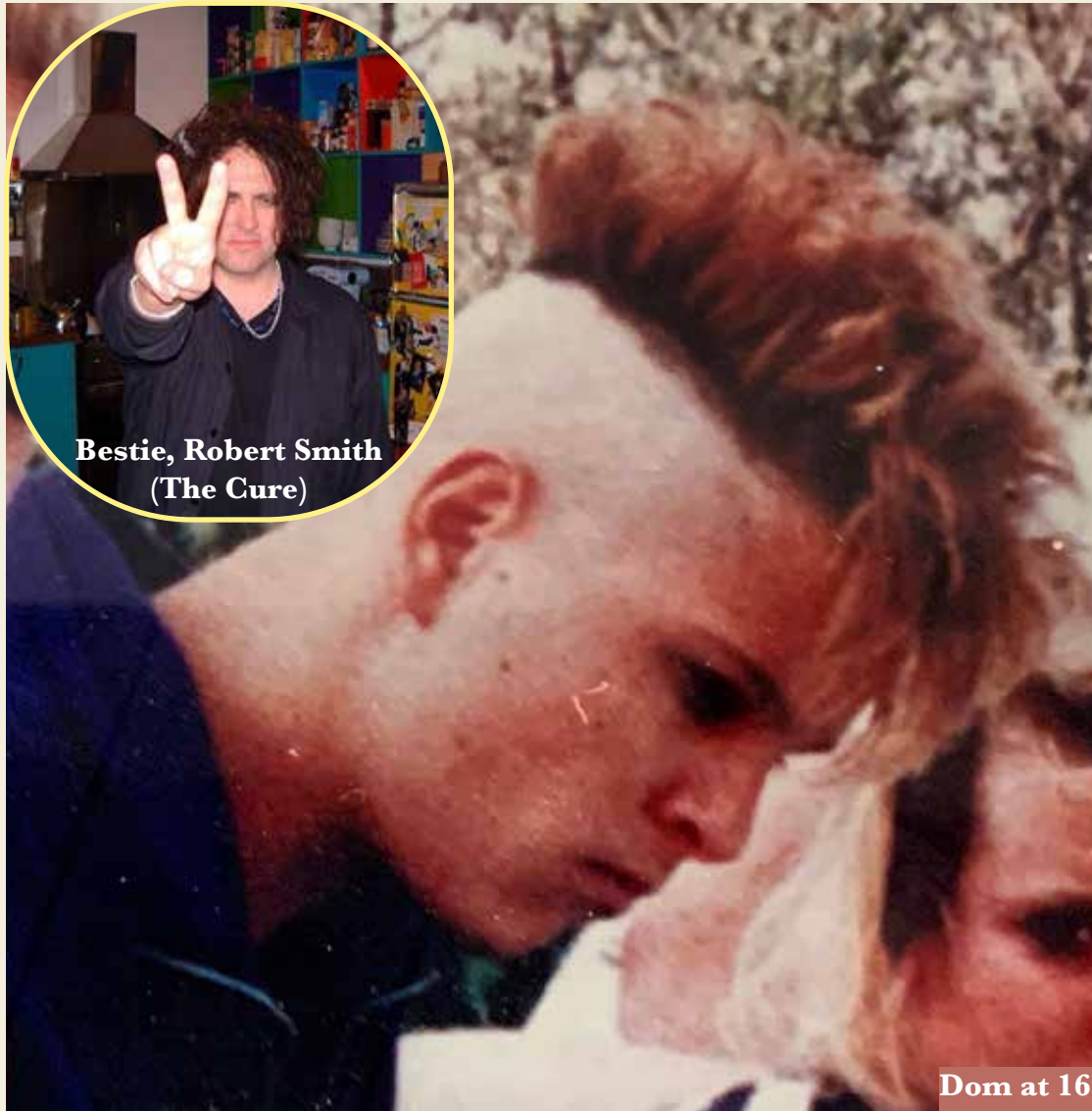
still happening. If all else fails put all the money you have on Leicester City winning the Premier League in 2015. You can get odds of around 5,000 to 1. I still hate football but this is a safe bet.

Overall. You're an OK guy. You have loads of faults, but so does everybody. Follow your heart. Hug every dog you see, they will never let you down. Live every day like it's your last... although

you now know that you have at least forty-one years...



Bestie, Robert Smith (The Cure)



Dom at 16

It's high time we stopped making thick people rich but it's still happening.

Trigger Happy TV is currently celebrating its 25th anniversary.

See: <http://www.domjoly.tv/>



ESB:

Lack of foresight and concern putting women at risk!!

ESB's lack of foresight and concern in placing car chargers in bleak areas, often devoid of cellular signal is putting women drivers at risk. Samantha Bailie-McMurdock reports.

I got an electric car a year ago. I've never regretted the decision as it runs on £50 per month compared with £160+ when driving a diesel. On the rare occasions I forget to charge at home, I pop into BP Pulse and with the swipe of my debit card and the time it takes to sup a

coffee-to-go I'm back on the road. I am based just north of the border in County Down.

I was in Letterkenny recently and upon arrival scanned for charging points - all of which were ESB (the Irish government owns 96.9%

of the company). Upon checking locations I noticed they were all nestled away in desolate areas. Weighing up my possibilities, Justice Walsh Car Park seemed the best option but as soon as I scanned my debit card, an error message appeared on the charger screen. I 'phoned ESB and after waiting 30+ minutes was informed I needed to download the app and register a bank card. I explained I'd done that ahead

of time but it would not recognise my Ulster Bank card, or indeed any of our bank cards on the app. The agent said he could take a 'phone payment so I gave him my details, but as soon as it pinged through and I received my bank app's request to verify payment, it swiftly

became obvious that Justice Walsh car park was too far off-grid to obtain a steady signal so the process timed out - and I was left with 12% power and informed there was "very little" could be done. In the meantime I was standing in the cold being encompassed by what I can only call human Piranhas;

every ten minutes the same white van and Volkswagen Passat drove menacingly up beside me in this empty carpark only to speed off (but that's another story).

Terrified, I drove to Port Road's ESB only to be told it's out-of-service when the garage closes so I drove round to An Granán Theatre ESB charging point thinking this would at least



a fifth of brand new vehicles purchased in Ireland last year were EVs, why are the ESB not installing more dependable chargers in well-lit, signal-friendly areas?

be well lit; my hopes were not only dashed but again I discovered the charger was so far off the beaten track that I was now down to 8% and feeling very exposed. Again I phoned ESB and this time was told,

“You can’t charge without an account”.

I said I knew this was untrue as I had just 30 minutes previous been allowed to charge but the data signal was so weak I couldn’t verify with my bank.

“The rules have changed,” the agent retorted..

“In the past 30 minutes?” I asked sarcastically.

“Yep...”

This guy sounded drunk or high and I told him I was hanging up and calling back as he was clearly “not quite compos mentis”.

I called again right away and after 45 minutes (apparently they were “experiencing high call volumes”) I got through. This time the guy took my card number, my mobile pinged and I verified with the bank and hey presto, the charger connected - however, I noticed when it got up to 12% it would not increase so I got out and looked at the screen and there was a fault with their charger so I had to press the emergency stop to remove the cable so I could drive back to the apartment, however, when I tried to ring again to report the fault, there was no answer and might I add that my ‘friends’ in the white van and Passat arrived again just as I jumped back into my car to leave.

I returned to my apartment just off Main Street where the city looks like a glistening snow globe and wondered why ESB wouldn’t place a charger where there’s street lights at the very least. Letterkenny is the largest town in Donegal, it receives up to 40,000 visitors per day for work,

education and social reasons, it’s close to two regional airports and has a population of 23,000, so why, when a fifth of brand new vehicles purchased in Ireland last year were EVs, is Letterkenny not installing more dependable chargers in well-lit, signal-friendly areas?



The website IrishEVs.com stated recently that “there’s major safety concerns” for women at public EV charging points “stemming primarily from the lack of proximity to facilities, the lack of light and shelter, and the lack

of any security systems”. They have stated that “clearly women’s safety is still not taken seriously or treated as a priority in Ireland” and contacted ESB for a statement, however, the response was less than encouraging;

“Sadly ESB’s response to our enquiry read like a marketing document ... rather than addressing the specific issue of women’s safety:

‘ESB is currently rolling out 50 high power charging hubs primarily located at motorway and national road service stations across Ireland.’”

I’d advise anyone to have a look at ESB’s reviews (one star) and indeed the experiences of thousands of people across Ireland

Back to my charging problems - I’d like to say this was the end of my tribulations with ESB but sadly not. Suffice to say I phoned my bank to ask if I could forgo the verification process needed

when charging with ESB, however, they did not think this was a good idea, so with my last morsel of energy in the car, I again drove around to Justice Walsh charging station on the afternoon we were leaving and when the verification ping came through on my bank app (and I had just a couple of minutes to verify), I took on speeds that would put Usain Bolt to shame around the carpark in a bid to obtain a signal, and just one second before it timed out - I acquired one bar of signal and charging began..... Jarringly the agent at ESB could not believe it worked!!!

