

Israel is a Powder Keg Waiting to Blow

ALSO

GAME CHANGER FOR CRYPTOCURRENCIES

KARL GEARY (THE IRISH ABROAD)

WINNIE & NELSON MANDELA

THE BALLYCOTTON JOB

LETTER TO MY YOUNGER SELF

AND LOTS MORE



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Congratulations & best wishes to all who participated in the Homeless Street Soccer finals on April 26th.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS



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- Outreach Team
01 872 0185
7am to 1am Monday to Friday
9am to 1am Saturday and Sunday

Day Services

- Focus Ireland Coffee Shop
01 671 2555
- Capuchin Day Centre
01 872 0770
- Merchants Quay Ireland
01 524 0923
- PMVT - Berkley Street
087 247 7117
087 434 1668
- Alice Leahy Trust
01 545 3799

Local Authorities

- DCC Central Placement Services
01 222 6944
- Finglas County Council
01 890 5090
- South Dublin County Council
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- Dún Laoghaire - Rathdown County Council
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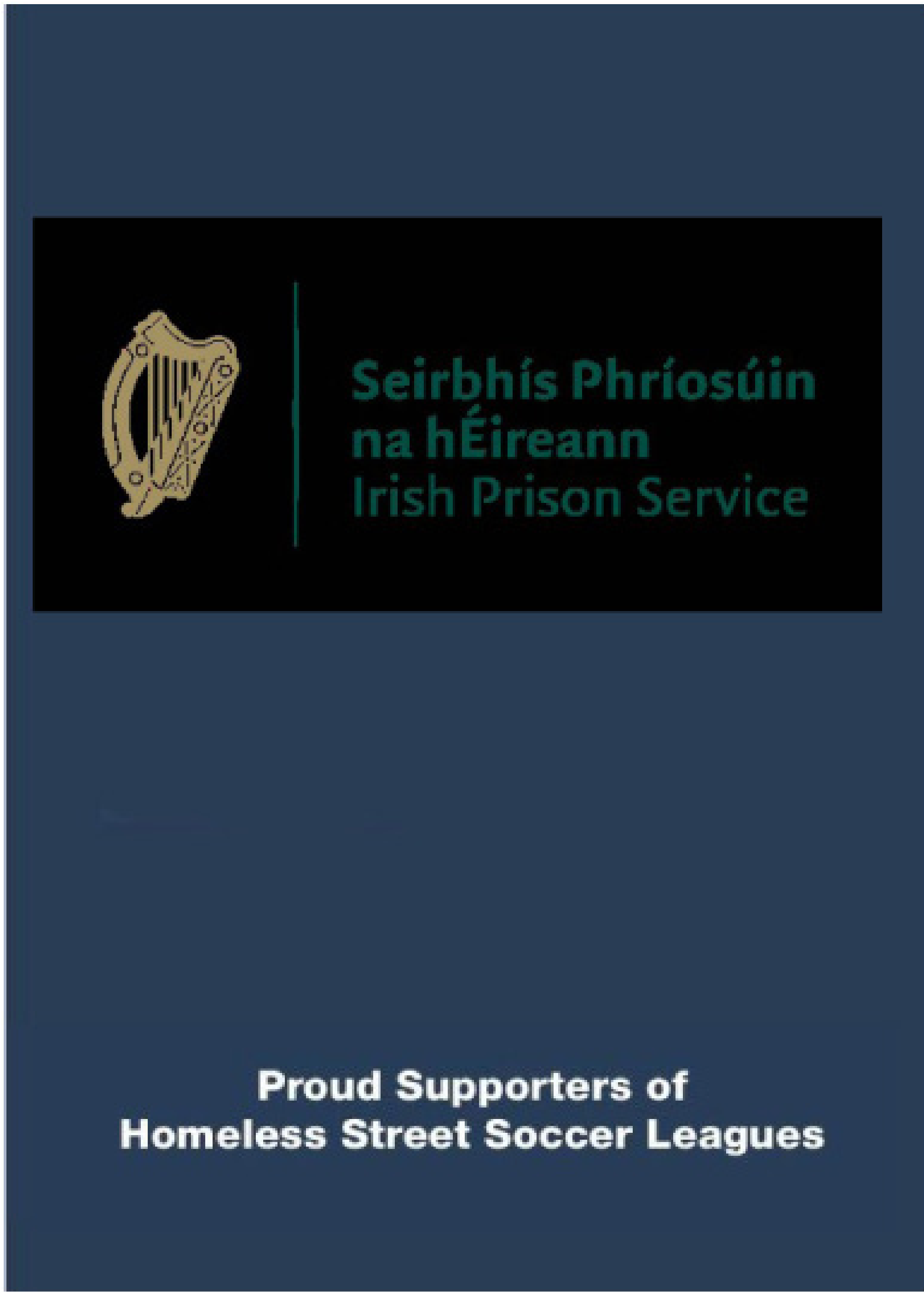


