

Success for Ireland At the Homeless World Cup



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Also

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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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Contents

Page 4

Letter to my Younger Self: William Coles

Each issue we ask a well-known person to write a letter to their 16-year-old self. This issue, screenwriter and veteran journalist William Coles takes on the challenge.



Page 7

Success for Ireland at the Homeless World Cup

Ireland's ladies win the Big Issue Cup while the men's team reach the quarter finals, beating Brazil along the way in the Homeless World Cup in Seoul, Korea 2024 Shaun Anthony reports.



Page 11

Israel-Iran: Together in the Abyss

Israel-Iran and the nine stages of how conflicts can escalate and get out of control. Mathew Powell reports.



Page 14

What's Breathing Inside your Parcel from China?

Over 60% of Brits now shop from Chinese apps and Ireland lead the world in 'fast fashion consumption' from Shein et al and this has caused an increase in the number of potentially dangerous creatures such as scorpions and spiders accidentally arriving in UK and Irish homes. Parcelhero warns us to be on their guard.

Page 16

Four in Five Pregnant Women in Ireland are Iron Deficient

Here's why that's worrying. Elaine McCarthy, Lecturer in Nutrition, School of Food and Nutritional Sciences, reports.

Page 18

Before P Diddy there was Louis B. Mayer

He had secret audio and video all over MGM, a brothel on the grounds and employed a 'fixer' to cover the most heinous of crimes. Shaun Anthony reports.

Page 22

A New Solution for Flood Prone Cities: Concrete Made from Shellfish Waste.

Researchers have developed a type of concrete that uses discarded shells to trap water. It's now combating floods and food waste in urban gardens and along cycling paths. Author Ayurella Horn- Muller, Grist.

Page 32

The Pirate Queen of Ireland: Grace O'Malley

Samantha Bailie-McMurdock takes a look at Ireland's very own swashbuckler – Grace O'Malley, the red headed gunslinger who raided vessel ships, battled English armies and took on Elizabeth I.



Regulars

26/27 – Screen Scene
29 - Jokes
36/37 - Book Club
38 - The Podcast Review

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Letter to my Younger Self - William Coles

Each issue we ask a well known person to write a letter to their 16-year-old self. This issue, William Coles who's been a journalist for over 30 years on publications including *The Express*, *The Mail* and as New York correspondent for *The Sun* takes on the challenge. William is also a screenwriter and lecturer.

Two months ago I lost one of my nine lives. A friend and I had walked out to Cramond Island, just outside Edinburgh. After an hour of exploring the island, we returned to the causeway. We'd been cut off by the tide.

Instead of just accepting our medicine, Jono and I decided to try and walk back over the half-mile causeway. After 300 metres, we'd both fallen in, up over our heads. We returned to the island, soaked and freezing, where, an hour later, we were rescued by the RNLI.

Another of my nine lives lost, another lesson learned – be wary of spring tides.

Unfortunately for me, I can't really be given advice. By that I mean the only lessons I ever really learn are through my own cock-ups. I have to experience the disaster before I can learn the wisdom. That said... There are two very specific pieces of advice I'd like to give my younger self.

Most of the nine lives that I've lost have been my own lives. But I do have two very near misses which are seared

into my memory, each one involving a child who nearly died on my watch. This would be a very hard thing to



recover from. My top tip is this: If you are looking after children, then most of the time they'll be just fine. But there are a few occasions when you need to be vigilant. On it. And that is when they're

near roads or water. And let's add in a third one. Electricity. A friend's son nearly killed himself after dismantling a plugged-in hair-dryer. But 17 years ago, as

a newish father, I didn't realise that when children are around water, you've got to wake up. We'd been walking around some ponds in Hampshire. My

brother had a little battery-operated buggie. My sons Dexter and Geordie were then aged about five and two. They drove off in the buggie. I was just mooching along after them. I remember thinking what a nice day it was,

This would be a very hard thing to recover from.

sun beating down, hardly a sound to be heard...
Hardly a sound to be heard?? I was instantly sprinting,
yelling for my brother to come and help.

The buggie was in the water,
Geordie nearly drowning. I plunged
in, dragged him out, thanking my
lucky stars he wasn't dead, one hell
of a lesson learned.

The second time I nearly managed
to kill a child was about eight years
later. My wife and I were looking
after a friend's two sons for the
weekend – Zak and Otis.

Another glorious afternoon and
this time we're walking to one of
Scotland's oldest pubs, The Sheep's
Heid, just on the other side of
Arthur's Seat in Edinburgh.

There is one busyish road to cross.

I cross the road with Margot. What
I'm really thinking about is the pint of ice-cold lager that
I'm soon going to be drinking.

I'm not much fussed about what Zak and Otis are doing.
They're with Dexter and Geordie about 50 yards behind
us – and Dexter and Geordie know how to cross a road.
I presumed that even if Zak and Otis didn't know how to
cross a road, they'd just stick with my sons...

I hear a screech of brakes and a bang. Otis had only just
made it over the road. Zak had been hit by two cars, one
from each direction. He broke his
leg and lost some teeth.

Margot was completely
traumatised for a long
time afterwards. As for me
– I was thinking to myself, "Jesus
that was a close one." By that I mean that although a
broken leg is bad, it could have been a whole lot worse.
So those would be my tips for my younger self. If you're
in charge of young kids and you're anywhere near roads
or water, then – Bloody. Well. Focus!

Actually, I've got one other red hot tip for that callow
teenager that was myself.

I used to be painfully shy. At the time, I thought that
being a shy introvert was just how it was. Just a part of
my character, and there was damn all I could do about it.
Whereas... Talking to people and engaging with people
is in fact a skill. Of course you've got some natural-born
charmiers like, say, Bill Clinton or Barack Obama. But
nevertheless, chatting to people and shooting the breeze
with strangers is very much a skill. It's like driving a car
or learning to swim.

And the way to learn how to connect with strangers and
to chat to people is... To chat to people.
Sounds blindingly obvious. Took me an absolute age to

work it out, but now I swear by it. I expound on it in all
of my journalism lectures.



All I'd have told my younger self
is to try connecting with five
strangers a day. And practically
speaking this means that rather
than just buying my coffee and
saying, "Thank you, bye bye," I
could have lingered a little, asked
about the weather, or what was on
last night's TV.

If you choose to engage with
five strangers a day, then very
quickly you'll gain confidence,
you'll discover lines that work for
you. Even if you were as socially
inept as the teenage me, you
would inevitably start to develop
socially antennae. Do it for a year

and that's 2,000 strangers. And that is how to develop
confidence and that is how to learn to talk to people – by
practising it over and over again until it becomes second-
nature. As it was, I learned to connect with people by
becoming a journalist. But it took years of blundering
around, and for a long time I was still quite nervy. But if
you're doing your five strangers-a-day, then you're on the
fast track. Wish I'd known that. I might not have been
quite so tongue-tied with people, particularly women,

when I was in my twenties. But then
again... when you look back on

your life, you can see the one
crucial moment that changed
everything. And if you were
to change a single part of your

life, then you might also have altered that
one glorious moment.

For me, my big day happened 23 years ago, when I
visited Edinburgh for the first time to play golf with a
friend, Seb. He introduced me to his boss. A year later we
were married.

So maybe I should just accept that 25 years of social
ineptitude was merely part of my
journey on the way to meeting Margot.

Perhaps best not to change a thing -
change a single link along the way and
there might not have been a Margot.

**William Coles' latest novel Eton
Rogue is out now, published by
Legend Press & is available in all
good bookshops & online.**



Congratulations and best wishes to the Irish Teams on their achievements at the Homeless World Cup in Seoul 2024



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Well done to the players, coaches and everyone involved with the 2024 Homeless World Cup. Many congratulations to the ladies team on winning the Big Issue trophy and to the men's team in reaching the quarter final. We wish you continued success in the future games.

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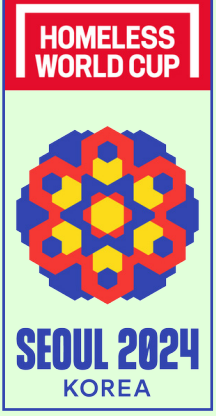
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Success for Ireland *at the Homeless World Cup*

Ireland’s ladies win the Big Issue Cup while our men’s team reach the Q finals
beating Brazil along the way in the Homeless World Cup in Seoul, Korea 2024
Shaun Anthony reports.

What a great tournament for our ladies team as they brought home the Big Issue Cup at the Trophy Stage at the 2024 Homeless World Cup in South Korea. The Girls in Green beat USA 5-2 in their Trophy Stage Final to cap off a fantastic tournament in style, where they scored 42 goals across 10 games overall.

The Men’s Team reached the Q finals of their competition beating Brazil along the way, to put it in perspective this is only the 4th time in 20 HWC tournaments that we have reached the Q final stage such is the competitiveness of the tournament, and to do so with three of our players over the age of forty is a phenomenal achievement and speaks volumes for their fitness and preparation for the tournament.