It's not just Letterkenny

I'd like to add that just months before this, I had exactly the same issues in Dublin 7. I'd driven down to Kildare, but realising I was a day early needed to find a hotel last minute so located one in Stoneybatter, however, becoming aware I'd need to charge the car, I scanned for chargers and found one 50 metres from the hotel, unsurprisingly in a dark part of Liffey Street West. Having downloaded the ESB app in the hotel, I was confident it would only take a minute to put the car on charge, however, the app displayed an error code when I typed in my debit card. Desperate to charge I headed on round to Liffey Street West, phoned ESB, gave the charging station code and asked to pay over the 'phone,



Charging point, Justice Walsh Lane, Letterkenny

said he could accept payment by 'phone. I was delighted; however, whilst waiting on my bank verification I had my personal space invaded by a young man in his early 20s mumbling unintelligibly. He followed me as I walked

swiftly towards the end of the street whilst on the phone with ESB and was told my payment hadn't gone through as it timed out. I explained there was no data signal, not to mention the fact I'd been followed before shaking the intruder off when I turned the corner and ran towards the street light.

"I'm frightened. I've just been followed and I don't know how I'll get charged." "Ma'am I cannot help you any further. If you believe you are in

danger you need to 'phone the guards. Goodnight." He replied and hung up.

I was too frightened to return to the car and went back to the hotel.

When daylight came I went around, got my car and with just 8% tried to locate another charger, however, aware

I wasn't familiar with the area, I feared I would not make it to a non-ESB charger as ALL the chargers in the surrounding area were ESB so, around 9am I called them and they said they'd take the payment over the 'phone. I walk briskly down the other end of the street holding my phone in the air until (just seconds before it timed out) my bank verification pinged and my payment went through; however, that wasn't the end of the problem - their super-fast charger was out of order and I was relegated to their regular charger which took 4.5 hours!

I'd advise anyone to have a look at ESB's reviews (one

"Could you download the app?" The agent asked

"I already have. It isn't working. Could I just pay you over the 'phone?"

"I'd like you to retry the app first." He replied.

"I am in a dark, unfamiliar city and you want me to restart the application process on my mobile phone This is insane ..."

"Ma'am", He replied. "I've requested that you retry the app before we try anything else."

"So you CAN take payment over the phone?" I retorted.

"Ma'am I request you to retry the app first?"

Enraged, I hung up, got in the car and attempted paying through the app again only to obtain an error code, so I 'phoned back and a different employee answered and

**In
N. Ireland BP Pulse is
simply swipe and charge, their
charging stations are always well lit and
in populated, busy areas**

star) and indeed the experiences of thousands of people and hung up.

across Ireland on Reddit. Reddit user Aisling O’Leary from Renelagh who works in banking and lectures part-time in the evenings agreed to contribute her experience,

“I’ve had persistent issues with ESB. One night I drove around frantically after a lecture and couldn’t get the app to work anywhere. This night I couldn’t see an inch in front of me and tripped over the curb. I got back in the car with a gaping cut on my knee and ripped tights and phoned ESB. It took almost an hour and when they answered they said I needed a membership. I said that this was false, and what I needed was to rapid charge asap as I’d hurt myself at their charger, was bleeding and frightened.

‘You are not listening,’ he responded.

‘I don’t think YOU are listening ... I give up.’ I shouted



One of the countless error messages

I called a taxi and when I went back in the morning I had a ticket. So nice going ESB.”

Aisling is just one of thousands of disgruntled customers on Reddit and contacting ESB online is a waste of time as it appears they simply don’t care. In N. Ireland BP Pulse is simply swipe and charge, their charging stations are always well-lit and in

populated, busy areas - perhaps ESB should look to their business model to improve, but then again, why would they bother when they’re practically a monopoly south of the border?

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Obituary

Joseph Laird 1985-2025

It is with great sadness that we announce the recent death of Joseph (Joey) Laird after a long, brave battle with cancer, in the wonderful care of the staff in The Mater Hospital.

You're very emotional even speaking of it now?

"It was lovely to see [silence] Sorry, I'm still very emotional about it. I cried with mam, I didn't care, I just cried because I could feel her relief She can see I'm

Joe was a member of our Irish Homeless Street Leagues International Team that won the 8 Nations Tournament in Dundee, Scotland, 2022.

A gentle giant with an engaging personality, Joe never grumbled, always turned up for training, was disciplined and dedicated, a true team player, who was loved by all, I know I speak for all within the Irish Homeless Street Leagues when I say we shall miss him dearly.

Sometime ago Joe did an interview with the Big Issue magazine, below is an extract from that interview. It's difficult not to be moved by his answer when asked what his family thought about him being selected for the IHSL International team in 2022.



on a different path, I've walked away from my old life."

Any advice for 16-year-old Joe?

"Don't follow the crowd. What seems cool and great at the time doesn't make for a good life. Turn away. Walk away from friends if they're leading you down that path. It'll be hard but it'll be worth it. Say no to drugs at all costs, I promise you, they aren't worth it. Don't rely on drugs, alcohol or anything else for your confidence ... Try and get yourself involved in a sport, any sport, just don't take that destructive path."

Finally, any advice to any guy or girl out there who'd like to turn their lives around and join the IHSL?

"Just go and do it. You'll get a drive you never imagined you have.

You've nothing to lose but

everything to gain, like motivation, commitment and the knowledge that things change when you change and things get better when you work to make them better. Giving up is the problem ... it was the problem for me and it's the problem for many people. Yes, you'll make mistakes, you'll make loads of them but you get back up and try, try, try. Finally, I'd like to say, if I can do it, anyone can, so give it a try."

"RIP Joseph"

What do your family think?

"Can I tell you a story? I was up at mam's the other day and there was a documentary on the telly about the Street League and she was loving it and loving that I am a part of that now. I got goose pimples all over my body when she said that. My breathing went because for the first time ever, I could see genuine pride in mam's eyes and tears [goes quiet].... Sam, the tears were tears of happiness and pride."

Responsibilities of Wealth

Andrew Carnegie and the 19th-century ‘robber barons’ have lessons for today’s oligarchs about the responsibilities of wealth says Professor Tobias Jung.

When Mark Zuckerberg recently announced sweeping changes to his company Meta’s work practices in anticipation of a Trump 2.0 presidency, keen-eyed observers noticed the tech titan was wearing a wristwatch worth nearly US\$900,000 (£837,000). It’s one of a range of high-end timepieces he has sported recently.

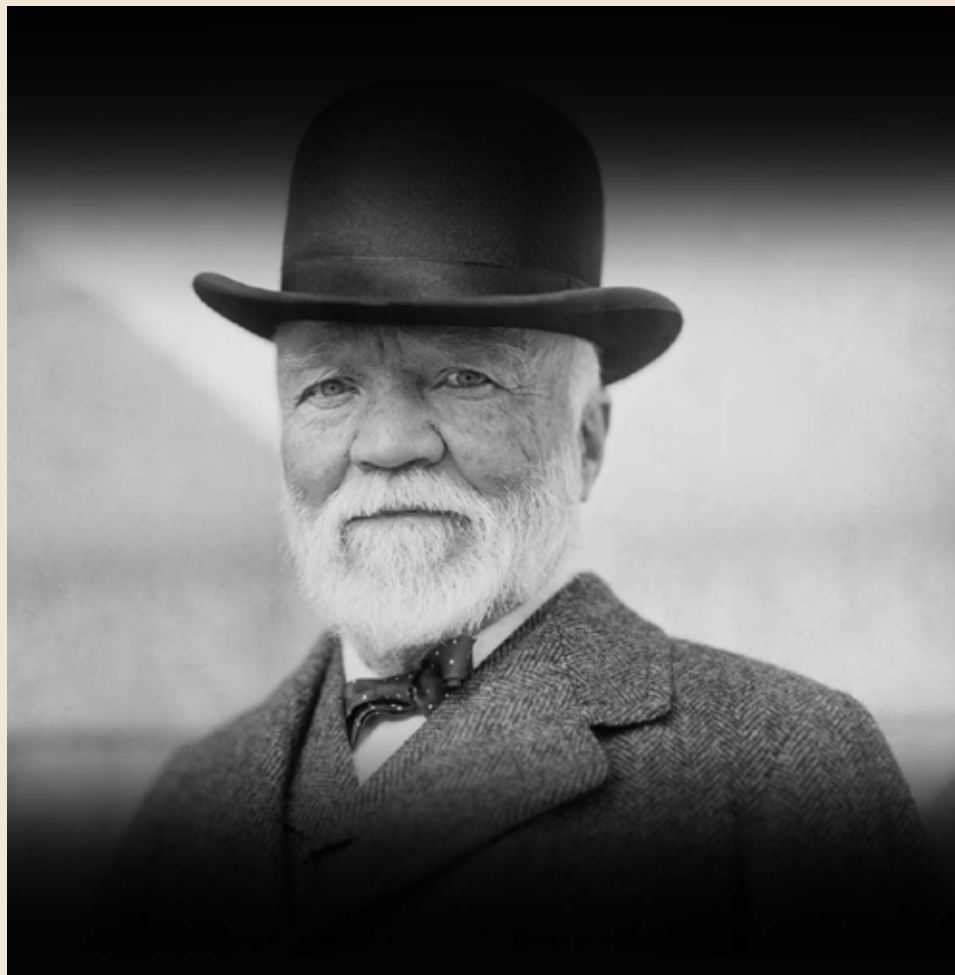
This ostentatious display of wealth may have ensured the luxury magazine market’s admiration. But, it has prompted others to

compare the likes of Zuckerberg and his fellow titans to the “robber barons” of 19th- and early 20th-century America.

In his farewell address from the Oval Office on January 15, outgoing president Joe Biden warned that “an oligarchy is taking shape in

America of extreme wealth, power and influence that literally threatens our entire democracy, our basic rights and freedom, and a fair shot for everyone to get ahead”.