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Ireland's National Police and Security Service

Congratulations & best wishes to all who participated in the Homeless Street Soccer finals on April 26th.



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 and essentially giving people the confidence and tools to become the best possible version of themselves.

We will also be adjusting the content to reflect the times we live in.

We thank you for your support to date and ask that you continue to help us help those on the margins of society. This has always been our aim and shall continue to be our driving force.

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An act of piracy took place off the south coast of Ireland, in a small fishing village outside of Cork city during the closing phase of direct British influence on the island. The incident would shock Michael Collins, throw the British government into disarray and change the course of the Irish Civil War. Sineád Dunlop reports.

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Letter to my Younger Self - Yasmin Azad

Each issue we ask a well-known person to write a letter to their 16-year-old self. This issue, author Yasmin Azad one of the first girls in her Muslim community in Sri Lanka to go to university, has a word with her 16-year-old self.

Soon after obtaining a degree in English from the University of Ceylon, Yasmin moved to the U.S. where she worked for over 20 years as a mental health counsellor. Her new book ‘Stay, Daughter’ draws on her experiences growing up in a close-knit, conservative society which, when it gave more independence to women, had to deal with the challenge of reconciling the rules of Islamic orthodoxy with the freedoms and innovations of the modern world.



When I was in kindergarten, I told my friends that my father was Tarzan. In first grade I changed the story. My father was a policeman. Big and tall, he put bad people in jail. There were a few variations of such stories in those early years, but they were basically the same yarn. I wanted my friends to see the father I adored as extraordinary, a superhuman being.

At eight or nine years old, this changed. I did not want my friends to see my father at all, in any shape or form. I had begun to measure him by the standards of the culture I lived in and believed he fell short. He had dropped out of school in the second grade, he liked to lounge around in a sarong which was the clothing of poor people in my country of Sri Lanka, he couldn’t speak proper English, and he had the manners of a person who had grown up in a rustic village, not a modern town. True, he had become a successful businessman and we lived in a big house and had more money than many people, but that didn’t stop others from laughing at him. Children are embarrassed by their parents, especially during their teenage years, but what I felt was more than a run-of-the-mill mortification about a parent who was not cool. It was an ever-present guardedness, a looking over my shoulder to see who else was there when my father was around. The same kind of guardedness that a child feels when she sees her family as not measuring up, not being normal, deficient in one way or the other. I had a friend who was acutely ashamed that her parents were divorced – this was at a time, many decades ago, when divorce carried a lot of stigma. Another girl did everything she could to prevent her classmates from stepping into her house. Years later, I found out that her mother was mentally ill. Immigrant children often experience this kind of shame. When a friend comes to their home, they wonder: does the food smell funny, do the accents sound strange, are the clothes outdated, the customs bizarre?