Coaches Mary Byrne (women) and Graham Tucker (men) must be congratulated for their ability to

mould a group of talented individuals into two teams who bonded together and were thoroughly prepared in mind and body for the task in hand.



Irish Street League CEO Chris O’Brien, who has been with the two teams in South Korea, expressed his pride in seeing the players make the most of this experience.

“I’d like to congratulate all of the players, thank the coaching

staff and volunteers who helped the Irish Street Leagues stay operational and everyone who has sent on their messages of support. It has been a brilliant tournament and an unforgettable experience, but it’s only the beginning of a bright future for these amazing people.”

The two squads returned home into Dublin Airport to a well deserved reception greeted by family, friends and supporter’s and with plenty of news media present to record the event.

A final word to Street league founder and chairman Sean Kavanagh who was among those greeting the teams at the Airport.




“Looking on you can see there is a special bond between these players, one you sense will be there for a lifetime, you get the feeling they will always be there for each other. The Street league motto is -A Ball can change a life- seeing and hearing what coming together on the field of sport has meant to these men and women - A ball can change a life - is an accurate description.”

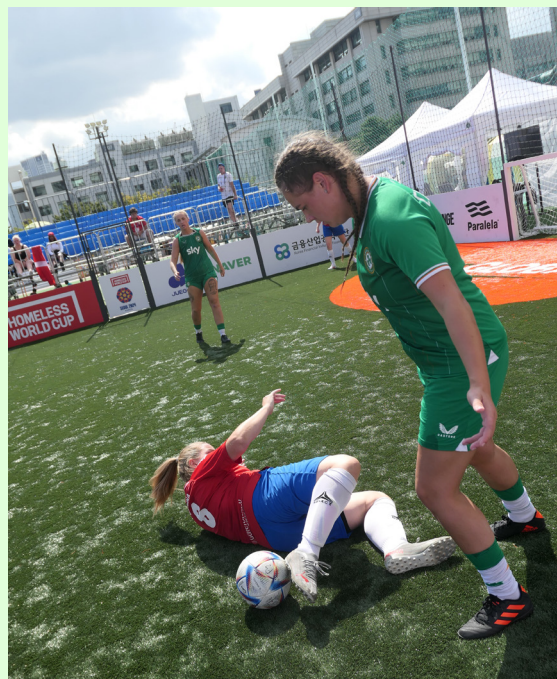
IHSL (Irish Homeless Street leagues) would like to thank all those who supported and continued to support the leagues without that support none of it would be possible.

If you would like to sponsor or support the Irish Homeless Street League (IHSL) pop across to:

<https://irishstreetleague.com>

The IHSL was founded in 2004 and is a volunteer-driven non-profit organisation that uses the power of sport to transform the lives of people who have found themselves affected by social exclusion.

 IrishStLeague
 @IrishStLeague
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2024 Homeless World Cup Squads

Women's Team:

Nicola Duffy, Niamh Ryan, Siobhan Kennedy, Abby Skelly, Alison Ryan, Hayleigh Power, Jade Clohessy.

Coach Mary Byrne

Men's Team:

Alan Grace, Brendan Taylor, Noel Gleeson, Graham Mellon, William Rafter, Jamie Wilson, Dylan Skeen.

Coach Graham Tucker.





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Israel – Iran

Together into the Abyss?

Israel-Iran and the nine stages of how conflicts can escalate and get out of control. *Mathew Powell reports.*

Tensions are running high in the Middle East. The murderous attack by Hamas on Israel on October 7 2023 kicked off a spiral of violence in the region. That has culminated, a year later, in Israel mounting a ground invasion of Lebanon. The invasion, which Israel says aims to confront and destroy Hezbollah, follows 12 months of tit-for-tat strikes between Israel and Iran, which have gradually escalated in intensity.

Given that Hezbollah is closely associated and supported by Iran, there is mounting concern that this conflict could become a major flashpoint in international relations. The worry is that this war might provide the spark that causes the next global conflict.

To understand how dangerous the situation could be, it's worth looking at the theory of conflict escalation. In 1997, Austrian economist

Friedrich Glasl published his nine-stage model of conflict escalation, which is generally accepted as the most sophisticated study of how conflicts can develop from disputes to all-out conflict (a step he gives the rather ominous name of "Together into the abyss").



The first level is when a conflict is readily or easily resolved, but when a resolution is not achieved, positions on either side of the argument harden and frustration begin to mount. The next step naturally occurs when conflict parties seek to make their case, hoping to gain advantage in the court of global opinion.

**the
worry is this war might
provide the spark that causes the
next global conflict.**

Stage three of the model sees the adversaries beginning to take action. Neither side wants to yield advantage to the other, while any sense that discussion might mitigate the conflict has disappeared in mutual antagonism and mistrust.

Accordingly at **stage four**, the conflict parties resort

to an “us v them” rhetoric in an attempt to build coalitions and attract support. **Stage five**, described as “loss of face”, is when one or other of the antagonists feels they have become tarnished in the eyes of the community as a whole. Reputation no longer matters as much as achieving their ends. Sometimes one side or the other commits an act that it feels has isolated it, which only serves to harden its position.

In stage six, threats or ultimatums are issued. This can lead to hostilities spiralling as the conflict parties seek credibility by putting a timescale on a threat, which in turn will heighten the pressure on both sides. This can also bind another of the warring parties to a course of action from where there is little opportunity to retreat. This facilitates the move to stage seven, where the antagonists begin to trade the first limited blows in response to the threats they have made.

In stage eight, the offensive blows intensify, with the focus on trying to injure – or even destroy – the adversary’s capacity for response or call into question the legitimacy of the other side’s leader. Often this can lead to one or another of the parties fragmenting into warring factions, making the situation increasingly uncontrollable.

As the conflict hurtles into stage nine, the threat to one or another of the parties has become existential, who are now falling “together into the abyss”. All

sense of caution is abandoned as the only goal is the total annihilation of the adversary. A state of total war.



Both sides clearly want to demonstrate their power and influence in the region

linked Iran to the planning of the Hamas attack on October 7. Tehran has recently denied having any part in the massacre. Hezbollah, which is more closely linked to the Islamic Republic, has carried out a year-long barrage of rockets from Lebanon into northern Israel. In response, Israel has now directly struck against Iran’s proxy, invading southern Lebanon to engage and attempt to destroy Hezbollah.

Both sides clearly want to demonstrate their power and influence in the region. But the stakes could rise if Iran feels an urgent need to protect its proxies. For Israel, its leaders have long argued that its very existence is at stake.

In terms of Glasl’s stages of escalation, the two countries appear to have reached stage seven, where they are launching limited blows against each other while avoiding direct confrontation. Both want to make their adversary consider whether the cost of continuing is worth the potential rewards that can be gained.

Iran’s air attacks on Israel suggest that while Iran can

What stage are we at?

After years of animosity and denunciation on both sides, the conflict between Israel and Iran has now progressed to the stage that both sides have exchanged limited blows against each other. Reports have

see that its regional position is being threatened and is still seeking to support the non-state actors in Gaza and Lebanon, the way in which they have conducted their attacks suggest that Tehran does not feel itself powerful enough to escalate further than it already has.

The only direct blows the two powers have launched against each other have been from the air. Iran has now launched two (large) barrages of rockets against Israel, one in April this year and again at the end of September. Both bombardments were announced in advance and neither has resulted in Israeli casualties.

Israel responded in April with a targeted strike against an Iranian airbase close to one of the country's nuclear installations. It has yet to directly respond to the latest Iranian barrage, but Netanyahu has said Israel would target Iran's military installations "based on Israel's national security

needs".

Analysts believe that both sides – so far at least – are using these limited strikes to signal their unwillingness to escalate. But there is a great deal at stake. Iran will feel its position as a regional power threatened by Israel's ground campaign in Lebanon. Meanwhile Israel has repeatedly declared that it is fighting for the security of its people. Neither appears to want a wider conflict – and their allies certainly wouldn't encourage them if they did. So it's clear that – up to now at least – neither Israel nor Iran wants to venture any further down the road to "the abyss" as envisaged by Glasl's nine-stage model.

Author: Matthew Powell; Teaching Fellow in Strategic and Air Power Studies, University of Portsmouth

First published on The Conversation

Congratulations and best wishes to the Irish teams on their achievements at the Homeless World Cup in Seoul 2024



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Congratulations and well done to all who represented Ireland at the Homeless World Cup in Seoul, 2024.



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Beware !!

What's breathing in your package from China?

Over 60% of Brits now shop from Chinese apps and Ireland lead the world in 'fast fashion consumption' from Shein et al and this has caused an increase in the number of potentially dangerous creatures such as scorpions and spiders accidentally arriving in UK and Irish homes. Parcelhero warns us to be on their guard.

In the past few weeks, several cases of stowaway scorpions in packages from China have hit the headlines. After ordering a fashion bargain from Shein, a student in Bristol discovered a sting in the tail when a highly venomous scorpion was found in the box. Similarly, after ordering a treadmill, a couple from Basingstoke found one in their Amazon third-party order from China.