Imagine instead these wealthy individuals using their resources to uplift society. This was the vision of the steel magnate Andrew Carnegie, one of the most famous of the so-called robber barons of America’s last “Gilded Age”. Carnegie dominated mass production of steel in the last quarter of the 19th century, at a time of massive industrial expansion in the US.



he built 2,509 Carnegie libraries around the world, as well as educational and healthcare institutions, parks and public spaces

Based on medieval feudal lords who used often illegal means to amass wealth at the expense of the rest of the population, the robber baron label was applied to industrialists and oil magnates like John D. Rockefeller, Cornelius Vanderbilt

and Carnegie to criticise their perceived ruthlessness. They were challenged for their monopolistic practices, seeming disregard for the rights and wellbeing of their labourers, and their accumulation of enormous personal fortunes at huge social costs – even when they were seen to stay within the law.

Today’s tech titans appear to share numerous similarities with them.

Zuckerberg’s Meta dominates social networking, Jeff Bezos’s Amazon rules e-commerce, and Elon Musk’s SpaceX commands the global rocket launch market, while his control of X (formerly Twitter) gives him

a massive voice on social media. The influence of these men is immense, their empires expansive, their assets astounding. Public debates are rife with concerns about their corporate practices, working conditions and wider social, political, economic, and environmental impacts.

It’s therefore unsurprising that the notion of robber barons is undergoing a renaissance. Whether that comparison is appropriate is debatable. Some commentators have suggested that this label is a misnomer – and a better one might be “tech tyrants”. They may share “some” robber baron characteristics around ruthless capitalism, but display fewer of their potentially redeeming features around using their wealth for the wider public good.

So, drawing on Carnegie’s 1889 essay *The Gospel of Wealth*, what can a robber baron teach a tech titan such

as Zuckerberg about the essence and expectations of enormous wealth?

With great wealth comes great responsibility

The *Gospel of Wealth* offers Carnegie’s reflections

on how to appropriately use one’s accumulated wealth. Carnegie acknowledges that, while inequality of wealth is unavoidable, massive wealth should come with moral obligations. In his view, the wealthy should act as trustees for the poor and support those less fortunate.



Displays of extravagance should be avoided. Any surplus, beyond provisions for one’s family, should be treated as “trust funds” to be used during one’s lifetime to produce the largest communal benefit. Under no circumstances is wealth to be hoarded or passed on as inheritance.

Musk and Zuckerberg among the least-generous billionaires, having given away less than 1%

Should the wealthy fail to fulfil those duties, Carnegie proposes a simple corrective option. As wealth needs to be shared with the community on whose back it was accumulated, he recommends strong inheritance taxes. He writes: “By taxing estates heavily at death, the state marks its condemnation of the selfish millionaire’s unworthy life.”

Carnegie also offers a number of practical guiding principles. Wealth should be used to provide stepping stones for those who are ambitious to rise and keen to help themselves. It should aim to prevent, rather than alleviate, poverty. Finally, it should be used for strategic rather than indiscriminate charity.

Furthermore, he believed in the provision of institutions offering lasting communal benefits. Between 1883 and 1929, he built 2,509 Carnegie libraries around the world, as well as educational and healthcare institutions, parks and public spaces. To this day, Carnegie’s provisions fund and support the space for the International Court of Justice and other legal bodies. As he argued, a person “who dies thus rich dies disgraced”.

Lost in fortune

With vast sums of wealth and comparatively small proportions being used for wider public benefits, today’s billionaires seem to be a far cry from Carnegie’s ideal.

The latest edition of The Forbes Philanthropy Score ranks Musk and Zuckerberg among the least-generous billionaires, having given away less than 1% or between 1% to 4.99% of their wealth respectively so far, even if, in Zuckerberg’s case, this amounts to more than US\$4.5 billion donated through the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, run with his partner, Priscilla Chan.

Superficially, tech titans have tried to emulate some of Carnegie’s principles through their philanthropy. The Giving Pledge, an initiative encouraging the wealthy to commit the majority of their wealth to charitable causes, includes Zuckerberg and Musk as signatories.

But the structure of these donations has led to questions about how far they actually constitute philanthropy. Rather than giving wealth away, it often seems transferred into structures, such as donor-advised funds or limited liability companies, that can be geared towards tax, investment, and reporting benefits that analysts estimate could, in some cases at least, be greater than the sums donated.

This leads us to the concept of “philanthrocapitalism”:

the idea that giving can be married with the structures of neoliberal capitalism, which often tend to make rich people even richer.

Critics of this approach think that, while appearing to be altruistic and being portrayed as maximising philanthropy’s potential, philanthrocapitalism shifts the



broader discourse on philanthropy itself. As part of that, the transfer of business principles and financial practices to philanthropy tend to mimic the kind of structures that exacerbate, rather than alleviate, inequality.

British academics
Linsey McGoey,

Darren Thiel, and Robin West argued in a 2018 paper that philanthrocapitalism “helps to confer moral legitimacy on pro-corporate government regulation and public spending that directly exacerbates economic inequality”.

today’s billionaires seem to be a far cry from Carnegie’s ideal.


Carnegie’s philosophy was clearly paternalistic, and he didn’t always practise what he preached. But he could offer today’s tech titans insights into recognising and navigating the moral obligations that come with the accumulation of wealth.

Author: Tobias Jung

Professor of Management, University of St Andrews

First published on The Conversation

What do you think?

Have your say on  @BigIssueIreland



Grey Abbey, Down: 1st Gothic building in Ireland & only Cistercian abbey in Ireland established by a woman

Donald Sutherland:

A Career Marked by Eccentricity, Versatility, and Depth

Shaun Anthony takes a look at the life, career and legacy of the late actor Donald Sutherland.

Donald Sutherland, who passed away at the age of 88, leaves behind an extraordinary legacy as one of Hollywood’s most enigmatic and versatile actors. Unlike

contemporaries such as Warren Beatty or Robert Redford, whose careers were often defined by their leading-man looks, or Al Pacino and Robert De Niro, who embodied the archetype of the “tough guy,” Sutherland carved a unique path. His career spanned more than six decades, during which he became known

for his ability to inhabit peculiar, complex, and idiosyncratic characters.

Although Hollywood often struggled to categorise him, Sutherland’s adaptability and range made him a beloved and enduring presence in the industry. His personal life, too, adds layers to his mystique, marked by romantic entanglements,

familial influences, and a deep commitment to his craft.



Playing Hawkeye Pierce in the movie, M*A*S*H(1970)

An Unusual Beginning

Born on July 17, 1935, in Saint John, New Brunswick, Canada, Donald McNichol Sutherland was raised in a modest, middle-class household. His mother, Dorothy Isobel McNichol, and father, Frederick McLea Sutherland, played significant roles in shaping his personality.

Dorothy, in particular, had a profound influence on him, both positively and negatively.

It's not easy being told that you're ugly...

Sutherland would later recall how his mother’s sharp wit and sometimes cutting remarks stayed with him throughout his life. One comment, made during his youth, haunted him for years. When Sutherland expressed his desire to pursue acting,

Dorothy reportedly said,

“Well, you’ll never make a living out of it.”

Though he proved her wrong, her words instilled in him a relentless drive to succeed and a deep sensitivity, which would later inform many of his most vulnerable and introspective performances. Despite the success, Donald, in one of his last interviews cried as he spoke of his mother’s cutting remarks,

“As a teen I asked my mother if I was good looking and my mother looked at me and went [breaks down and attempts to compose himself] ... your face has character Donald...”

When asked by the interviewer if this has haunted him, he replied,

“Just 16 years.... It’s not easy being told that you’re ugly...”

Donald attended the University of Toronto and then Victoria University where he met his first wife, Lois May Hardwick and later graduated with a dual degree in engineering and drama. Whilst attending Victoria University he became a member of the UC Follies comedy troupe and changed his mind about becoming an engineer, leaving Canada for Britain in 1957 to attend the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA). While at LAMDA, he began appearing in West End productions. He dropped out of his first year and moved to Scotland where he acted at the Perth Theatre for the next year-and-a-half and shared a flat with Grange Hill

actor, the late Michael Sheard.

Sutherland began his TV acting career in television in the early 1960s, appearing in small roles in British films and TV. His first major film break came with *The Dirty Dozen* (1967), where he played Vernon Pinkley, a role that hinted at his knack for bringing quirky, offbeat characters to life.