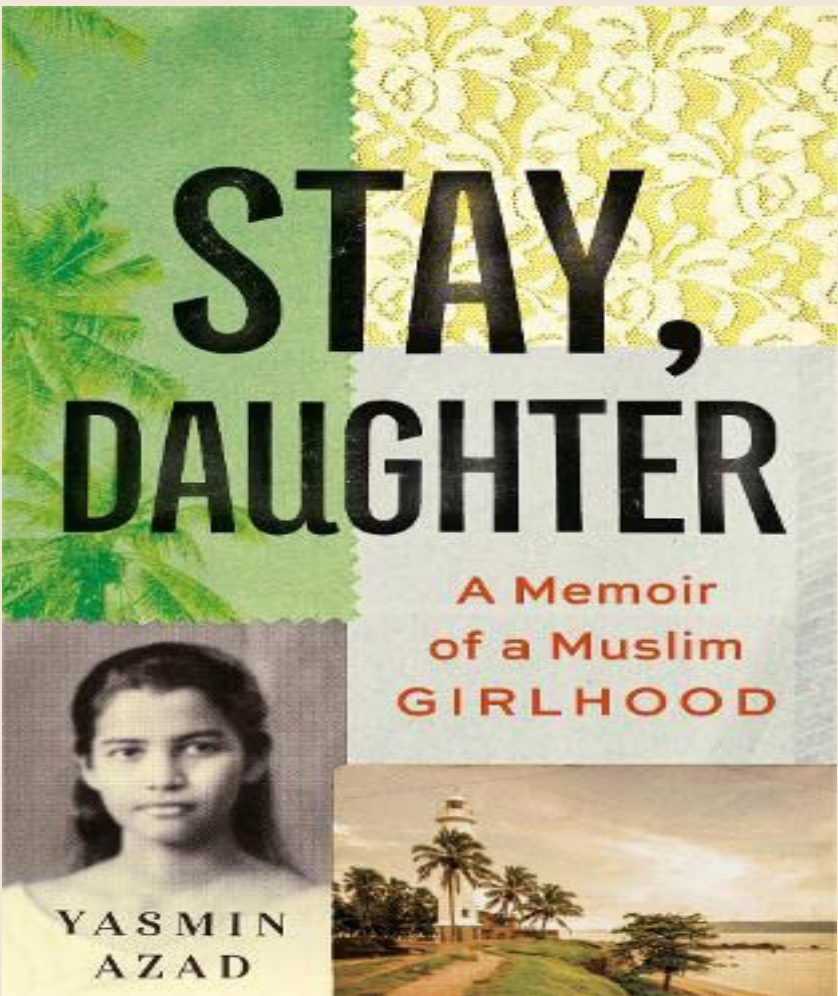
“.... the children of immigrants, instead of focusing on the things that supposedly make parents “weird”, should respect the sacrifices they have made to give their children a better life.”

I remember how I cringed when someone from my school saw my father walking around bare-bodied, in a sarong. In the village where he had grown up, that was how people dressed when they were at home. Sri Lanka is a warm tropical island, and for many people that was the most comfortable way to be. But when you are desperate to belong and not be thought of as “different”, you can’t see how reasonable it is for people to dress in ways that are appropriate for the climate they live in and the practices of their society. Nor do you recognize how unfair it is to judge a person who belongs to one culture by the standards of another.

Another thing you may not recognize are the admirable qualities of those we see as “not measuring up”. Instead of being embarrassed about the way my father spoke English, I could have appreciated how determined he must have been to teach himself a language as an adult, and how brave he was to speak it no matter that people laughed. Similarly, the children of immigrants, instead of focusing on the things that supposedly make parents “weird”, should respect the sacrifices they have made to give their children a better life.

We all want to belong and be accepted. Young people especially so. It would therefore be unrealistic to expect my younger self to overcome the social values that she would have absorbed from her environment. But I would like her to hold on as best she can to the thought that nobody should be judged by their family circumstances or be embarrassed about where they come from. I would want her to recognize that all human beings have value, and that there is nothing shameful about poverty, or disability, or a lack of formal education, or anything else that is a fact of life. I would tell her to bravely reject the ways in which people are belittled for who they are and appreciate, instead, the ways in which they have overcome adversity. I would tell her that different does not mean inferior.

Stay Daughter (Swift Press) is available now in bookshops & online.



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Israel is a Powder Keg Waiting to Blow

Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu struggling to hold together his fractious coalition government in the face of mass protests. James Sunderland reports.

Photo by Ehimetalor Akhere Unuabona on Unsplash



The death in custody on May 2 of Khader Adnan, the first Palestinian to die of a hunger strike for more than 30 years, sparked mass protests in Gaza and an exchange of fire between Israel and armed Palestinian groups. It was later announced that a ceasefire had been agreed, but the situation remains febrile.

**Israeli society is fractured
– and
external enemies of Israel know this. But
so too does Netanyahu.**

It’s another headache for Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu. He’s already struggling to hold together his fractious coalition in the face of mass protests over his government’s plans to overhaul the country’s judiciary to make it effectively subordinate to the Knesset, or parliament. Netanyahu was forced to shelve the plan in April after four months of street protests in Israel’s cities.

But there is also significant support on the right – both within Netanyahu’s coalition and on the streets. On April 28 an estimated 200,000 pro-overhaul protesters gathered in Jerusalem for a mass rally ahead of the reopening of the Knesset after Passover.