Now the international delivery specialists Parcelhero is warning Brits and Irish buying online from overseas sellers to be cautious when opening packages ordered from China, just in case unwelcome creatures have crawled their way inside.

Parcelhero's Head of Consumer Research, David Jinks M.I.L.T., says: 'More of us than ever now use online marketplaces to order products direct from China. 43% of Brits who shop online have bought items such as household goods from Temu, 42% have ordered fashion items from Shein, 25% have purchased accessories and other goods from

TikTok Shop and 22% products such as electronics from AliExpress. Ireland is one of Temu's fastest growing markets with 20% (and growing monthly) of us shopping via the app so it's important to be mindful when opening parcels as,



there might be more than you bargained for inside these innocent-looking packages. An expert told the BBC recently that there appears to have been a "worrying" increase in cases of potentially dangerous creatures lurking inside packages from

China, with three venomous scorpions appearing to have been shipped in the last month alone.

**"worrying"
increase in cases of
potentially dangerous creatures
lurking inside packages from
China**

'Chris Newman, from the National Centre for Reptile Welfare

(NCRW), told the BBC:

"We've had 200 stowaways this year. Twelve have been scorpions and three of those have been within the last month – the same species of scorpion from China."

Of course, thousands of e-commerce parcels arrive

daily from China into the UK and Ireland, so this is proportionately a very small amount. However, the fact that any parcel may potentially contain something a lot scarier than Halloween lights is something online shoppers should keep in mind.

Trade with China is accelerating rapidly. For example, in less than two years since its UK and Irish launch, Temu has already become a favourite site of online shoppers. However, people should exercise some caution when opening parcels from China and other countries where potentially dangerous creatures, such as scorpions, spiders and snakes, may be found.

For example, scorpions have a very slow metabolism and use very little oxygen so they don't need much ventilation. That means if one of these creatures crawls into a box in China, the chances of it surviving the journey are quite high.

If you are at all concerned about a parcel, particularly if you have a pet that seems to be very interested in it, perhaps barking or scratching at the package, it's best to take precautions:

- **Never touch a creature you are unfamiliar with by hand**
- **Try to trap the animal under a glass or in a plastic container**
- **Never release any unknown creature in your garden. It is actually an offence, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, to release a non-native creature into the wild**
- **Contact an expert. For example, the Animal Law Ireland website <https://animallaw.ie> or call them on 01 607 2379 or 0761 064 408**
- **If you are confronted by a potentially dangerous animal you can call the ISPCA on: 043 33 25035. The ISPCA can also be emailed at helpline@ispca.ie**
- **Finally, contact the All Ireland Reptile**



Keepers Alliance via their website <https://airka.co.uk> for immediate advice if faced with a potentially dangerous reptile or phone the National Reptile Zoo on 056 77 61783.

Never send a potentially dangerous live animal of any kind by post or general courier

Live mammals and reptiles are prohibited from being sent by post or non-specialist courier, as are any creatures or insects classified as dangerous within the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 (including certain venomous spiders). Parcelhero's David Jinks states,

'Parcelhero welcomes most shipments, domestically and internationally, but we are fond of our partner couriers so please do not ship any dangerous creatures with us or any other non-specialist carrier! There are

a number of dedicated courier services that are able to transport creatures such as scorpions for the pet trade.

people should exercise some caution when opening parcels from China

'Any kind of live creature that can be sent legally in the general post must be boxed and packaged to protect the creature, postal staff and customers from harm. The fastest possible service should be selected and items must be clearly marked "URGENT - LIVING CREATURES - HANDLE WITH CARE".

While China is now the UK and Ireland's number one market for consumers purchasing goods from overseas sellers, the USA remains the UK's biggest overall individual trading partner. The US is also Parcelhero's biggest individual overseas market.

For expert advice on UK-US shipping, including useful frequently asked questions (FAQs), help for exporters and prohibited items details, see: <https://www.parcelhero.com/en-gb/international-courier-services/usa-parcel-delivery>

Four in Five Pregnant Women in Ireland are Iron Deficient

Here's why that's worrying. *Elaine McCarthy*, Lecturer in Nutrition, School of Food and Nutritional Sciences, reports.

More than 80% of pregnant women in Ireland are iron deficient by their third trimester, according to a new study my colleagues and I conducted. What we found particularly surprising was that the women were in otherwise good health.

Working alongside the University of Minnesota and the Masonic Institute of the Developing Brain, we analysed data from 641 participants based in the Republic of Ireland. All were pregnant with their first child. We took blood samples at 15, 20 and 33 weeks to track their iron levels.

Our study, one of the largest of its kind globally, reveals how widespread iron deficiency is, even in wealthy countries like Ireland. Indeed, the women in this study had higher rates of iron deficiency than women in some low-income countries where access to good healthcare and nutritious foods is more limited.

In the early months of pregnancy, 20% of women were iron deficient at 15 weeks, but none were

anaemic. But by the third trimester, more than 80% were iron deficient. This suggests that while many women may begin pregnancy with normal iron levels, they are not getting enough to keep up with the body's increasing needs as pregnancy progresses.



One of the most surprising aspects of this study is that about 75% of the women were taking iron supplements that met the European recommended dietary allowance of 15-17mg of iron. While this supplement

was protective for some women, iron deficiency was still extremely common by the third trimester.

Pregnant women require ten times more iron during pregnancy to support their own needs and those of their growing baby.

Why iron is so important

Pregnant women require ten times more iron during pregnancy to support their own needs and those of their growing baby.

It's used by both mother and baby to move oxygen around the body, which is essential for keeping all the cells and organs working properly. Low iron levels are associated with a higher risk of

harm for both mother and child.

Iron deficiency can have long-term consequences on the child's brain development, leading to poorer cognition, behavioural problems and poorer motor skills. My previous research has shown that iron deficiency in early life is associated with behavioural problems at five years of age.

Our research suggests that women should be routinely screened for iron deficiency in early pregnancy. Currently, screening for the early stages

of iron deficiency isn't the norm in Ireland or many other countries, meaning many women don't realise they have low iron levels until late in pregnancy — or not at all.

Screening in early pregnancy could identify those at the greatest risk of deficiency, allowing them to get help before it becomes a problem.

As well as screening, there's a need to educate women about the importance of iron during pregnancy. Women are urged to focus on an iron-rich diet, including red meat, green leafy vegetables,

beans, nuts and dried fruit. While iron from animal foods is more easily absorbed, iron-rich food from both animals and plants is important.

Routine screening and better education on the importance of iron during pregnancy are vital

in benefiting families and helping avoid any unnecessary risks.

Iron deficiency can have long-term consequences on the child's brain development

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Congratulations and best wishes to the Irish teams on their achievements at the Homeless World Cup in Seoul 2024



Louise O Reilly TD

Dublin Fingal

*Well done to those who represented
Ireland in Seoul at the Homeless World
Cup*

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Seirbhís Phríosúin
na hÉireann
Irish Prison Service

Proud Supporters of
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Before P Diddy there was....

Louis B Mayer

Before P Diddy there was Louis B Mayer. He had secret audio and video all over MGM, a brothel on the grounds and had “fixers” to cover the most heinous of crimes. Shaun Anthony reports.

Louis B Mayer, the movie producer and co-founder of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM) Studios hardly needs any introduction; he discovered Hollywood royalty like Joan Crawford, Judy Garland and Clark Gable. He epitomised the American dream: A poor Jewish boy from a Ukrainian immigrant family who left school at 12 to support his family gathering scrap metal he became the highest paid person in the U.S. - but at a huge cost to the stars he “made”.



A young Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland and Mayer

factory to make props for its dozens of sound

stages, upon which 18 films were being made simultaneously.

Inside this perfectly curated world, Mayer made films that glittered, providing a lustrous distraction from life inside Depression-era America. His employees were part of his “family”.

MGM’s image was one of

squeaky clean fantasy (as that’s what sold) – and Mayer deployed brutal levels of control to keep it that way. Marriages, murder, rape, abuse and

addiction were all kept quiet to keep up appearances.

The MGM Town

At its peak, MGM employed 6,000 people. They worked in a small town of a studio, with its own electricity plant, police force, doctor, dentist, chiropractor, foundry and.. brothel... It even had a

Marriages, murder, rape, abuse and addiction were all kept quiet to keep up appearances.

Mayer was among the first to acknowledge Hollywood as a place that nurtured talent, creating a “star system” that made names – quite literally – out of screen idols such as Greta Garbo, Jean Harlow,

Norma Shearer, Hedy Lamarr and Judy Garland.

He once said,

“The idea of a star being born is bush-wah. A star is made, created; carefully and cold-bloodedly built up from nothing, from nobody. We hired geniuses

at make-up, hair dressing, surgeons to slice away a bulge here and there, rubbers to rub away the blubber, clothes designers, lighting experts, coaches for



everything – fencing, dancing, walking, talking, sitting and spitting.”