A Career Defined by Eccentricity

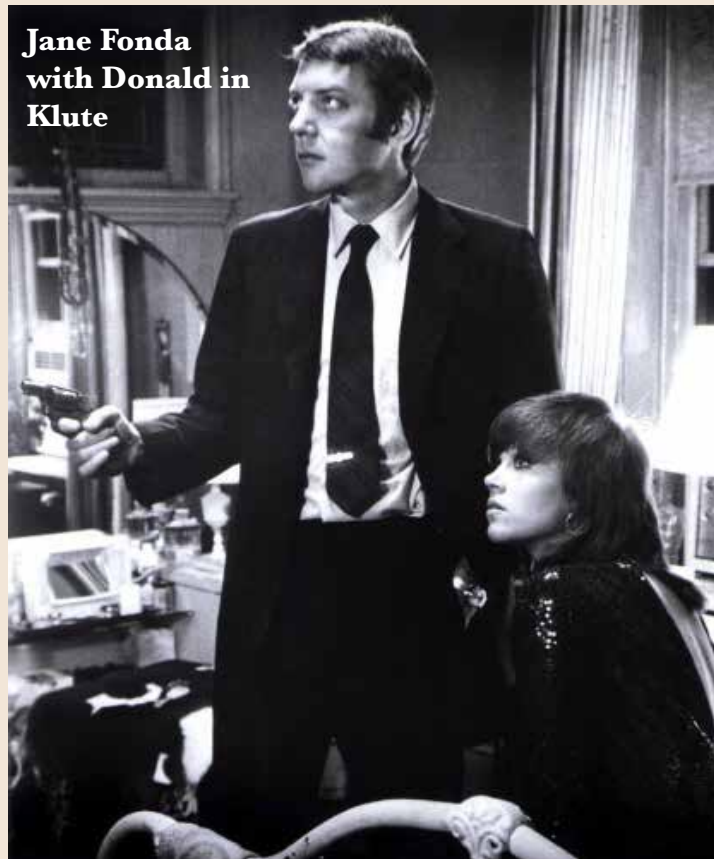
Sutherland’s career-defining year was 1970, when he appeared in two major films: *Kelly’s Heroes*, where he played the eccentric tank commander Oddball, and *MASH**, where he

portrayed the irreverent “Hawkeye” Pierce. Both roles showcased his ability to blend humour, charm, and depth, qualities that would become hallmarks of his work.

Throughout the 1970s, Sutherland took on an array of leading roles, from the psychological horror of *Don’t Look Now* (1973) to the wartime thriller *The Eagle Has Landed* (1976). One of his standout performances from this era came in the sci-fi horror *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1978). The film’s final scene, featuring Sutherland’s character emitting a bone-chilling alien scream, remains one of the most iconic moments in cinematic history.

Interestingly, Sutherland refused to read reviews of his performances after film critic, Pauline Kael of *The New Yorker* described his performance in *The Day of the Locust* (1975) in less than complimentary language,

“There’s nothing specifically wrong with Donald Sutherland’s performance. It’s just



**Jane Fonda
with Donald in
Klute**

awful.”

Sutherland said her review was,
“...the most destructive, stupid piece of
criticism I’ve ever received.”

Despite his success, Sutherland never settled into a single archetype or genre. His ability to adapt to a wide variety of roles kept him relevant and in demand for decades.



With Elliott Gould & Sally Kellerman on location at Malibu Creek State Park, California filming M*A*S*H

A Near-Death Experience

In 1970, while filming Kelly’s Heroes in what was then Yugoslavia, Sutherland experienced a harrowing medical

Romance and Complexity: The Jane Fonda Affair

Sutherland’s personal life often mirrored the intensity of his onscreen performances. While filming Alan J. Pakula’s 1971 neo-noir thriller Klute, he began a passionate affair with his co-star, Jane Fonda. The pair had previously met at a Black Panther benefit in LA and hit it off so were delighted when they were cast together a short time after. During rehearsals the chemistry between the pair was evident and that translated on screen, as Fonda’s sex worker character Bree Daniels and Sutherland’s private investigator character John Klute. Their off-screen romance lasting for over a year until a break-up in Tokyo. Sutherland described their relationship as deeply meaningful, filled with intellectual and emotional connection. However, their intense bond ultimately could not withstand the pressures of their demanding careers and Fonda’s political activism and Sutherland later said that things worked well until they moved in

together. Despite the breakup, Sutherland held great respect for Fonda and often spoke fondly of their time together and Fonda was devastated when she learned of his death.

crisis that brought him close to death. He contracted spinal meningitis and was hospitalised for several weeks.

He would later speak of this experience as a moment of clarity, a reminder of life’s fragility and the importance of embracing each moment fully.

During this time, Sutherland, (who died for five seconds) had an out-of-body experience that he later described as deeply transformative. He recalled floating above his body in the hospital room, observing the frantic efforts of the medical staff to save him. This brush with mortality left a profound mark on him, shaping both his personal outlook and his approach to his work. He would later speak of this experience as a moment of clarity, a reminder of life’s fragility and the importance of embracing each moment fully.

The Railway Station Man and Ireland

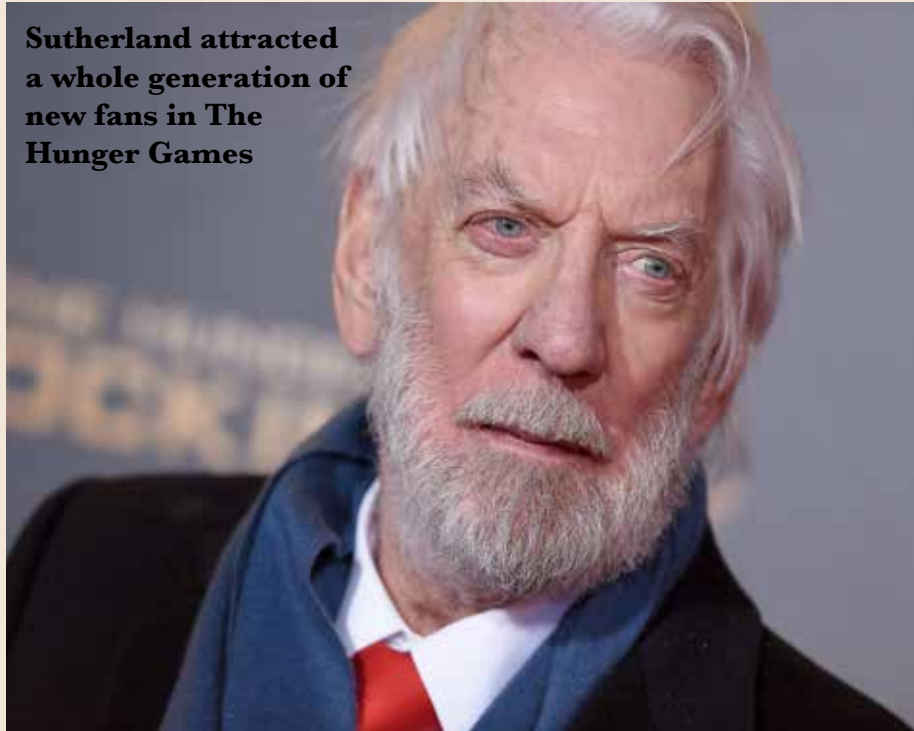
Sutherland had a deep love for Ireland, that connection came during the filming of The Railway Station Man (1992), based on the novel by author Jennifer Johnston. Set in the remote and hauntingly beautiful village of Glencolmcille

in County Donegal, the film tells the story of a reclusive artist who forms a bond with a widow grieving the loss of her husband to political violence. Sutherland was captivated by the Irish landscape and the depth of the story. He spoke about how the rugged beauty of Donegal and the warmth of the Irish people enriched his experience. The isolation and timelessness of the setting allowed him to fully immerse himself in the role, delivering a performance marked by quiet intensity and emotional vulnerability.

2015) introduced him to younger viewers while reaffirming his relevance to older fans.

Family and Legacy

Sutherland's personal life extended beyond his romantic entanglements. He was married three times (apart from Lois, he also wed Canadian actresses Shirley Douglas and Francine Racette and had five children, including actors Kiefer Sutherland (with Shirley) and Rossif Sutherland (with Francine). His relationship with Kiefer, in particular, was both a source of



Sutherland attracted a whole generation of new fans in The Hunger Games

pride and complexity. Watching his son follow in his footsteps brought him joy, but it also underscored the challenges of maintaining a personal identity within the shadow of fame.

From Leading Man to

Scene-Stealer

By the 1980s, Sutherland had transitioned from leading roles to supporting ones, but he brought the same level of commitment and nuance to every performance. In films like *Ordinary People* (1980), *Six Degrees of Separation* (1993), and *Disclosure* (1994), he demonstrated an ability to command attention even in smaller roles.

Unlike many of his contemporaries, Sutherland was not defined by a single iconic character. Instead, he was a chameleon, able to disappear into his roles and make them feel authentic. This versatility was both a blessing and a curse, as it sometimes led to his being overlooked for awards and recognition. His ability to reinvent himself for new generations of audiences also set him apart. Films like *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1992), and *The Hunger Games* series (2012–

Sutherland had a deep love for Ireland

Despite his Hollywood success, Sutherland often reflected on his Canadian roots and the grounding influence of his upbringing. His mother's skepticism about his talent drove him, even as an elderly man, pushing him to prove not only his worth but also his versatility and staying power.

A Career Without Comparison

Sutherland's career was defined by his refusal to be typecast. He could play the eccentric oddball, the brooding loner, the terrifying villain, or the gentle hero with equal ease. Hollywood may not have always known what to do with him, but his adaptability ensured that he left an indelible

mark on the industry.

Though he was never nominated for an Academy Award—a glaring oversight in the eyes of many—he received an honorary Oscar in 2017, recognising his immense contributions to cinema. During his speech, as self-deprecating as ever, he joked,

“I have to tell you that I have been beset by my mind’s unrelenting interrogation of me, demanding if I deserve this. And in that quandary, I finally found peace in the words of the great Benjamin Kubelsky, who is also known as Jack Benny, when he said, as I say to you now: ‘I don’t deserve this. But I have arthritis and I don’t deserve that either.’”

A Life Well Lived

Donald Sutherland’s life and career were as multifaceted as the characters he portrayed. From his humble beginnings in Canada to his affair with Jane Fonda, his near-death experience, and his enduring love for acting, he lived a life filled with passion, complexity, and artistry.