They were addressed by figures including the justice minister, Yariv Levin, who said the government remained committed to the planned overhaul. He also attacked opposition parties for refusing to compromise over the legislation as part of a mediation process being led by Israel’s president, Isaac Herzog.

Netanyahu’s promise in April to seek a compromise plan has been met with scepticism by many opposition figures and ordinary Israelis. This is at least partly due to promises from government ministers to plough on with the measures one way or another and their hostile rhetoric against the supreme court and the millions of Israelis who want to prevent the reform.

On April 15, the number two at the justice ministry, David Amsalem, called for an investigation into the protests and for the current supreme court president, Esther Hayut, to be charged with “an attempted coup”. Tens of thousands took to the streets again, the 17th consecutive week that Israelis have turned out for mass demonstrations against what many see as a plan that would undermine Israeli democracy.

Challenges on multiple fronts

Meanwhile, clashes between Muslims and Israeli police during Passover and Ramadan led to heightened tensions with the Palestinians and neighbouring Arab states. After Israeli Defence Force troops twice stormed al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, arresting hundreds of worshippers and injuring several, it drew an immediate response from what are believed to be Hamas members based in Lebanon.

A barrage of 34 rockets was launched into Israel over the following weekend, but were mainly intercepted by Israel’s Iron Dome defence system.

Warming relations with the Gulf states, meanwhile, have also turned progressively chillier in recent months due to inflammatory language regarding Palestinians from far-right coalition members and heightened settler violence in the West Bank.

These are dangerous times for Israel as it marks the 75th anniversary of its statehood. Israeli society is fractured – and external enemies of Israel know this. But so too does Netanyahu.



He is an inveterate political survivor, who understands that the current situation is untenable. The decision to prevent Jewish worshipers from entering the Temple Mount, where Al Aqsa is located, until the end of Ramadan seems to have been designed to de-escalate tensions.

Meanwhile, after firing his defence minister, Yoav Gallant, for speaking out against the overhaul, Netanyahu has awkwardly rescinded that decision – another sign of how serious the situation has become. But given the language being used by various hard-right government ministers and the violence they are whipping up, it’s unclear how long any relative calm can last.

..the decision to hand the extremist minister such a force (National Guard) demonstrates the hold hardline and far-right ministers have over this government.

The path ahead

Facing unfavourable conditions at home and abroad, Netanyahu will probably attempt to focus on preparing and passing the budget in the coming weeks. This, he may hope, will distract hardliners in his coalition from the judicial reform and secure some political breathing space.



Yet it’s far from certain that many ministers will be so easily diverted. Even as Israeli society tears itself apart and investors pull their money from the country in response to the proposed overhaul, many members of the government remain ideologically committed to neutering the courts – no matter the cost.

This could unleash more trouble. Many protesters feel Netanyahu, a man renowned for stabbing even his allies in the back, cannot be trusted. Even if he attempts to defuse the situation, the attitude of many of Netanyahu’s ministers is likely to make many people even more sceptical of his real intentions. Protesters are unlikely to disappear from Israeli streets any time soon.

Netanyahu, meanwhile, has already shown he is willing to bend to the demands of the far-right in order to keep them behind him – though cracks in the relationship are beginning to show with several members of the far-right Otzma Yehudit party threatening to resign.

Lost in much of the coverage in the west as Netanyahu announced his plans to pause the judicial overhaul, was the price the security minister Itamar Ben Gvir – a convicted supporter of a Jewish terrorist organisation – managed to elicit from the premier in return for support for the legislative pause: an armed “national guard” under his command. The force has not come into being yet. But despite Netanyahu’ efforts to water down the force’s powers and Ben Gvir’s grip on the organisation, the decision to hand the extremist minister such a force demonstrates the hold hardline and far-right ministers have over this government.

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government remain ideologically
committed to neutering the courts

All signs point to continued chaos as ministers continue to call to push through the deeply divisive overhaul legislation and the far-right continues to profit from its intransigence. Ben Gvir’s national guard could further ignite tensions with the Palestinians and by extension armed Islamic groups in the Middle East. Although Passover provided a welcome break in Israel’s political drama, more unrest is on the cards.

James Sunderland
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First published on The Conversation.



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Your Festival Savvy Guide

As the summer approaches, many music lovers will be making their way to various festivals around the country. Having fun and getting the most out of your experience is key to a great festival but its important to remember that there's always people willing to prey on the distracted. Liz Scales offers advice on staying safe this summer.