If MGM was a dream factory, and Mayer the paternal force behind its success, then Garland was probably the best representative of his method. At 13, Frances Gumm had been signed on account of her voice. By 14, Mayer repeatedly fat shamed her and had her on diet pills, black coffee and 80 cigarettes a day. Garland, along with Mickey Rooney and many of the more forgotten child stars was assigned a confidante who would report back to Mayer on her actions. Every misdeed was reprimanded. Garland and others were routinely told by Mayer that they were “owned” by him and he had the power to “destroy” them. Garland was so terrified of him that when summoned to sit on his knee she’d smile and pretend all was well as he cupped her left breast “apparently he liked to remind me where my heart was,” she would later state sarcastically.

When she was 18 Garland married David Rose, a

songwriter 13 years her senior, however, Mayer was furious as he hadn’t granted her permission and when she fell pregnant he forced her to have an abortion or “I’ll destroy you.”

Garland wasn’t alone in having her love life and diet controlled by Mayer. Most of the talent that had been funnelled through his star system had signed contracts that forbade them from marrying, changing their image, gaining

any weight etc. Jean Harlow had a clause written into her contract forbidding her to marry, because, as MGM’s blonde bombshell, she couldn’t simultaneously be a wife.

When young actress Betty Garrett complained to Mayer that she was unfairly pinned down to a 7-year contract he calmly told her she was very privileged he’d even considered her then smashed her feet so hard with his heels that she couldn’t walk for over a week. When Garrett was carried back to her dressing room she was in tears with pain - but sadly there was little she could do about it - Mayer was bad tempered and did not appreciate being challenged, especially by a woman. When actress Jean Howard refused to have sex with Mayer he chased her around a room, furious that she had the audacity to turn him down. Silent star Esther Ralston, in her biography claimed that Mayer sabotaged her career after she refused him sex - warning her (like he did with so many) “I can destroy you.”

**Mayer
also had huge sex parties
where the most expensive champagne
and drugs were freely on offer...**

Just like P Diddy

Countless stars including Marilyn Monroe believed Mayer had hidden recording equipment everywhere and whilst some felt this was just paranoia - it would later transpire that Louis B Mayer (like P Diddy and others) seemed to have had hidden spy cameras throughout MGM. And again like P Diddy he paid the doctors, psychiatrists etc to have full access to his stars' private medical notes as well as listening to every conversation during their appointments.

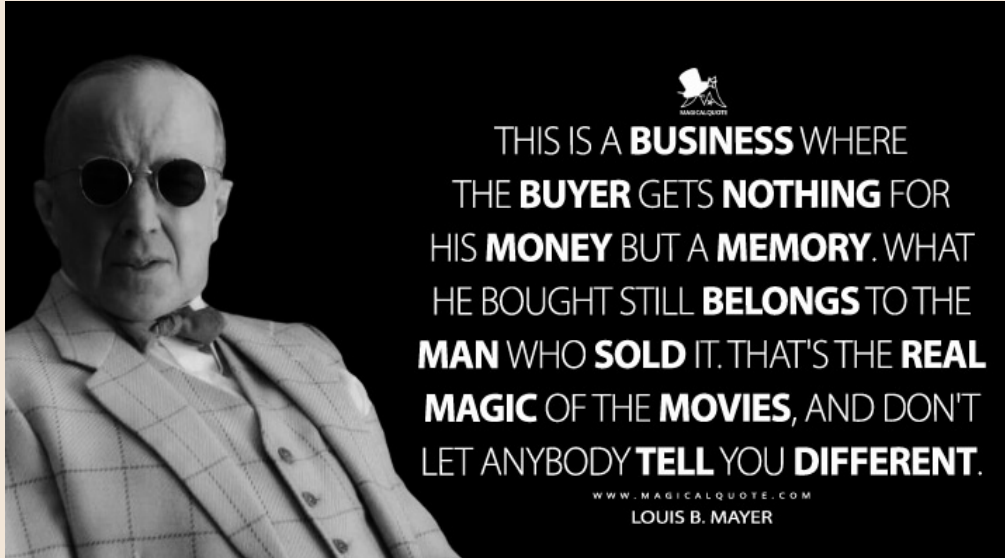
The Parties

Mayer also had huge sex parties where the most expensive champagne and drugs were freely on offer and MGM's wannabe starlets were present, as were journalists, politicians and other powerful men. Mayer, who never drunk or took drugs would have female sex workers from his brothel give these men a good time and its believed this is how he levied power, influence and favours in Hollywood.

At one of Mayer's many parties a young dancer

named Patricia Douglas (17) was in attendance. She believed she was there for a film shoot but in fact Mayer had arranged a "stag affair" with 500 cases of champagne for 300 men to celebrate MGM's success in nailing a distribution deal that would make them the most lucrative studio in Hollywood. During the party an MGM salesman, David Ross dragged the

teenager to a car and raped her. Patricia, who was a virgin, reported the crime and was examined by an MGM doctor!! He claimed there was no evidence of sexual violence!



Mayer's crimes went unpunished. Thankfully people like P Diddy are being flushed to the surface for what they are.

Undeterred, she swore a complaint against her rapist at the LA County district attorney's office. Sadly (thanks to Mayer's instructions) Patricia was victim of the most horrendous smear campaign that painted her as an immoral, promiscuous drunk! In an interview just months before her death in 2003

she said the experience "destroyed my life" as she could never trust men again. How was Ross punished? Mayer gave him a huge promotion and pay rise and Mayer and Mannix (his fixer) joked they'd

had Douglas killed (in fact the MGM talent believed this, which is possibly why no one ever filed a rape



allegation again).

Mayer Controls their Private Lives

Homosexuality was illegal – if rife – in the early days of Hollywood and posed a constant threat to MGM’s All-American image. Even those men who weren’t gay, but merely single, were encouraged to prove their sexual prowess. At 25, an MGM scout ordered Jimmy Stewart to go to the MGM brothel and “get those rocks off with at least two of those broads”, lest “Mayer thinks you’re gay”.



Lionel Barrymore's 61st birthday in 1939, standing: Mickey Rooney, Robert Montgomery, Clark Gable, Louis B. Mayer, William Powell, Robert Taylor, seated: Norma Shearer, Lionel Barrymore, and Rosalind Russell

Mayer manufactured a big romance between George Raft and Betty Grable to “keep that manly reputation” after word got out about Raft’s impotence. Happily married Evie Wynn was bullied into divorcing her husband, actor Keenan, in order to marry a closeted friend of the couple, and MGM actor, Van Johnson. In exchange, Mayer guaranteed good contracts and roles for all three of them. Mayer controlled his talent with an iron fist. Not only did he control the narrative on film but he wanted to control every single aspect of his talent’s lives.

Mayer Lets a Patsy Take the Fall

Mayer’s villainy went even further. Clark Gable was driving recklessly when he killed a pedestrian near Hollywood Boulevard. Mayer sent Gable into hiding and then conspired with the D.A. to have a minor executive take the rap in return for staying on the payroll at a higher salary. Journalists (on the payroll) hushed the story.

As mentioned earlier, Mayer did not tolerate his female talent getting pregnant and women like Jean Harlow and Joan Crawford, who was married when she conceived Clark Gable’s unborn child, were given no say and had terminations forced upon them. Judy Garland was known to have had (at least) two abortions forced on her. Mayer kept “fixers” on site who looked after such situations. One was

Eddie Mannix, MGM’s manager, who was paid to keep everything looking peachy to the outside world - and this included arranging “holidays” to London for female talent in the family way. Some were not so “lucky”. When Mayer discovered Lana Turner was pregnant during a publicity

tour of Hawaii he ordered a studio doctor to go to her bedroom immediately and terminate it. The doctor carried out the abortion on her bed without anaesthesia and Mayer deducted \$500 from her pay cheque and forced her back on the set of *Zeigfeld Girl* within a week.

The doctor carried out the abortion on her bed without anaesthesia

Mannix was a busy man. Mayer ensured he hauled stars out of the drunk tank and glossed over sticky situations even

murder, as was the case with actress Thelma Todd. Another man on the payroll, Howard Strickling, a journalist-turned-press gatekeeper controlled what stories got into the Hollywood press and distracted the media with less inflammatory ones. Together, they managed the MGM family’s misdemeanours

Mayer’s crimes went unpunished. Thankfully people like P Diddy are being flushed to the surface for what they are . Mayer was allowed to bow out of his career with the same orchestrated pizzazz that he had instilled in his studio, resigning in 1951 and walking out on a red carpet, applauded by the great and the good of Hollywood.

A new solution for flood-prone cities? *Concrete made from shellfish waste.*

Researchers have developed a type of concrete that uses discarded shells to trap water. It's now combating floods and food waste in urban gardens and along cycling paths. Author *Ayurella Horn- Muller, Grist.*

This time of year, bushels of rhubarb, potatoes, and lettuce can be harvested in abundance at The People's Pantry, a community garden that doubles as a fresh food pantry in Blackpool, England. There, residents living in adjacent affordable housing units tend to the fresh crops they grow and then eat. And lining the ground beneath each raised bed of soil is a smooth sheet of concrete, dotted with slivers of ivory shells.