As we remember Sutherland, it’s clear that his greatest achievement was the way he approached his craft—with curiosity, humility, and an unwavering commitment to truth. In the end, Hollywood may not have known exactly what to do with Donald Sutherland, but he left a legacy that speaks for itself: one of unparalleled

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Trump and Netanyahu

Donald Trump's presidency presents Benjamin Netanyahu with a crisis that could be existential – here's why, *Professor John Strawson explains.*

Having agreed to a complex ceasefire in Gaza under pressure from the incoming US president, Donald Trump, Benjamin Netanyahu now confronts a range of international and domestic challenges.

On his doorstep, he needs to decide whether to complete the Gaza deal and the future governance of the strip. In the wider region he will need to decide on what, if any, action he wants to take against Iran's nuclear sites as well as how to respond to what Saudi Arabia wants in return for a normalisation of relations: steps towards the creation of a Palestinian state.

Each issue intimately connects US interests in the region with the course of Israeli politics. The choices Netanyahu makes will determine his future and have important consequences for the region.

Having spent much of his career trying to reduce Israel's dependence on America, he now finds

himself trapped in the spider web of Trump's world, beholden to the policy choices of his major sponsor in Washington.

It's an uncomfortable situation for a leader who has, after all, in recent months decisively changed the strategic balance in the Middle East. Israel's defeat of Hezbollah deprived Assad of important military resources, contributing to the fall of his regime which in turn put Iran on the back foot.

***But
Netanyahu's
moment
of strength
looks rather
brittle***



he now finds himself trapped in the spider web of Trump's world, beholden to the policy choices of his major sponsor in Washington.

The Gaza deal, which has already seen the return of three hostages, is overwhelmingly backed by the Israeli public, but has thrown his own cabinet into turmoil. The final vote was 24 in favour and eight against. Those

against included not just members of far-right parties, but also two ministers from Likud, his own party.

This could auger a realignment of political forces for Netanyahu. He must balance shifting loyalties of Israeli politicians with the new Trump administration's Middle East priorities. Those were no doubt seen even before in the presidential inauguration, when Trump's Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff arrived to inform the Israeli prime minister that the Gaza ceasefire agreement – on the table since May – had to be agreed before Trump became president.

Most important for the US is to boost relations with the Saudi Arabia, seen as a major counterweight to China's influence in the region. The US-Saudi military and technical cooperation agreement negotiated in 2023, since the first Trump term, is seen as critical to a new regional security architecture. Part of that is Saudi Arabia normalising relations with Israel in the context of progress toward a two-state solution.

It is likely that Wikoff offered Netanyahu some incentives. That could well have included freedom of action against Hamas in the West Bank. If so, this could explain the major Israeli operation in Jenin this week.

It may also be that Trump himself is considering joint US-Israeli military action to eliminate Iran's nuclear programme something that would coincide with

Netanyahu's long-held position.

Within Israel itself, Netanyahu knows that his recent



military victories are widely supported – but he has

now become a victim of his own political rhetoric. His war aims of destroying Hamas has evidently not been achieved. This was clearly underlined by the images of a throng of Hamas militants in military fatigues surrounding the three women hostages released on Sunday.

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) high command have regularly briefed the prime minister that the elimination of Hamas would be an impossible goal. But even in his address following the ceasefire agreement he repeated his policy. This leaves him politically vulnerable and places a major strain on his will to complete the deal.

inform the Israeli prime minister that the Gaza ceasefire agreement – on the table since May – had to be agreed before Trump became president.

The departure from the cabinet of national security minister Itamar Ben Gvir, from the far-right Otzma Yehudit party, has been welcomed across the political spectrum. Ben Gvir's ally, the finance minister and leader of the far-right National Religious Party–Religious Zionism remains in the cabinet but is threatening to bring the government down unless Netanyahu ditches the ceasefire deal.

While the polls show that Netanyahu would lose an election if it was called now, his support as prime minister still exceeds opposition politicians Benny Gantz and Yair Lapid. However the far-right former prime minister, Naftali Bennet, has emerged a current favourite rival.

If he returned to politics, as is widely speculated, he would now win convincingly. Some voices on the right, who would normally support the prime minister, are now telling him his time is over.

To add to his woes, a recent opinion piece by the influential Eran Yashiv in a usually loyal newspaper advised Trump to dump Netanyahu if we wants to achieve his aims in the Middle East. Whether Trump accepts this advice, what is almost certainly is that he will become an increasingly important factor in Israeli politics.

Ceasefire deal

The urgent question will be whether Netanyahu will honour the ceasefire deal. He is caught between his inclination to return to military action to eradicate Hamas and the Israeli public's support for a deal that will involve the release of the rest of the hostages.

Critics in his cabinet will encourage him to take the military option, but this would endanger the lives to the hostages. That would come with a heavy political cost in public support and also alienate a US administration opposed to "forever wars".

The resignation of IDF chief of staff, General Herz Halevi will be welcomed by Netanyahu who saw him as an opponent. But it will also raise questions about whether new military operations are wise at a time of

turbulence at the top of the army.



Whether Netanyahu will take his military win over the past 15 months or see a return to action in Gaza as in his interest will be a calculation he will have to make. All the while he'll know that Washington is watching him closely and that the new president isn't necessarily his friend.

Author: John Strawson Emeritus

Professor of Law, University of East London

First published on The Conversation

a usually loyal newspaper advised Trump to dump Netanyahu

You can keep up-to-date on  with Benjamin Netanyahu & Donald Trump's latest Tweets on their official X handles: [@netanyahu](https://twitter.com/netanyahu) and [@realDonaldTrump](https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump)

A LITTLE BIT OF IRISH

PHRASE	TRANSLATION	PRONUNCIATION
Happy St. Valentine's Day	Lá Fhéile Vailintín sona duit.	Law Ay-lah Vahl-in-teen suh-nuh dheev
It's February already	Tá sé Feabhra cheana féin.	Taw shay fyow-rah khan-ah fayn
The nights are stretching.	Tá na hoícheanta ag dul i bhfad.	Taw nuh hee-hun-tuh egg dull ih wad
The weather is frosty	Tá an aimsir reóite.	Taw un am-shir ryoh-cha
It's time to plant the tomatoes	Tá sé in am na trátaí a chur.?	Taw shay in om nuh traw-tee uh khur
Are you planning a summer holiday?	An bhfuil tú ag pleanáil saoire samhraidh?	On will too egg plah-nawl SEE-ruh SOW-ree
Easter eggs are in the shops already	Tá uibheacha Cásca sna siopaí cheana féin.	Taw iv-uh-kah Caw-skuh snah shop-ee khan-ah fayn
Is it a leap year?	An bhfuil sé ina bhisigh?	On will shay in-uh vih-shee
Where is the car charger?	Cá bhfuil an luchtair cairr?	Kaw will un luck-tur car

Word Power

Over the next few issues we'll be attempting to increase your word power. Have a look at the words below and afterwards see if you know their meaning.

Word	Pronunciation	Answers
1. Pernicious	per-NISH-uhs	1. Having a harmful effect, especially in a gradual or subtle way.
2. Quixotic	kwik-SOT-ik	2. Extremely idealistic, unrealistic, or impractical.
3. Cacophony	kuh-KAW-fuh-nee	3. A harsh, discordant mixture of sounds.
4. Munificent	myoo-NIF-uh-suhnt	4. Very generous.
5. Aplomb	uh-PLOM	5. Self-confidence or assurance, especially when in a demanding situation.
6. Polemical	puh-LEM-ih-kuhl	6. Involving strong, controversial arguments or debates.
7. Obfuscate	OB-fuh-skayt	7. To deliberately make something unclear or difficult to understand.
8. Perfunctory	per-FUNK-tuh-ree	8. Carried out with a minimum of effort or reflection.
9. Recalcitrant	ri-KAL-si-truhnt	9. Having an obstinately uncooperative attitude.
10. Vitriolic	ri-KAL-si-truhnt	10. Filled with bitter criticism or malice.
11. Incongruous	in-KON-gruh-uhs	11. Not in harmony or keeping with the surroundings or other aspects of something.
12. Vituperative	vi-TOO-puh-ruht-iv	12. Bitter and abusive in language or tone.

How did YOU score?
 10 or more - Perfection!
 6-9 Brilliant.
 3-5 Well done.
 0-2 Must do better.

Screen Scene

American Primeval **

Starring: Taylor Kitsch, Betty Gilpin
Run Time: 6 x 60 mins
Streaming: Netflix
Available: Currently

A Thousand Blows ***

Starring: Malachi Kirby, Erin Doherty
Run Time: 7 x 60 mins
Streaming: Disney+
Available: Currently

American Primeval is a gripping miniseries that delves into the brutal realities of the American West in 1857. Directed by Peter Berg and starring Taylor Kitsch and Betty Gilpin, the series portrays a mother and son fleeing their past, forming a found family while confronting a harsh landscape of freedom and cruelty. This isn't a series to watch with children around or if you're triggered by graphic depictions of violence as this series really portrays an unvarnished portrayal of frontier life. The commitment of the cast, particularly Kitsch's immersion into his role, adds depth to this historically resonant narrative.

BAFTA award-winning actor Malachi Kirby is Hezekiah Moscow, and finds himself thrust into the vibrant and violent melting pot of post-industrial revolution London's East End from Jamaica. Drawn into the criminal underbelly of the thriving boxing scene, he meets Mary Carr, played by Erin Doherty, leader of The Forty Elephants – the notorious all-female London gang – as they battle for survival on the streets. As Hezekiah sharpens his new skills, he comes up against Sugar Goodson, played by Stephen Graham, a seasoned and dangerous boxer and the two are soon locked into an intense rivalry that spills out way beyond the ring.