Sexual Assaults on the Rise at Festivals

As ‘being roofied’ (having a drink drugged) remains one of the most feared incidents amongst young women and gay men, its important to be empowered with the knowledge to stay safe and keep others protected, especially since sexual assaults have been on the rise at festivals in recent times.

Don’t Rely on your Senses

’Roofies’ like GHB may not have an unusual taste or smell and although used most for date rape, they’re also employed amongst ‘friends’ for ‘amusement’, before carrying out theft and even in premeditated physical assaults, therefore, it’s important exercise caution such as opening your own drink (and never leaving it unattended) and not drinking from shared pitchers. It’s also important to recognise the early signs of being drugged: - a sudden feeling of fogginess, difficulty moving or feeling sedated.

Drugs aside, its important to remain savvy in general, especially if you’re at a multi-day festival and camping on-site. If this is the case, pitch your tent near a lamppost or landmark – something that you can easily find at night. If that isn’t an option, you should create a meeting spot with your friends and make sure you have a buddy system to avoid getting lost on your own. It really helps if you get your bearings when you first arrive (layouts are often confusing) so find out where key areas are such as the toilets, first aid and chill out zones. Most festivals provide a map; get one and keep it with you.

Having a Drink

You want to enjoy yourself - but you want to remember what sort of time you had, so there’s really no point in cracking out the booze at noon. Plus, if you’re heading to a multi-day festival, you won’t want to lose a day to a hangover - and let’s face it, toilets aren’t the most pleasant at these events - both from the queuing perspective and cleanliness, so pace yourself.

Be a Part of the Solution

A drug testing pilot - first introduced at Electric Picnic last year - is to be rolled out to other music festivals here this year. The scheme, operated by the Health Service Executive (HSE) Safer Nightlife programme aims to identify drug market trends of concern and keep people safe. Festival goers can anonymously put drugs into HSE surrender bins at the HSE harm reduction tent and the festival medical tent. The substances will then be moved by staff to an onsite portable lab and analysed by the HSE National Drug Treatment Centre Lab. Prof. Eamon Keenan said drugs “are becoming stronger and more dangerous bringing higher risk”.

At last year’s Electric Picnic festival in Co Laois, the pilot scheme found high-strength MDMA samples and a new substance 3-CMC not detected here before. Those who surrender drugs are not at risk of being arrested, so if you’ve taken drugs with you, whether its Ketamine or even cannabis edibles - put them in the HSE surrender bin and be a part of the solution, not the problem.

Finally, enjoy the music, be a friend and remain vigilant.

To keep up-to-date with drug alerts this summer follow [drugs.ie](#) on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. You can also check out [drugs.ie/festivals](#) follow [#IfYouGoGoSlow](#) and [#HSESaferNightlife](#) on social media.

Karl Geary: *Madonna, Mugging and Making It ...*

Sam McMurdock has a chat with Irish-born actor, novelist and screenwriter Karl Geary (50) who emigrated to the U.S. at 16 and honed many of his skills in New York’s boho East Village.



Karl Geary, the youngest of eight siblings grew up in a working-class area of Blackrock, Dublin. Dropping out of school early due to a learning disability, he was working full-time in a wallpaper shop in Talbot Street by the age of 15 and by the following year had emigrated to the States, settling in New York’s East Village, where, armed with only the phone number of a friend of a friend named Johnny One Eye (his brother knocked the other one out in a fight) he made a call and got his first job stateside as a bicycle messenger, however, that employment was not to last as he had his bike stolen frequently, but Geary by this stage had fallen in love with the area and the bohemian community that was burgeoning there,

“It was a very welcoming place, really creative, loads of artists, poets and musicians I loved being around these people. I could see another life ... another way of living I could see all these possibilities, all these alternative ways of being. I loved sitting down, having conversations that always seem to end in someone throwing me a book, telling me I must read it. You’d be sitting eating and drinking with people like Lou Reed and Allan Ginsberg.”

Co-Managing Hipster Hang-Out Sin-é

After establishing himself amongst the artists of the East Village Karl helped another emigrant, Shane Doyle with his run-down pub, Sin-é on hipster St. Mark’s Street, a bar that seen talent like Jeff Buckley, Sineád O’Connor, Marianne Faithfull, Johnny Depp and Bono perform and Allen Ginsberg, Iggy Pop and Gabriel Byrne come in to chill out,

“We’d no liquor license,” Karl tells me, breaking into a smile. “After 11 pm we’d hand out bottles of Rolling Rock and whiskey in these little tea cups.... It was an amazing time and despite not making a penny from it, we knew it was something very special, and that was enough.”