"They're not so obvious at first ... but as you walk on it, the shells become more apparent as you go, and little flecks of white start coming out," said Helen Jones, operations director at LeftCoast, which runs the local community garden. She's describing the concrete mix made with crushed seashells that now serves as a sentry against floods for the garden, bolstering the space against stormwater runoff or heavy rains.

It wasn't too long ago that frequent water inundation was a mainstay at The People's Pantry. A regular day of rainfall would turn the garden's corners into something like a marsh, morphing uneven ground into dangerously

slick walkways, and even seeping into the housing the land is wedged in-between.

This led Jones to meet with local officials last April to see how the issue could be remedied. By the year's close, the garden's visitors were looking on in bemusement as a team of scientists at the University of Central Lancashire installed a promising solution: A permeable concrete mix made with cement, aggregate — materials

like gravel and rock that are part of typical concrete mixes — and discarded shellfish waste collected from nearby fish processors.

The material is the brainchild of Karl Williams, who directs the Centre for Waste Management at the University of Central Lancashire. His focus on turning items people traditionally perceive to be waste into useful resources is what led him to begin experimenting with using fishing industry shells otherwise tossed into landfills to



the appeal of using discarded seashells to accomplish this flood mitigation is that it also tackles the climate impacts of both food waste and traditional construction

improve the built environment.

“We’re trying to minimize the carbon footprint of using waste materials, and we’re looking for local solutions,” said Williams.



The material is the brainchild of Karl Williams, pictured in the centre, who directs the Centre for Waste Management at the University of Central Lancashire. LeftCoast

When crushed, scallop and whelk shells produce an ideal shape that enhances the porosity of pervious concrete, a highly permeable form of concrete, which allows for incoming water to drain right through the layer, instead of amassing on the surface like it would with traditional materials. In coastal, urban environments like Blackpool, where flooding is happening more frequently because of climate change, and an abundance of hard surfaces and a lack of natural greenery means there is a lot more runoff than can currently be absorbed, the shell concrete acts like a sponge, holding onto the water for a period of time before releasing it into the surrounding ground — not unlike a sustainable urban drainage system.

the shell concrete acts like a sponge, holding onto the water for a period of time before releasing it into the surrounding ground

For Williams, the appeal of using discarded seashells to accomplish this flood mitigation is that it also tackles the climate impacts of both food waste and traditional construction. The construction and use of our built environment accounts for more than one-third of global greenhouse gas emissions — the cement industry alone accounts for about 8 percent of the planet’s carbon emissions — while food waste is responsible for at least another 8 percent. The climate toll of both industries is what gave Williams the idea to develop the pervious concrete made from locally-sourced shells, as part of a European Union-funded multinational research project.

“There’s quite a lot of work around in the

construction sector looking at how you can use alternative materials,” said Williams, noting that the construction and food industries happen to be two sectors where “they don’t really talk to each other.” He describes the shell concrete, which he started developing in 2018, as “a conduit for both industries to actually think about the waste that they produce,

the products they produce, and how they can work together.”

Fishmongers typically remove the shells from coastal shellfish catches before they sell them to retailers, producers, or directly to consumers.

Incorporating them into the concrete material saves them from being simply tossed into landfills, Williams noted. There’s a cost-saving incentive for the fishmongers, too: Currently, in the United Kingdom, a shellfish processor looking to dispose of waste shells in landfill must pay almost 100 pounds per metric ton, so Williams says commercial operations have an incentive to avoid contributing to waste and instead give away their garbage to be repurposed.

Meanwhile, the more recycled material that you can put into a building material like cement, the lower the carbon footprint of the production process. Replacing the aggregate with alternative materials can shrink the emissions typically generated from quarrying, processing and transportation.

This story was originally published by Grist. Sign up for Grist’s weekly newsletter here: <https://grist.org/subscribe>

<https://grist.org/food-and-agriculture/shellfish-waste-concrete-flood-solution-cities/>



CAMPAIGNING FOR WORKERS



Right to join and be represented by a Union

Right to Collective Bargaining

Outlaw victimisation of Workers and Trade Union Representatives

Transposition of the EU Adequate Minimum Wages Directive

Full implementation of LEEF Report on Collective Bargaining

Support the Respect at Work Campaign

Join the CWU



A LITTLE BIT OF IRISH

PHRASE	TRANSLATION	PRONUNCIATION
Clocks go back	Cuirtear na cloig ar gcúl.	koo-ir-chur nuh kluhg ahr gool
Where's my scarf?	Cá bhfuil mo scairf?	kaw will muh skarf
It's very cold	Tá sé an-fhuar	taw shay ahn oor
I'll make some stew	Déanfaidh mé stobhach.	dayn-hee may stoh-wahk
Have you any logs?	An bhfuil aon bhloca agat?	ahn will ayn vlu-kuh ah-gut
Let's go out	Téimis amach	tay-mish ah-mahk
I want a latte	Ba mhaith liom latte	bwah lyum lat-tay

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. This issue, it's words beginning with B.

Word	Pronunciation	Answers
1. Bellicose	bel-li-kohs	1. Demonstrating aggression and a willingness to fight
2. Benevolent	buh-NEV-uh-luhnt.	2. Well-meaning and kindly
3. Blithe	blythe.	3. Showing a casual and cheerful indifference
4. Bombastic	bom-BAS-tik	4. Describes speech or writing that is pompous
5. Bifurcate	BYE-fur-kate	5. To divide into two branches or forks
6. Bucolic	byoo-KOL-ik	6. The pleasant aspects of the countryside and rural life
7. Brusque	brusk	7. Abrupt or offhand in speech or manner
8. Bromide	BROH-myd	8. A trite or unoriginal idea or remark
9. Bacchanalian	bak-uh-NAY-lee-uhn	9. Indulgence in revelry, particularly with drinking
10. Benignant	buh-NIG-nuhnt	10. A gentle or gracious disposition
11. Breviloquent	brev-IL-uh-kwuhnt	11. Someone who speaks in a concise or terse manner
12. Balkanize	BOL-kuh-nize	12. To divide a region or group into smaller, mutually hostile units

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

Screen Scene

Emelia Pérez **

Starring: Selena Gomez
Run Time: 130 mins
Streaming: Netflix
Available: 13th November

One of Netflix's biggest Oscar contenders for this year, starring Selena Gomez, Adriana Paz, and Édgar Ramírez. In present-day Mexico, lawyer Rita receives an unexpected offer to help a feared cartel boss retire from his business and disappear forever by becoming the woman he's always dreamed of being.

This won't be for everyone - not least because it's in Spanish and it's a musical (a musical crime thriller - if you've ever heard of such a thing) but Gomez fans will definitely want to see their girl illustrate to the world that she's more than Justin Bieber's heart-broken ex!

Say Nothing ****

Starring: Lola Petticrew, Maxine Peake
Run Time: 9 x 60 mins
Streaming: Disney+
Available: 14th November

Say Nothing is a gripping story of murder and memory in Northern Ireland during The Troubles. Spanning four decades, the series opens with the shocking disappearance of Jean McConville, a single mother of ten who was abducted from her home in 1972 and never seen alive again. Telling the story of various Irish Republican Army (IRA) members, Say Nothing explores the extremes some people will go to in the name of their beliefs, the way a deeply divided society can suddenly tip over into armed conflict, the long shadow of radical violence for all affected, and the emotional and psychological costs of a code of silence.



Paddington in Peru ****

Starring: Antonio Banderas, Emily Mortimer
Streaming: At cinemas
Run Time: 103 mins
Available to watch: 8th November

Paddington in Peru brings Paddington's story to Peru as he returns to visit his beloved Aunt Lucy, who now resides at the Home for Retired Bears. With the Brown Family in tow, a thrilling adventure ensues when a mystery plunges them into an unexpected journey through the Amazon rainforest and up to the mountain peaks of Peru.

Brilliant movie for old and young alike - and let's be honest - who doesn't love Paddington? Now go and make some marmalade sandwiches!



Bad Sisters - Season 2 ***

Starring: Sharon Horgan, Eve Hewson
Streaming: Apple TV+
Run Time: 10 x 58 mins.
Available to watch: 25th October

Bad Sisters season two returns to follow the lives of the Garvey sisters played by Sharon Horgan as Eva, Anne-Marie Duff as Grace, Eva Birthistle as Ursula, Sarah Greene as Bibi and Eve Hewson as Becka.

Two years after the "accidental death" of Grace's abusive husband, the close-knit Garvey sisters may have moved on, but when past truths resurface, the ladies are thrust back into the spotlight, suspicions are at an all-time high, lies are told, secrets revealed and the sisters are forced to work out who they can trust.

For those who haven't watched season one, now's a great time to binge-watch.





Jokes

Because laughter is
the best medicine!