Dear Edward **

Starring: Colin O'Brien, Taylor Schilling
Streaming: Apple TV+
Run Time: 123 mins
Available to watch: 3rd February

A Complete Unknown ****

Starring: Timothée Chalamet, Elle Fanning
Streaming: In cinemas
Run Time: 140 mins.
Available to watch: Currently

Dear Edward is a poignant series that delves into the aftermath of tragedy with sensitivity and emotional depth. Based on Ann Napolitano's novel, the show follows Edward, the sole survivor of a plane crash, as he navigates grief and finds meaning in his altered life. The ensemble cast delivers moving performances, particularly Colin O'Brien as Edward, capturing the complexities of loss and resilience. With heartfelt storytelling and moments of hope, Dear Edward is a touching exploration of human connection and healing, though its slow pacing may deter some viewers.

"A Complete Unknown," directed by James Mangold, offers a biographical portrayal of Bob Dylan's early career, with Timothée Chalamet delivering a compelling performance as the iconic musician. The film delves into Dylan's transformation from a folk artist to a rock legend, capturing the cultural upheaval of the 1960s. Chalamet's nuanced portrayal has been praised for its authenticity, and he truly does a stellar job. Whether or not you're a Dylan fan, "A Complete Unknown" provides an engaging glimpse into the life of a musical legend and is well worth a trip to the cinema for.



Coffee Please!

Professor Justin Stebbing lists **All the reasons a cup of coffee really can be good for you.**

Consuming too much caffeine is definitely bad for your health, and there may be good reasons why some people want to quit it altogether. But if you despair at the idea of giving up your morning coffee, fear not.

There's lots of research out there to show that moderate coffee intake is linked with all sorts of benefits. As well as well-known pluses improving heart health, a daily cup of coffee even seems to be good for your brain and may help prevent mental illness.

For a start, coffee contains several essential nutrients beneficial to overall health. A typical eight-ounce cup of coffee provides small amounts of B vitamins – riboflavin, pantothenic acid, thiamine and niacin – as well as minerals potassium, manganese, and magnesium. The nutrients in coffee can contribute significantly to daily intake when multiple cups are consumed. It's also rich in antioxidants. In fact, many people – especially in the west – will probably get more antioxidants from coffee than from fruit and vegetables.

So what does drinking coffee actually mean for the body? One of the most well-known potential benefits of coffee is its ability to boost energy levels and improve mental alertness, especially first thing in the morning or during an afternoon slump. This is primarily due to

caffeine, a natural stimulant found in coffee, which blocks the brain's inhibitory neurotransmitter adenosine, which

promotes sleep and suppresses arousal. This leads to increased neuronal firing and the release of neurotransmitters like dopamine and norepinephrine, which enhance mood, reaction time and cognitive function.

However, sometimes it's difficult to work out cause and effect here.

People drink coffee at work, for example, and in social settings with friends so research has to tease out the effects of the coffee and those of the social aspect of sharing time with friends and colleagues.



moderate coffee intake is linked with all sorts of benefits.

Chronic diseases

In the long term, moderate coffee consumption can help reduce your risk of developing a host of chronic diseases.

1. Cardiovascular diseases

Moderate coffee consumption is associated with a reduced risk of heart disease and stroke. Studies indicate that drinking one to two cups of coffee daily may lower the risk of heart failure. Additionally, coffee consumption has been linked to a lower risk of cardiovascular mortality and disease. Interestingly, even when someone has abnormal heart rhythms, coffee is not

harmful according to recent data.

2. Type 2 diabetes

Coffee may enhance the body's ability to process glucose, reducing the risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Research has shown that people who consume more coffee have a lower likelihood of developing this condition.

3. Liver diseases

Coffee seems to help protect the liver. Both regular and decaffeinated coffee have been associated with healthier liver enzyme levels, and coffee drinkers have a significantly lower risk of liver cirrhosis and liver cancer.

4. Cancer

Coffee consumption has been linked to a reduced risk of several other types of cancer, including colorectal and womb cancers. A systematic review found that high coffee consumption is associated with an 18% lower risk of cancer.

5. Neurodegenerative diseases

Caffeine is associated with a lower risk of developing Parkinson's disease and may help those with the condition manage their movements better. Additionally, coffee consumption may reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia.

Mental health

As if the physical benefits aren't enough, coffee has also been shown to have positive effects on mental health. Studies suggest that coffee drinkers have a lower risk of depression, with some findings indicating a 20% reduced risk of becoming depressed.

What's more, coffee consumption has been associated with a decreased risk of suicide. Research has found that people who drink four or more cups a day are 53% less likely to die by suicide.

Lifespan

With all these benefits, it's not surprising that research suggests that coffee drinkers tend to live longer than



non-drinkers. A large study involving over 400,000 people found that coffee consumption over a period of 12 to 13 years was linked to a lower risk of death – with the strongest effect observed at four to five cups per day. This longevity benefit could be due to the cumulative effects of coffee's protective

properties against various diseases.

Moderation required

While coffee offers numerous health benefits, it is essential to consume it in moderation. It's also advisable to limit added sugars and creams to avoid unnecessary calorie intake.

research suggests that coffee drinkers tend to live longer than non-drinkers.

Excessive caffeine intake can lead to negative side effects such as jitteriness, anxiety and sleep disturbances. Some people who are especially sensitive to caffeine may need to limit their coffee intake or avoid it altogether, as even decaffeinated coffee contains caffeine.

As with any dietary component, balance is key. By understanding the potential benefits and limitations of coffee, people can make informed decisions about incorporating it into their daily routine.

I, for one, will be sticking to my morning cup.

Author: Justin Stebbing Professor of Biomedical Sciences, Anglia Ruskin University.

First published on The Conversation.

The Guildford Four and the Miscarriage of Justice

In the wake of the 1974 Guildford pub bombings, four innocent individuals were wrongfully convicted and sentenced to life in prison. Their case became a notorious miscarriage of justice. Liz Scales explores the full story and the legal battle to prove their innocence.

The 1970s were a tumultuous decade in both Northern Ireland and mainland Britain, marred by political upheaval and violence as the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) executed a series of deadly bombing campaigns. Among the most shocking incidents occurred in October 1974, when the IRA bombed two pubs in Guildford, Surrey, resulting in the deaths of five individuals and numerous injuries. The British public was rightfully appalled, and in a frantic response



revealing an unsettling propensity to prioritise public sentiment over the pursuit of truth.

In an ideal justice system, the principles of fairness, transparency, and the rule of law should stand paramount. Yet, the Guildford Four case is a glaring example of how easily these principles can be disregarded in moments of national crisis. The rushed investigation, flawed legal proceedings, and pervasive police misconduct not only devastated the lives of the wrongfully convicted but also illuminated systemic failures that still cast a shadow over the British legal system today.

to the ensuing outrage, authorities arrested four individuals—Paddy Armstrong, Gerry Conlon, Paul Hill, and Carole Richardson—who would come to be infamously known as the Guildford Four. What transpired, however, was not a quest for justice but rather a catastrophic miscarriage that would taint Britain’s legal system for decades,

The IRA Bombing Campaign (1974-1975)

The rushed investigation, flawed legal proceedings, and pervasive police misconduct not only devastated the lives of the wrongfully convicted but also illuminated systemic failures that still cast a shadow over the British legal system today.

The IRA’s bombing campaign across England during the years 1974 and 1975 was part of a broader strategy aimed at destabilising British authority in Northern Ireland while drawing attention

to their cause for Irish unification. These bombings were designed to instil fear, disrupt everyday life, and compel the British government to engage in negotiations. On October 5, 1974, two bombs exploded in Guildford at pubs frequented by off-duty soldiers: The Horse and Groom and The Seven Stars. The bombings were catastrophic, resulting in the deaths of four British soldiers and a civilian, while injuring countless others. The brutality and indiscriminateness of the attacks left the public shocked and authorities scrambling to identify the culprits.

In the aftermath, an atmosphere of fear and anger enveloped the nation, prompting fervent calls for immediate action. The British government, already grappling with the turmoil of the Troubles in Northern Ireland, felt immense pressure to respond decisively. Unfortunately, the urgency to demonstrate results—coupled with an anti-Irish sentiment exacerbated by years of sectarian violence—created a disastrous rush to judgment. Rather than a measured approach, the authorities sought quick arrests to quell public outrage, ultimately undermining the principles of justice in the process.

The Arrest and Coerced Confessions of the Guildford Four

One year after the Guildford bombings, British police apprehended Paddy Armstrong, Gerry Conlon, Paul Hill, and Carole Richardson, alleging they were members of an IRA cell responsible for the attack. Remarkably, there was no physical evidence linking them to the crime, and none of

them had any prior involvement in terrorism. Yet this lack of evidence mattered little in the face of overwhelming public pressure to secure a conviction. Desperate to show results, the police resorted to extreme interrogation tactics to extract confessions from the four individuals, a tactic that would later



prove to be a hallmark of the case's tragic unfolding.

The confessions obtained during these interrogations were not only contradictory but also fundamentally inconsistent with the established facts of the case. They included inaccurate details regarding

the timing and location of the bombings, raising immediate questions about their validity. Yet, despite these glaring discrepancies, the authorities clung to these coerced statements as their primary evidence. The glaring issues with the confessions

it was later revealed that Surrey Police had known the identities of the actual bombers long before the Guildford Four were convicted.

were conveniently glossed over in court, with the justice system instead prioritising guilty verdicts over a genuine search for truth.