Sin-é was very close to Jeff Buckley’s heart and having waited tables with Geary and playing there each week for a year recorded his EP Live At Sin-e in the cafe in 1993,

“Jeff insisted on recording in that room because he felt so comfortable there. He felt safe. He was a very nervous performer, a shy man.”

Within a year Buckley would release his only studio album Grace and become a huge star before sadly drowning in 1997. As Geary speaks of him, it’s evident that he still misses him deeply.

After Dark in the Village

New York’s East Village may have been a nonconformist paradise for the artistically minded but nighttime brought its own dangers, thanks in part to the crack epidemic and one evening, turning down an unfamiliar street, Geary was met with a gun to the head, “Give me your money,” the mugger scowled. Karl swiftly turned out his pockets,

“All I had was a lighter, 45 cents and a Walkman.... Let’s say he was not happy. ‘I’m very disappointed in you’ he said tapping me on the head before walking off.

Karl swiftly took off to the bar to meet his friend, Johnny One Eye who said,

“You were lucky.”
“I know,” Karl replied, “I thought he’d shoot me.”
“No,” replied Johnny, ”If he’d had a knife he would have cut you for kicks. Big thing to pull the trigger.”

Talent Spotted by Madonna’s Photographer

A good looking kid, Mark would be approached from time to time by photographers for modelling work and on one occasion Steven Meisel who was talent spotting for Madonna’s coffee table book ‘Sex’ offered him a few hours work. It’s not something Geary is proud of,

“It’s one of the least interesting things I get asked about the most.”

Karl goes on to explain that he didn’t give the job much thought and felt it “may be interesting” but would later find the photographs “sterile.” In the book, a long-haired, androgynous-looking Geary passionately kisses a topless Madonna but reflects that the book was,

“corporate exploitation of third-wave feminism” and, “far from erotic.”



Karl met wife Laura on Coney Island Baby, a film he wrote and starred in

First Acting Gig

Geary would go on to co-found the renowned bar, The Scratcher before being approached to act in vampire movie (and a nod to Bram Stoker’s Dracula) Nadja. Ever self-effacing he jokes,

“I think I was only cast because I was the only Irish guy in the village.”

Geary was met with a gun to the head...

Although shy and supplementing his income with work on building cites, cafes and bars, Geary eked out a successful screen career with parts in Sex and the City, Ken Loach’s Jimmy’s Hall and Hysteria - The Def Leppard Story and screenwriting including the screen adaptation of Dorothy Parker’s You Were Perfectly Fine. Despite finding little joy in the art of acting, it would be in front of the camera he’d meet his wife, The Missing and Breaking Bad star Laura Fraser. The pair swiftly fell in love filming Coney Island Baby, a film Geary both wrote and starred in and the pair left New York for Fraser’s hometown of Glasgow where they raise their daughter Lila (now 16).

Five-Publisher Vie for Geary’s Novels

Upon moving to the UK, there was a five-publisher jostle for Geary’s novels that was won by Harvill Secker who published his critically acclaimed debut Montpelier Parade and his new novel Juno Loves Legs, both novels centring around working-class Dubliners in the 1980s. I ask Karl if highlighting the lives of the working class is important to him,

“It is, yes. You see, you can read for a long time as a working class guy before you meet yourself in a book that’s not being used for comic relief so I like to represent working class people in a way that’s true. Middle class people are always heroic in books, working class people are always the horde, a generalised people, so we never get to know about their individual lives, what matters to them, what makes them human. It’s difficult, because when you truly show that, people want to look away or say, ‘Oh that’s not true, that was 1950s Ireland but I grew up in the ‘70s and ‘80s and I’m not making this up. Working class people make up 85% of the world, it’s middle class that’s unusual so why don’t we have a middle class category and call everything else fiction?’”

When I was young in Dublin we didn’t have 5-star hotels rubbed in our faces, but now we have an even bigger disparity in wealth...

These days Karl has settled into a quiet life in Glasgow where he plans to devote his time to writing novels,

“Glasgow is perfect ... when I realised I wanted to spend my time writing, I had to find a way to structure my life so I could do that. Glasgow is one of the few cities that’s affordable in that way.”