A doctor and his wife are having a fight at the breakfast table. Husband gets up in a rage and says, "And you are no good in bed either," and storms out of the house. After sometime he realises he was nasty and decides to make amends and calls home.

She comes to the phone after many rings and the irritated husband says, "What took you so long to answer the phone?"

She says, "I was in bed."

"In bed this early, doing what?" Shouts the doctor.

"Getting a second opinion!"

A noted psychiatrist was a guest at a chic gathering, and his hostess naturally broached the subject in which he was most at ease.

"Would you mind telling me, doctor," she asked, "how you detect a mental deficiency in somebody who appears completely normal?"

"Nothing is easier," he replied. "I ask him a simple question, which everyone should answer with no trouble at all. If he hesitates, that tells me just what I need to know."

"What sort of question?"

"Well, I might ask him, 'Captain Cook made three trips around the world and died during one of them. Which one?'"

The hostess thought for a moment, then said with a nervous laugh, "You wouldn't happen to have another example, would you? I must confess I don't know much about history."

A married couple is driving along the highway doing a steady forty miles per hour. The wife is behind the wheel.

Her husband abruptly looks across at her, speaking in a clear voice, and says, "Darling, I know we've been married for twenty years, but I want a divorce."

The wife says nothing, keeping her eyes on the road ahead but slowly increases her speed to 45 mph.

The husband speaks again, saying this time, "I don't want you to try and talk me out of it, because I've been having an

affair with your best friend, and she's a far better lover than you."

Again the wife stays quiet, but grips the steering wheel more tightly and slowly increases the speed to 55.

He pushes his luck. "I want the house," he demands.

Up to 65 mph. "I want the car, too," he continues. Up to 75 mph! "And," he says, "I'll have the bank accounts, all the credit cards, the boat, and our dog!"

The car slowly begins veering towards a massive concrete bridge. This makes him a wee bit nervous, so he asks her, "Isn't there anything you want?"

At last the wife replies - in a quiet and controlled voice. "No, I've got everything I need." she says.

"Oh, really?" he inquires, "So what exactly have you got?"

Just before they slam into the wall at 80 mph, the wife turns to him and smiles, "The airbag."

A man kills a deer and takes it home to cook for dinner. Both he and his wife decide that they won't tell the kids what kind of meat it is, but will give them a clue and let them guess. The dad said, "Well it's what Mommy calls me sometimes." The little girl screamed to her brother, "Don't eat it. Its an asshole!"

A teacher wanted to teach her students about self-esteem, so she asked anyone who thought they were stupid to stand up. One kid stood up and the teacher was surprised. She didn't think anyone would stand up so she asked him, "Why did you stand up?" He answered, "I didn't want to leave you standing up by yourself."

I took the shell off of my racing snail, thinking it would make him faster. But if anything, it made him more sluggish.

I can never take my dog to the park because the ducks keep trying to bite him.

I guess that's what I get for buying a pure bread dog.

Should you Share your Bed with your Pet?

There are benefits to sharing a bed with your pet – as long as you’re scrupulously clean. Jacqueline Boyd reports.

When heading off for a night’s slumber, does your pet follow? Perhaps the cat curls up at the end of your bed. Maybe the dog dives under the duvet or pops their head on your pillow. Alternatively, your pet might have their own devoted sleeping space.

But if you do share your bed with Fluffy or Fido, what does science suggest is best practice?

Pets increasingly have new roles and expectations in society. Dogs, cats and a multitude of other companion animal species have become family members, a role far removed from their original purposes as protectors, hunting partners, pest-exterminators and in some cases, food sources.

Owners now spend much more time in close contact with their pets, which confers many benefits. Positive associations with pets are linked with improved health, social contact, physical activity, and decreased perceptions of loneliness.

While people typically share living spaces with their pets, sharing beds is a much more intimate proposition. Nevertheless, research shows that of the estimated 90 million European households who own a least one pet, 45% of dogs and 60% of cats are allowed on the bed – and 18% of dogs and 30% of cats sleep with their owner

inside the covers.

While it might be enjoyable and relaxing to share resting time with your pet, it could come with risks to pet and human health, not to mention impacts on sleep hygiene and human relationships too.

Disturbed Sleep

One challenge of sharing your bed with your pet could be disturbed sleep. The movement of sleeping partners (two or four-legged) may lead to reduced sleep efficiency, although a bed large enough to

accommodate all can mitigate this.

Encouraging your pet to sleep elsewhere, but within the bedroom could also be beneficial if sleep disturbance is affecting your wellbeing. Our pets also need quality sleep, so their own sleeping space might be good for them too.



45% of dogs and 60% of cats are allowed on the bed – and 18% of dogs and 30% of cats sleep with their owner inside the covers.

But shared sleeping areas can have positives. Many owners like to sleep with their pets, who can offer companionship, security and even warmth. More than 80% of dogs examined in studies preferred to be close to people at night, suggesting a mutual benefit. Different species of pets also appear to spend time resting together,

so if you have a multi-pet household, all might enjoy shared sleeping.

Bed bugs

Pets sometimes bring unwanted guests into our homes such as fleas, ticks, mites and lice

These ectoparasites might hop from our pets to us and either cause transient or more prolonged irritation. In extreme cases, they can transmit other, potentially serious diseases such as plague or “cat scratch disease”, an infection caused by bacteria in cat saliva.

Cleaning pet paws after being outdoors is a good strategy to reduce contamination risk



Pets often also harbour internal parasites such as the roundworm *Toxocara canis* – a parasite that affects both cats and dogs – some of which can be passed to humans, resulting in illness. Microscopic eggs that can cause infection can be carried on the fur of our pets and close contact increases the potential of spread between pets and people.

The potential for other disease-causing organisms including bacteria, viruses and fungi to spread between our pets and us is also of concern, especially antibiotic-resistant bacteria such as MRSA. Indeed, we can even share infections with our pets – including COVID-19 – so it’s not all one-sided.

Allergies and injuries

Sharing intimate contact with pets does raise the potential for increasing allergic responses or injury risk. Minor, unintentional injuries such as scratches can occur. Contact with dust and dander from pet hair can be prolonged when in close proximity. This material can also accumulate in the environment, potentially increasing the risk of allergic reactions.

Some pets may develop behavioural concerns such as separation-related behaviours as a result of sharing intimate spaces and prolonged contact with their human. Conversely, some owners choose to allow their pet access to sleeping areas to reduce problem behaviours such as door scratching or nighttime vocalising. Fair, consistent training and expectations between a pet and their owner

can go a long way to mitigate any such concerns, no matter where a pet sleeps.

Keeping it clean

If you do share your bed with your pet, good hygiene and regular cleaning is a must. Advice suggests that at least weekly washing of bed sheets is good practice.

If you share your bed with pets, washing bedclothes every three to four days is suggested.

The fur and feet of our pets can be contaminated with dirt and pathogens too. This leads to potential contamination “hotspots” in sleeping areas. Bacteria from faeces was isolated from the paws of 86%

of dogs in one study. Cleaning pet paws after being outdoors is a good strategy to reduce contamination risk.

Regular grooming and bathing (when appropriate) is important for pet health monitoring and wellbeing. It can also support a positive human-pet bond and reduce the potential for spreading potential infection.

The use of anti-parasitic treatments under veterinary advice can also minimise the carriage and spread of internal and external parasites to pet owners and other pets.

It’s bedtime

Whether you choose to share your bed with your pet depends on a number of factors, including lifestyle, health and even the relationship with your pet. Balancing the potential downsides of sharing a bed with your pet, with possible benefits is important to assess whether it is a good choice for you or not. Indeed, sleep disruption due to bed-sharing with pets is not as detrimental to sleep quality as often thought. With good hygiene and management, the choice to share your sleep with your pet might just give you both a great night’s sleep.

Author Jacqueline Boyd Senior Lecturer in Animal Science, Nottingham Trent University
First published on The Conversation

THE PIRATE QUEEN OF IRELAND GRACE O'MALLEY

Forget Blackbeard, Black Bart, Long Ben or any other pirate you've read about up until now. Samantha Bailie-McMurdock takes a look at Ireland's very own swashbuckler – Grace O'Malley, the red headed gunslinger who raided vessel ships, battled English armies and took on Elizabeth I.

Gráinne Ní Mháille, whose name was anglicized to Grace

O'Malley, was born in 1530 to parents Eoghan Dubhdara O Máille and Maeve Ní Mhaille when Henry VIII was King of England and (in name) Lord of Ireland.

As a girl she grew up on the family's residence of Belclare on Clare Island, but also spent some of her time fostered out to another family, as

fosterage was very popular amongst the Irish nobility at the time. Grace was a curious, clever girl who excelled in her studies, was fluent in five languages and could forecast the weather.