The trial of the Guildford Four serves as a stark illustration of how the legal system can fail when driven more by public pressure than by a commitment to justice. In 1975, all four were convicted of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment—sentences that would rank among the longest in British history. The courtroom, rather than a venue for rational deliberation, became a space where the state sought to reassure a frightened public that it was in control of a chaotic and violent situation. In the process, the fates of four innocent individuals became collateral damage in a misguided pursuit of justice.

Police Misconduct and Suppression of Evidence

The Guildford Four case is laden with evidence of police misconduct and legal malpractice. Not

only were the confessions extracted under extreme duress, but critical evidence that could have exonerated the accused was also withheld from their defence teams. In fact, it was later revealed that Surrey Police had known the identities of the actual bombers long before the Guildford Four were convicted. This

information was deliberately concealed to avoid the embarrassment of admitting they had wrongfully arrested and prosecuted the wrong individuals.

The deliberate suppression of exculpatory evidence is one of the most egregious aspects of this case, illustrating a shocking failure of oversight as well as a calculated effort to maintain the narrative constructed by law enforcement and the prosecution. The goal was clear: secure convictions at all costs, regardless of the ethical implications. In their eagerness to placate public and political pressure, the police not only fabricated evidence but also ignored contradictory information and manipulated the legal process to achieve their ends.

The Role of Gareth Pierce and the Campaign for Justice

For years, the Guildford Four languished in prison, steadfastly proclaiming their innocence. Their families, alongside human rights advocates, began

a grassroots campaign for their release. It wasn't until the tireless efforts of human rights lawyer Gareth Pierce in the 1980s that the tide began to turn. Pierce's unwavering determination to expose the truth behind their wrongful convictions was



instrumental in uncovering vital new evidence. One of her most significant breakthroughs was revealing an alibi for Gerry Conlon that Surrey Police had concealed during the original trial. Conlon had been in London on the night of the Guildford bombings, yet this crucial information was buried, ensuring

it never reached the defence.

The confession of the real bombers was effectively ignored, and the Guildford Four remained imprisoned for another 14 years

Pierce's investigation also brought to light the broader systemic failures inherent in the case. She meticulously documented the police's use of coercive interrogation techniques, the fabrication of evidence, and the manipulation of the legal process to secure convictions. Her relentless pursuit of the truth illuminated the ethical breaches committed by law enforcement. Without her intervention, the Guildford Four may never have been exonerated.

The Balcombe Street Siege and the Real Bombers

In a dramatic twist, the actual perpetrators of the Guildford bombings came forward during the Balcombe Street siege in December 1975, just months after the Guildford Four had been wrongfully convicted. Four IRA members, including Joe O'Connell and Eddie Butler, were arrested following

a standoff with police in London. During the siege, they confessed to several bombings, including those in Guildford.

In a functional justice system, such an admission would have led to the immediate release of the Guildford Four. However, authorities were reluctant to acknowledge their monumental error. The confession of the real bombers was effectively ignored, and the Guildford Four remained imprisoned for another 14 years, serving sentences for crimes they did not commit while the actual perpetrators faced trial for unrelated offences.

The Impact of Ros Franey and Grant McKee's Documentary

Another pivotal moment in the campaign for the Guildford Four's exoneration came through the investigative efforts of documentary filmmakers Ros Franey and Grant McKee. Their documentary was instrumental in exposing the investigative flaws, coerced confessions, and police misconduct that had led to the wrongful convictions. By presenting the facts in an accessible format, Franey and McKee helped shift public opinion, bringing the case back into the limelight and intensifying pressure on the British government to reconsider the convictions. The documentary not only illuminated the police's failure to conduct a fair investigation but also humanised the Guildford Four, transforming them from abstract "convicts" into real victims of a deeply flawed system. Franey and McKee's willingness to challenge the official narrative and highlight the legal and political shortcomings of the case was crucial in the eventual overturning of the convictions.

Exoneration and Lingering Injustice

Finally, in 1989, after years of legal battles, media campaigns, and mounting public pressure, the convictions of the Guildford Four were quashed. The Court of Appeal ruled that the confessions had been obtained improperly, acknowledging the police misconduct that had tainted the investigation.

After nearly 15 years of wrongful imprisonment, Armstrong, Conlon, Hill, and Richardson were finally freed.

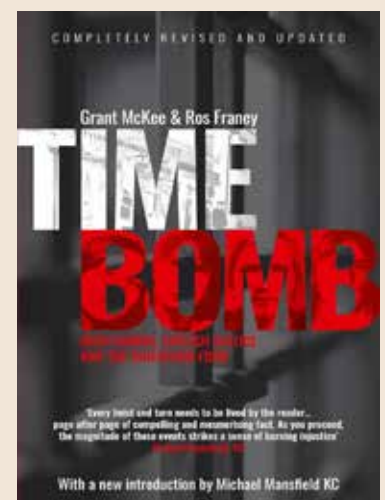
While the exoneration of the Guildford Four was a landmark moment, it also served as a scathing indictment of the British legal system. It underscored the lengths to which authorities were willing to go to maintain a façade of justice, even if it meant imprisoning innocent individuals. The revelations of police misconduct, the suppression of evidence, and the reliance on coerced confessions exposed systemic failures that extended far beyond this singular case. For the Guildford Four, freedom came too late to reverse the years of suffering and loss they endured.

The Legacy of the Guildford Four Case

The Guildford Four case remains one of the most notorious miscarriages of justice in British history. It stands as a chilling reminder of the dangers posed by a legal system driven by political expediency rather than a genuine pursuit of justice. Furthermore, it starkly illustrates how easily human rights can be trampled when law enforcement operates without checks and balances.

In the years following the Guildford Four's exoneration, their case became emblematic of the need for transparency.

- Recommended reading: Timebomb: Irish Bombs, English Justice and the Guildford Four (Muswell Press) by Grant McKee and Ros Franey available in paperback in all good bookshops and online as well as Kindle.





Narrow street with flowers in the old town Mougins in France. Night view

Jokes

Because laughter is the best medicine!



There were two Indians and a Cavan fellow walking along together in the desert, when, all of a sudden, one of the Indians took off and ran up a hill to the mouth of a cave.

He stopped and hollered into the cave... "Woooooo! Woooooo! Woooooo!" and then listened very closely until he heard the answer..."Woooooo! Woooooo! Woooooo!" He then tore off his clothes and ran in to the cave.

The Cavan fellow was puzzled and asked the other Indian what that was all about, was the Indian goofy or something.

"No", said the other Indian. "It is mating time for us Indians and when you see a cave and holler, "Woooooo! Woooooo! Woooooo!", and get an answer back, that means that she is in there waiting for you.

Well, just about that time, the other Indian saw another cave. He took off and ran up to the cave, then stopped and hollered, "Woooooo! Woooooo! Woooooo!" When he heard the return, "Woooooo! Woooooo! Woooooo!", off came the clothes and into the cave he goes.

The Cavan man started running around the desert looking for a cave to find these women that the Indians had talked about. All of a sudden, he looked up and saw this great big cave.

As he looked in amazement, he was thinking, "Man! Look at the size of that cave! It's bigger than the ones that those Indians found. There must really be something really great in this cave!"

Well... he took-off up the hill at a super fast speed. He got in front of the cave and hollered, "Woooooo! Woooooo! Woooooo!" He was just tickled all over when he heard the answering call of, "WOOOOOOOOOO! WOOOOOOOOOO!! WOOOOOOOOOO!!! Off came his clothes and, with a big smile on his face, he raced into the cave.

The next day in the newspaper the headline read, Naked Cavan man Run Over By Freight Train!!

A very zealous soul-winning young preacher recently came upon a farmer working in his field. Being concerned about

the farmer's soul the preacher asked the man, "Are you laboring in the vineyard of the Lord my good man?"

Not even looking at the preacher and continuing his work the farmer replied, "Naw, these are soybeans."

"You don't understand," said the preacher. "Are you a Christian?"

With the same amount of interest as his previous answer the farmer said, "Nope my name is Jones. You must be looking for Jim Christian. He lives a mile south of here."

The young determined preacher tried again asking the farmer, "Are you lost?"

"Naw! I've lived here all my life," answered the farmer.

"Are you prepared for the resurrection?" the frustrated preacher asked.

This caught the farmer's attention and he asked, "When's it gonna be?"

Thinking he had accomplished something the young preacher replied, "It could be today, tomorrow, or the next day."

Taking a handkerchief from his back pocket and wiping his brow, the farmer remarked, "Well, don't mention it to my wife. She don't get out much and she'll wanna go all three days."

My friend thinks he is smart. He told me an onion is the only food that makes you cry, so I threw a coconut at his face.

Q: Is Google male or female?

A: Female, because it doesn't let you finish a sentence before making a suggestion.

Maths Teacher: "If I have 5 bottles in one hand and 6 in the other hand, what do I have?"

Student: "A drinking problem."

Patricia Scanlan's Book Club



Patricia Scanlan was born in Dublin, where she still lives. She is a #1 bestselling author and has sold millions of books worldwide. Her books are translated in many languages. Patricia is the series editor and a contributing author to the award winning Open Door Literacy series.

This issue, Patricia brings her favourite books of the moment.