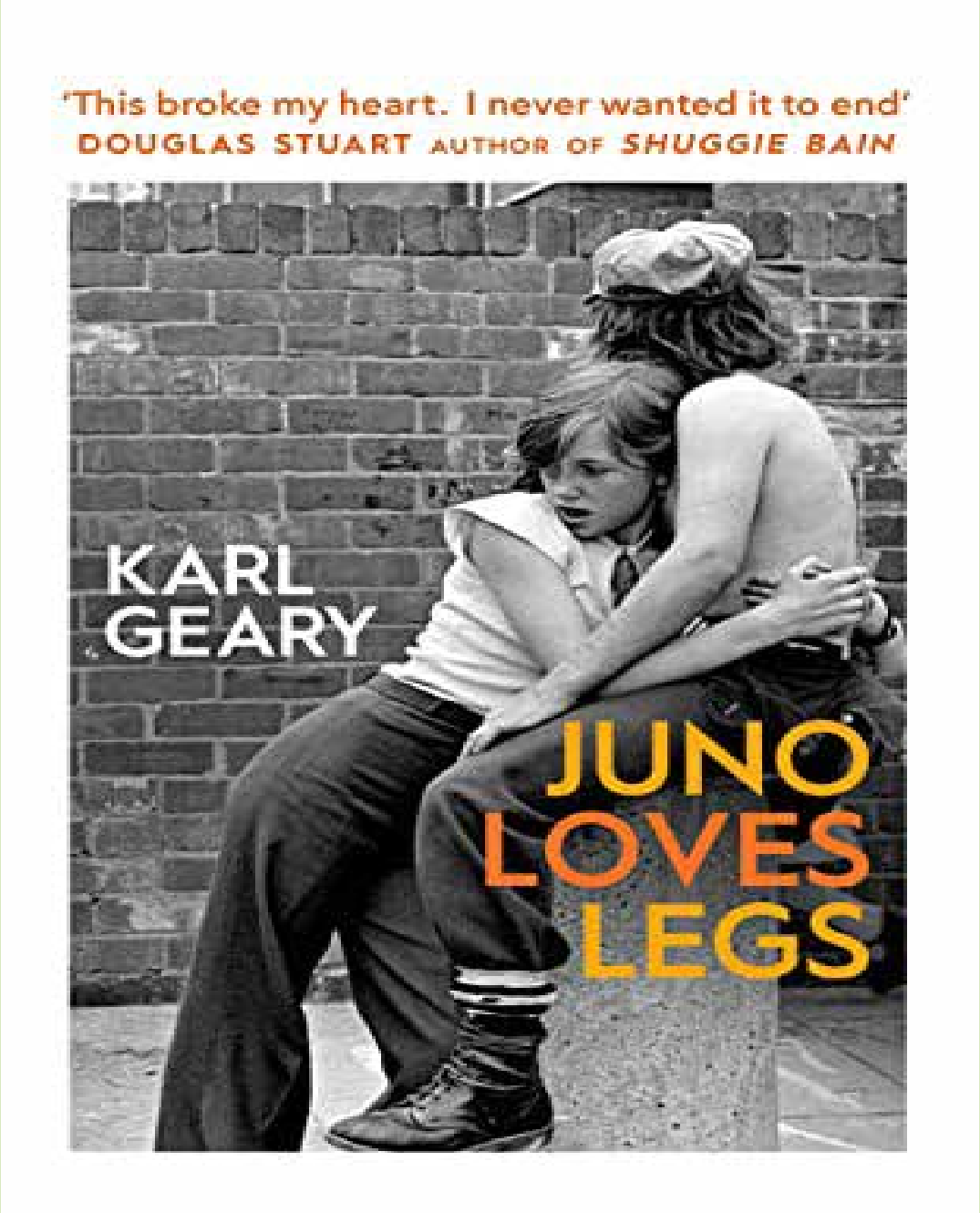
A family man at heart, he rises very early, works for several hours, rewrites in the afternoon and spends as much time with Laura, Lila and (son from previous relationship) Billy (22) as he can. As we near the end of our chat he tells me about some of the research he carried out for Juno Loves Legs, which involved attending a sewing school,

“I really wanted to go but was way too shy to walk in on my own, so I asked Lila to go with me. I made a dress, which to be honest was a dog’s dinner but Lila really did well... and bless her, she only went because she knows how shy I am.”