Eoghan and his family were originally from Clew Bay, Co. Mayo and he was

chieftain of the O Máille clan. The O'Malley family

was one of very few seafaring families on the west coast, and they built a large row of castles facing the sea to protect their territory and taxed all those who fished off their coasts, including men who sailed in from England, thus affording them a considerable income from tolls alone. When Grace was a young girl her father informed her he was going

off on a trading expedition to Spain. Being a bit of a tomboy, she begged him to

Being a bit of a tomboy, she begged him to take her with him, but he said he couldn't, as her waist length hair would catch in the ship's ropes.

take her with him, but he said he couldn't, as her waist length hair would catch in the ship's ropes.

The young redhead was furious, stomped off angrily into another room and came back with her thick hair shabbily cut around

Depiction of Grace O'Malley



her ears (she's used a knife). Because her dad had used her hair as an excuse, he had to take her with him now she had short hair and she gained the nickname 'Gráinne Mhaol' (a dig at her baldness!) amongst the crew.

Despite having very feminine features and a slight figure, Grace proved she was as strong and tough as any man onboard and she quickly proved herself as a more than capable sea woman who could lead men, spot storms and trade better than the rest of the crew, leading to her father making her his second-in-command. During one of these trading expeditions, her ship was overtaken by pirates, and she personally saved the life of one of her shipmates by jumping off the rigging in the middle of a brawl, and taking the offending pirate down.

When Grace turned 16 (1546) she married Dónal an Chogaidh O Flaithbheartaigh, (O'Flaherty) better known as Donal of the Battle, who was tánaiste / an heir to the O'Flaherty title, which of course would be a good political match for the daughter

of the O Máille chieftain. Grace and Dónal had 3 children: Owen, Margaret and Murrough, but she

was quickly left a widow after just a handful of years, and upon her husband's death, the Joyce's, whom her husband had seized a castle in Lough Corrib from, attacked her in an attempt to retrieve it, but Grace successfully defended it and the Joyce's were so impressed by her tactics in battle that they renamed it the Hen's Castle!

One attack is bad luck, but it was quickly followed by another, in the midst of her mourning, when the English mounted an attack on her castle, but despite being vastly outnumbered, she withstood the siege, even taking lead from the roof, melting it and pouring it

onto the heads of the attacking soldiers!

By 1566 Grace was married again, this time to Ríseárd an Iarainn, better known as Iron

Richard, as he always wore a coat of mail, and he controlled the ironworks at Burrishoole, where his residence was. The couple had 1 child, Theobald. It is thought that Grace only married Richard to enlarge her holdings and prestige, as her new husband was the owner of Rockfleet



Gráinne Mhaol Ni Mhaille statue. Westport, Co. Mayo

....many gossipers suggesting she was very promiscuous...

Castle, which was situated near Newport, Co. Mayo, and he had other lucrative lands like Burrishoole, with sheltered harbours in which a pirate could hide. Grace and Richard married under Brehon Law 'for one year certain,' and when the year was up, Grace divorced him and kept the castle! She and her followers

locked themselves in and she shouted out the window, "Richard Burke, I dismiss you," meaning the marriage was over.

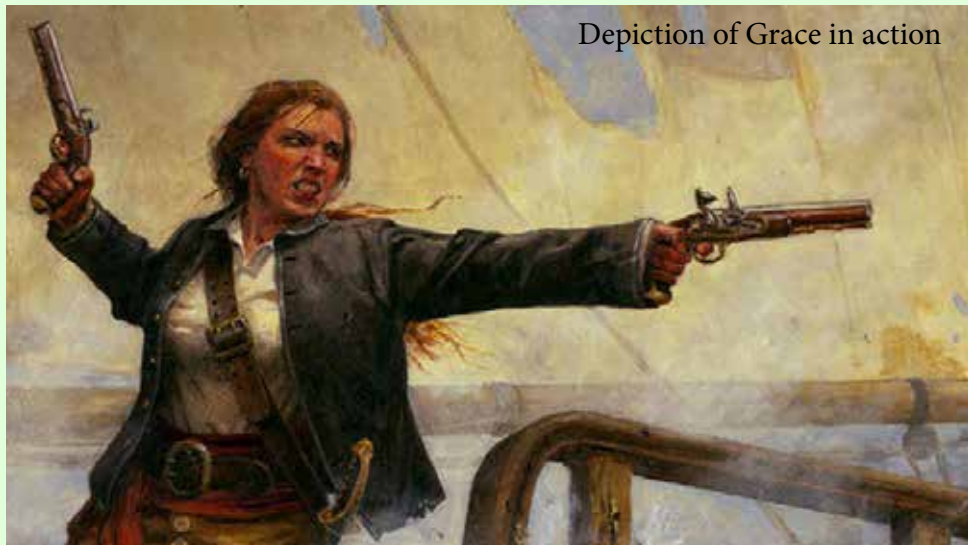
When that marriage ended

rumours abounded, many gossipers suggesting she was very promiscuous, but then again, being a lady who refused to conform to social norms of the time, perhaps these were purely speculations, but who can tell? Were people angry with her? We do know that there were countless complaints to the English Council in Dublin due to her extracting large taxes from vessels that sailed in her waters, and she could be very greedy if they couldn't pay - helping herself to hefty shares of their cargo - something that didn't go down too well.

In the early 1560's O'Malley returned to her father's holdings on Clare Island and decided to recruit fighting men from Ireland and Scotland, transporting the gallowglass mercenaries between their Scottish homes and Irish employers and plundering Scotland's outlying islands on her return trips. In an apparent effort to curry favour with the English, who were engaged in a re-conquest of Ireland at the time, Grace went to the Lord Deputy of Ireland and offered 200 fighting men to serve English interests in Ireland and Scotland!

O'Malley continued to attack vessels as far down the coast as Waterford and she started to attack more fortresses along the shoreline, from The Burren to

Lough Swilly. Her exploits knew no end. During a trip from Dublin, O'Malley attempted to visit Howth Castle, home of Lord Howth, however, because they refused to open the gates and see her (they were eating dinner), she abducted their grandson! He was only released when they promised the redhead



Depiction of Grace in action

that the gates would never be closed to her again! Then there was her seizure of Doona Castle in Ballycroy. Her reason? The owners of the castle (The MacMahon's) killed the man she was sleeping with (Hugh

de Lacy). When the guilty members of the MacMahon clan went to the holy island of Caher for a pilgrimage, guess who was there waiting? Yes, O'Malley. She captured their boats, killed those who killed her lover and took the castle for herself.

There has never been a female pirate anywhere who could equal the fiery boldness of Ireland's Grace O'Malley...

In the later 16th Century, English power was growing, and O'Malley was feeling her supremacy slip. The straw that broke the proverbial camel's back came when the English governor of Connacht - Sir Richard Bingham, took

two of her sons, as well as her half-brother captive. Grace sailed to England to petition Elizabeth I for their release, but before she met the Queen, guards found a knife hidden on her person. O'Malley, who was a great talker, asserted it was for her safety, and the Queen agreed she would still speak with her, as long as the weapon was removed. Just before communication with the Queen began, in an interesting display of her character, Grace sneezed and a noblewoman gave her a silk handkerchief; the redhead blew her nose in it and threw it to the ground! Interestingly, the Queen and Grace communicated in Latin, as O'Malley didn't speak English and Elizabeth I didn't speak Irish.

After much discussion, the Queen and Grace came

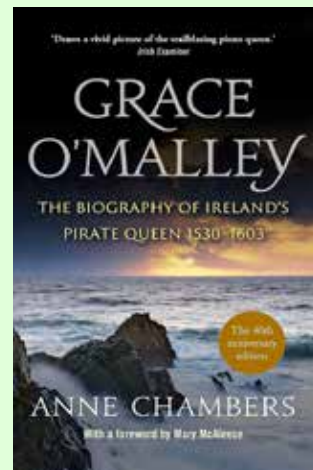
to an agreement and Elizabeth I agreed to remove Sir Bingham from his position in Ireland as long as Grace stopped supporting the Irish Lords' rebellions, however, within a short period of time Bingham was sent back to Ireland and Grace realized her meeting with the Queen had just been lip service, so she went back to supporting Irish rebellions during the Nine Years War.

During her lifetime, Grace dominated shipping lanes, accumulated countless wealth and demanded respect wherever she went. She was never defeated and died in 1603 at Rockfleet Castle, aged 73. She is buried in the abbey on Clare Island, near Belclare Castle, where she was born.

The cultural impact of O'Malley lives on in song (The Saw Doctors in 'The Green and Red of Mayo' for instance and Cathie Ryan's song Grace O'Malley on her Somewhere along the Road album) to name a couple, there have also been numerous theatre productions all around the world on the esteemed female and of course she has featured in countless books, even James Joyce used her in chapter 1 of Finnegans Wake.

There has never been a female pirate anywhere who could equal the fiery boldness of Ireland's Grace O'Malley – she was the original swashbuckler: 'The Queen of the Irish Seas', 'The Sea Queen of Connemara', 'The Pirate Queen of Connacht' – call her what you will, but one thing is for sure, we shall never forget the redhead who was the very personification of girl power – ambition, assertiveness and individualism.