The Last Days of Kira Mullan – Nicci French – Simon & Schuster



She thinks it was murder. But if she can't trust herself, can anyone else? Nancy North and her boyfriend Felix are making the move across London to Harlesden. A new flat, a new area, a new start. Because while Nancy is fine now, she wasn't fine before. But settling into the new flat and meeting the new neighbours isn't helped by Felix's hovering concern. She is all right. She is sticking to her breathing exercises and doctor-prescribed help. So, when their new neighbour Kira Mullan is found dead by suicide, Felix is understandably worried about Nancy's frame of mind. But Nancy saw Kira the day before she died and she didn't strike her as someone who was suicidal – she was upset and angry, yes, but was she upset and angry enough to take her own life?

Nancy is the only one convinced that there's more to Kira's death than has been discovered. But all the police and the neighbours see is a vulnerable woman who isn't sure of what she saw, and might even be imagining things . . . Is Nancy imagining things, or are there more questions that should be asked about the last days of Kira Mullan?

Ravelling – Estelle Birdy – The Lilliput Press

SET IN DUBLIN'S LIBERTIES, Estelle Birdy's explosively original debut *Ravelling* channels the energies and agonies of young men let loose in the city, their city, navigating the tumultuous trajectory of youth and young manhood, where they balance their hopes with the harsh realities of their present. Hurling between friendships, feuds, drug-deals, family and brushes with the law, this is modern Dublin as never before portrayed. *Ravelling* follows Deano, a weed-smoking hurling star, living with his aunt in an about-to-be-demolished flat; Hamza, a Pakistani Muslim atheist and precocious academic, who sells his ADHD drugs to the kids in a private school; Oisín, empathetic and iron-willed, who has begun to see his dead brother at the end of his bed; Congolese nature lover, Benit, who just wants to relax and hurl with the lads; Karl, a maybe-gay fashionista, dreaming of something better while immersing himself in his art. Bound by friendship, place and the memories of those who've died too soon, these young men grapple with race, class, sex, parties, poverty, violence and Garda harassment, all while wondering what it means to be a man in twenty-first century Ireland.



Charlotte – Martina Devlin – The Lilliput Press

Charlotte Brontë dazzled the world with some of literature's most vital, richly-drawn characters. She spent her brief but extraordinary life in search of love – and eventually found it with Arthur Bell Nicholls, her father's curate, a reserved yet passionate Irishman. The pair honeymooned in Ireland, though their joy was quenched nine months later when Charlotte died in March 1855. The aura of mystery surrounding the enigmatic author was only to intensify after her death. Charlotte

is the story of two marriages and three lives irrevocably intertwined, told by the woman who went on to wed Brontë's widower. Theirs was a love triangle of devotion and heartache, friendship and deception, passion and obsession. Martina Devlin's enthralling novel re-envision's Charlotte's pivotal time in Ireland, weaving back and forth through the novelist's life and afterlife. It reflects upon the myths built up by those who knew her, those who thought they did, and those who longed to.

Nesting – Roisin O'Donnell – Scribner UK



On a bright spring afternoon in Dublin, Ciara Fay makes a split-second decision that will change everything. Grabbing an armful of clothes from the washing line, Ciara straps her two young daughters into her car and drives away. Head spinning, all she knows for certain is that home is no longer safe. This was meant to be an escape. But with dwindling savings, no job, and her family across the sea, Ciara finds herself adrift, facing a broken housing system and the voice of her own demons. As summer passes and winter closes in, she must navigate raising her children in a hotel room, searching for a new home and dealing with her husband Ryan's relentless campaign to get her to come back.

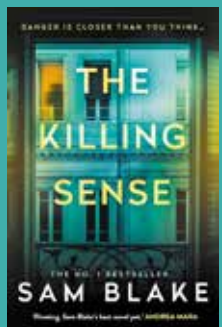
Because leaving is one thing, but staying away is another. What will it take for Ciara to rebuild her life?

Can she ever truly break away from Ryan's control – and what will be the cost? Tense, beautiful, and underpinned by an unassailable love, hope and resilience, this is the story of one woman's bid to start over.

The Killing Sense – Sam Blake – Atlantic Books

Single Mum Kate Wilde has escaped an abusive marriage and hasn't had a holiday in years, so when she wins a five-day trip to Paris to learn about perfume - in a competition she can't remember entering - it's a dream come true. Or is it? Almost as soon as she arrives, Kate's ex texts with evidence that he's in Paris too. Kate can feel she's being watched, and she's sure someone has been in her apartment. Then

she discovers that there's a killer in the city focusing on red headed women like her. And his kill count is rising. Who should she fear the most? All Kate's senses are on alert. But can her instincts keep her safe?

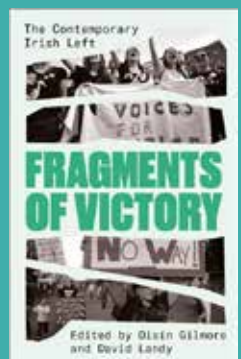


Bored of Lunch Six Ingredient Slow Cooker – Anthony Nathan – Ebury Press Random House

A revolutionary collection of calorie-counted recipes for your slow cooker. Say farewell to mealtime mayhem with recipes easier than ever before, guaranteed to be used time and again. From fakeaways to desserts and throw-and-go dinners to midweek meals, Nathan has all your favourites covered with pies, pastas, curries, soups, risottos and more. Calorie-counted recipes with nutritional breakdowns for carbs, protein and fat. A photo for every recipe and for each 6 ingredients. Easy-to-find ingredients. Triple-tested recipes. All new never-seen-before recipes. One-pot and one-pan friendly recipes. Recipes include Beef & Bacon Hotpot, Lazy Chicken Stroganoff, Beef Brisket Madras, Spiced Sweet Potato & Halloumi Soup and Dark Chocolate Brownies. Let the slow cooker do the work with these super-simple six-ingredient recipes. Cooking can't get any easier than this.

Fragments of Victory – Oisín Gilmore and David Landy – Pluto Press

There is much to learn from modern leftwing activism in Ireland. A rich tapestry of movements, including republicans, social democrats, trade unions, Trotskyists and anarchists, have battled neoliberalism and austerity with vigour, frustration, success and failure. Fragments of Victory charts these political currents, from the difficult early years of anti-austerity campaigning to the seismic victory of 'Repeal' – the campaign for women's reproductive rights. Each chapter covers a different campaign or group, written by leading activists who provide insiders' perspectives on how history was made, and share valuable insights that can be applied to international movements everywhere. Oisín Gilmore is Senior Economist at TASC (Thinktank for Action on Social Change) in Dublin, Ireland. He has participated in various social movements in Ireland, Britain and continental Europe. David Landy is Assistant Professor at Trinity College Dublin. He is the author of Jewish Identity and Palestinian Rights, and co-editor of Enforcing Silence: Academic Freedom and Criticism of Israel.

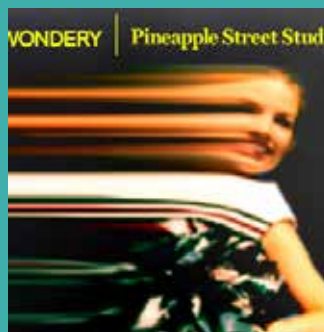
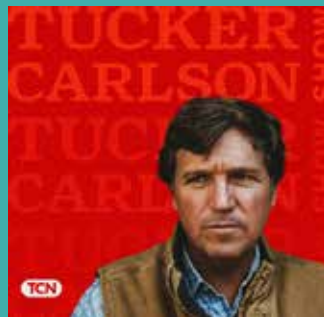


The Podcast Review

We source the best selection of podcasts each issue. This time we bring you, **The Tucker Carlson Show, Hysterical, The Lonely Island & Seth Meyers Podcast, Revolutions by Mike Duncan and The Maintenance Phase.**

The Tucker Carlson Show (Uncensored Discussions)

The Tucker Carlson Show is a thought-provoking podcast that dives deep into political and cultural issues with Carlson's signature incisiveness. Each episode blends sharp analysis with candid interviews, offering a platform for diverse viewpoints. While polarising to some, its in-depth discussions and engaging format make it a compelling listen for politically minded audiences.



The Lonely Island & Seth Meyers Podcast (Comedy)

This podcast is a delightful blend of comedy and nostalgia. Featuring the iconic trio (Andy Samberg, Akiva Schaffer, and Jorma Taccone) and Meyers, the podcast dives into their time on Saturday Night Live, behind-the-scenes stories, and creative inspirations. With witty banter and genuine camaraderie, it offers laugh-out-loud moments alongside insightful reflections on comedy and pop culture.

Revolutions by Mike Duncan (Historical)

Mike Duncan examines major political revolutions throughout history, including the American, French, and Russian revolutions. Ideal for those who love political history and want a structured, chronological narrative.



The Maintenance Phase (Health)

This podcast debunks diet myths, wellness trends, and health fads with humor and deep research. Perfect for skeptics looking to understand the science (or lack thereof) behind popular health advice.



Hysterical (Investigative)

Hysterical is a gripping investigative podcast that unravels the mystery of a baffling outbreak of Tourette's-like symptoms in teenagers. With meticulous research and compelling storytelling, it explores the social and psychological forces at play. A masterful blend of science and human emotion, this podcast is both thought-provoking and deeply engaging.

Could the 'outbreak' really be caused by pollution from an abandoned factory or a train wreck from the 1970s? Were the girls taken seriously or was there misogyny at play in the community and within the media?

It's impossible to listen to this podcast without having a view - and that view seems to differ from person to person.



How to:

Search "Google podcasts" in the Play Store app (if you're an Android phone). iPhones comes with Apple podcasts app installed. Open the app and type in the name of the podcast you want or you can just browse categories whilst there.

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