*** Recommended reading for your little pirates out there – *Pirate Queen of Ireland – The True Story of Grace O'Malley* by Anne Chambers – Published by Collins Press (Available from all good book shops and online) and perfectly written and illustrated to bring this vibrant story alive. A beautiful book.**



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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.



Intermezzo – Sally Rooney – Faber & Faber

From the author of the multimillion-copy bestseller *Normal People*, an exquisitely moving story about grief, love and family. Aside from the fact that they are brothers, Peter and Ivan Koubek seem to have little in common. Peter is a Dublin lawyer in his thirties - successful, competent and apparently unassailable. But in the wake of their father's death, he's medicating himself to sleep and struggling to manage his relationships with two very different women - his enduring first love Sylvia, and Naomi, a college student for whom life is one long joke. Ivan is a twenty-two-year-old competitive chess player. He has always seen himself as socially awkward, a loner, the antithesis of his glib elder brother. Now, in the early weeks of his bereavement, Ivan meets Margaret, an older woman emerging from her own turbulent past, and their lives become rapidly and intensely intertwined. For two grieving brothers and the people they love, this is a new interlude - a period of desire, despair and possibility - a chance to find out how much one life might hold inside itself without breaking.

Into the Storm – Cecelia Ahern – Harper Collins

ONE NIGHT. It is a wild night in the middle of December, and GP Enya is crouched over a teenage boy, performing CPR in the rain. ONE MOMENT. The boy survives, but Enya's life splinters in two. Trapped in a loveless marriage, the storm propels her to break free. ONE CHANCE TO BE FREE. But even in the remote country town that becomes her sanctuary, Enya is haunted by the night in the rain. Beneath the boughs of an ancient tree that tells a thousand stories, can she find the courage to face her own?



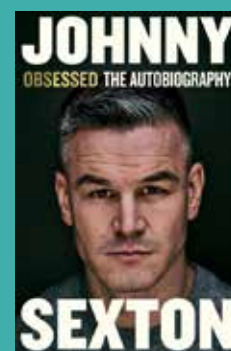
Midnight and Blue – Ian Rankin – Orion



John Rebus spent his life as a detective putting Edinburgh's most deadly criminals behind bars. Now he's joined them. As new allies and old enemies circle, and the days and nights bleed into each other, even the legendary detective struggles to keep his head. That is, until a murder at midnight in a locked cell presents a new mystery. They say old habits die hard...However, this is a case where the prisoners and the guards are all suspects, and everyone has something to hide. With no badge, no authority and no safety net, Rebus walks a tightrope - with his life on the line. But how do you find a killer in a place full of them?

Obsessed – Johnny Sexton – Sandycove

No Irish rugby player has ever achieved more, or been a source of more inspiration to teammates and fans alike, than Johnny Sexton. In his hotly anticipated autobiography, Johnny tells the story of his life and explores the sources of his unmatched will to win. The Sexton era was marked by four European Cups, four Six Nations championships (including two Grand Slams), a series win in New Zealand, two stints for Ireland at number 1 in the world, and the World Player of the Year award. Always outspoken on and off the field, Sexton offers an honest look at his childhood, his seemingly inauspicious early experiences in club and professional rugby, his relationships with key teammates and coaches (including Brian O’Driscoll, Paul O’Connell, Ronan O’Gara, Joe Schmidt and Andy Farrell), and his ideas about the game. Obsessed is more than just a brilliantly detailed account of a legendary playing career. It is also a work of deep self-exploration, tracing the psychological arc of a player who almost always felt embattled, who struggled with self-doubt, and who was still learning new lessons about being a team-mate and a leader into his late thirties. Intense, witty, perceptive and frank, Obsessed is an autobiography worthy of its author and the essential chronicle of an extraordinary era in Irish rugby.



Stronger – Nicola Hanney – Merrion Press

In 2017, against all odds, Nicola Hanney survived a terminal cancer diagnosis and decided to live life to the full. When she matched with Garda Paul Moody on a dating app, she thought her dreams had come true, but could never have imagined she would be plunged into another nightmare: a four-year campaign of violence and coercive control at his hands. Despite being told she would never conceive due to the toll cancer had taken on her body, Nicola beat the odds a second time and became pregnant to Moody. Trapped in an unrelenting cycle of abuse, the baby she had always wished for gave Nicola newfound hope for the future. Then, midway through her pregnancy, she found a lump in her breast. The cancer was back. In Stronger, Nicola charts her extraordinary journey through unimaginable abuse and aggressive, recurring illness. Revealing the insidious nature of coercive control, she recounts how Moody manipulated her and threatened her loved ones to keep her compliant. Throughout it all, Nicola’s resilience never wavered. She proved herself stronger than the disease that threatened to take her life. Stronger than the man who tried to crush her spirit. Stronger than the bad hand she was dealt.

This is her story.



The Irish Words You Should Know: and how to start using them again: and how to use them every day – Hector Ó hEochagáin – Gill Books

Loinnir: The sunlight sparkling on the waves, or the merriness you feel after early pints of stout in the morning. When you speak in Irish, every word is a tiny poem that reveals a new perspective. The Irish language is our inheritance. It lives underneath us in the soil, it blows through the leaves on trees and rises from the roots. Hector Ó hEochagáin is on a mission to help us reclaim that inheritance.

From beautiful and melodic words like LOINNIR and phrases like ‘CÉN CHAOI A BHFUIL TÚ?’ – the perfect greeting for when the postman stops by on a winter’s morning; to ‘GAFA’ – a way to say you’re so busy you don’t even have time to go to the toilet; ‘DAMANTA’ – when you have an almighty headache or terrible hangover; and ‘SIOCTHA’ – when it’s so cold the grass is crunchy under your feet, rediscover the fun and magic of Irish words you can use every day.



Haunted Ireland: An Atlas of Ghost Stories From Every County – Kieran Fanning (Author) Mark Hill (Illustrator) – Gill Books

Join master storyteller Kieran Fanning on a visit to every county in Ireland through 32 spooky stories. From well-known hauntings like The Ghost of Loftus Hall and The White Lady of Kinsale, to lesser-known sightings like The Black Pig of Kiltrustan and Father Hegarty’s Phantom Horse, there’s a story and a site to discover wherever you are in Ireland! This beautifully presented gift book features a map of all the story locations so you can carry out your very own ghost tour – or stay safely at home poring over the stunning illustrations by Dublin artist, Mark Hill.



The Podcast Review

We source the best selection of podcasts each issue. This time we bring you, Winds of Change, Magnificent Jerk, Beo Ar Éigean, Food for Thought and 1619.

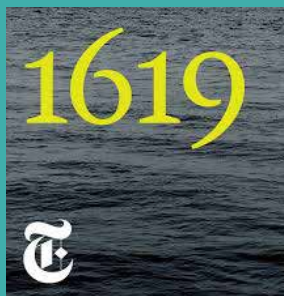
Winds of Change (Conspiracy Theory)

It's 1990. The Berlin Wall has just come down. The Soviet Union is on the verge of collapse. A heavy metal band from West Germany, the Scorpions, releases a power ballad, "Wind of Change." The song becomes the soundtrack to the peaceful revolution sweeping Europe — and one of the biggest rock singles ever. According to some fans, it's the song that ended the Cold War.

Decades later, New Yorker writer Patrick Radden Keefe hears a rumor from a source: the Scorpions didn't actually write "Wind of Change." The CIA did. This is Patrick's journey to find the truth. Among former operatives and leather-clad rockers, from Moscow to Kyiv to a GI Joe convention in Ohio, it's a story about spies doing the unthinkable, about propaganda hidden in pop music, and a maze of government secrets. You'll be hooked to this 8-part investigation.

Magnificent Jerk (Investigative)

On the last day of her grandmother's life, journalist Maya Lin Sugarman finds a box of forgotten screenplays that sets her on a journey to uncover the truth about their author: her late uncle, Galen. She discovers that he was a leader of a Chinese gang, that he went to jail, and, in a final twist, that he poured his life story into a screenplay that was turned into a '90s Hollywood action movie...starring Rob Lowe, Burt Reynolds, and Ice-T.



Beo Ar Éigean (Irish)

Presented by Siún Ní Dhuinn, Áine Ní Bhreisleáin and Sinéad Ní Uallacháin this is a podcast from three intelligent and funny women, each with her own unique style. Showcasing the Irish language in a modern, fresh approach, they all use it naturally and incorporate it seamlessly into every sort of topic.

Food for Thought (Health)

Food for Thought delivers a wide range of invaluable information and expert advice from Rhiannon and other leading industry professionals about nutrition, fitness and health in an accessible, friendly way. Tune in for all you need to know about enhancing your wellbeing.

1619 (History)

This weighty but digestible podcast from the New York Times tackles the legacy of slavery in America and takes its name from the year that the first ship carrying enslaved Africans arrived in the nascent country. Hosted by Nikole Hannah-Jones, '1619' advances through six punchy episodes to examine the impact on American culture of its Black population on everything from music to healthcare.

How to:

Search "Google podcasts" in the Play Store app (if you've 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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