It’s evident that despite those halcyon days in New York’s East Village, Geary, despite living a more structured, conventional life these days is still a freethinker at heart,

“New York is unrecognisable to me now. White upper-middle class. Not the most interesting demographic and certainly not good when that’s the only voice in the room.... And Dublin ... I was put up in a 5 star hotel there recently and the amount of homeless people outside was devastating At least when I was young in Dublin we didn’t have 5 star hotels rubbed in our faces, but now we have an even bigger disparity in wealth and sadly we’ve become numb to the plight of those without like the homeless Things aren’t getting better.”

Highly Recommended: Juno Loves Legs (Harvill Secker) is available now in all good bookshops and online.





Winnie and Nelson

Jonny Steinberg talks about his intimate double biography of the famous South African leaders.



Winnie and Nelson: A new book paints a deeply human portrait of the Mandela marriage and South Africa’s struggle

A powerful new book on Nelson Mandela and Winnie Madikizela-Mandela has just been published. Winnie and Nelson: Portrait of a Marriage is at once a double biography of South Africa’s two famous liberation leaders and a historical love story about their personal lives. Mandela was imprisoned for 27 years during apartheid and went on to become the country’s first democratic president. For her part Madikizela-Mandela was persecuted relentlessly by the white minority government as she organised the resistance. After democracy the couple divorced. Jonny Steinberg, political scientist and award-winning author, answers six questions about his book.

What’s the premise of the book?

Winnie and Nelson were consummate performers who wanted the story of their marriage to tell the story of South Africa’s struggle for freedom. The premise of the book is that their marriage really does embody the tale of modern South Africa, but not as they intended. So the idea is that the book is at once about a couple, a nation, and a series of ideas about freedom, forgiveness and vengeance.

Nelson Mandela was the saddest human being she’d ever met. Sometimes she felt emanating from him “a stillness, just a grim, frightening stillness”.

What research did you undertake?

I haven’t counted, but I think I interviewed about 150 people who knew them, starting with Winnie’s younger sisters and ending with people who were close to either or both of them at the end of their lives. Then there are the letters Winnie and Nelson wrote to one another during the years Nelson was in prison. A long-term prisoner cannot help but write self-revealing letters, no matter how guarded he tries to be; he is attempting to keep his most cherished relationships alive through the words he puts down on the page; he shows all of himself, everything.

And there are the papers left by Kobie Coetsee, apartheid South Africa’s last Minister of Justice, who recorded all of Winnie’s and Nelson’s conversations when she visited him during the last eight or so years of his confinement. Kept at the Archive for Contemporary Affairs at the University of the Free State, these are slippery documents to interpret. Winnie and Nelson both knew that there were bugs in the room and so nothing they said can be interpreted straightforwardly. These documents are nonetheless revelatory, both about them as individuals and about their relationship.

What insights did you gain about Winnie Madikizela-Mandela?

She was an extraordinarily complex person, and I can only nibble at those complexities here. She had a

genuinely aristocratic understanding of politics in a stark, old-fashioned way. She felt that by virtue of having married Nelson Mandela she was really and truly the embodiment of black South Africa, not metaphorically, but really.

And so, for instance, she would talk about how her relationship with the policeman who tortured her, Theuns Swanepoel, was a fight to the death. In the next breath, she would say that because of this, the struggle to free South Africa must necessarily be insurrectionary and violent. This notion that her own personal struggle and the nation’s struggle were indistinguishable is fascinating.

What insights did you gain about Nelson Mandela?

His close friend and chief of staff in the early 1990s, Barbara Masekela, told me that Nelson Mandela was the saddest human being she’d ever met. Sometimes, she said, she felt emanating from him “a stillness, just a grim, frightening stillness”.

In researching his life, I think I glimpsed something of this terrible sadness. He believed in his depths that the story of his life was a tragedy. He was delighted to be the most famous living person in the world because it was so politically useful. But he never for a moment believed that fame would bring him happiness or compensate for what had been lost.



How do they reflect the bigger picture of a people’s revolution?

I’m not sure that South Africa has yet reckoned with how horrible the violence of the 1980s and the early 1990s was, before democracy in 1994. It’s too ghastly to look in the eye. But you can certainly try to get close to it by telling Winnie’s and Nelson’s story. There was Winnie in the very heart of it; violent death came to her own household again and again. And there was Nelson, sitting in prison, increasingly powerful, but also increasingly out of touch. He wanted to save his country and his family from catastrophe, little knowing that both were already broken.

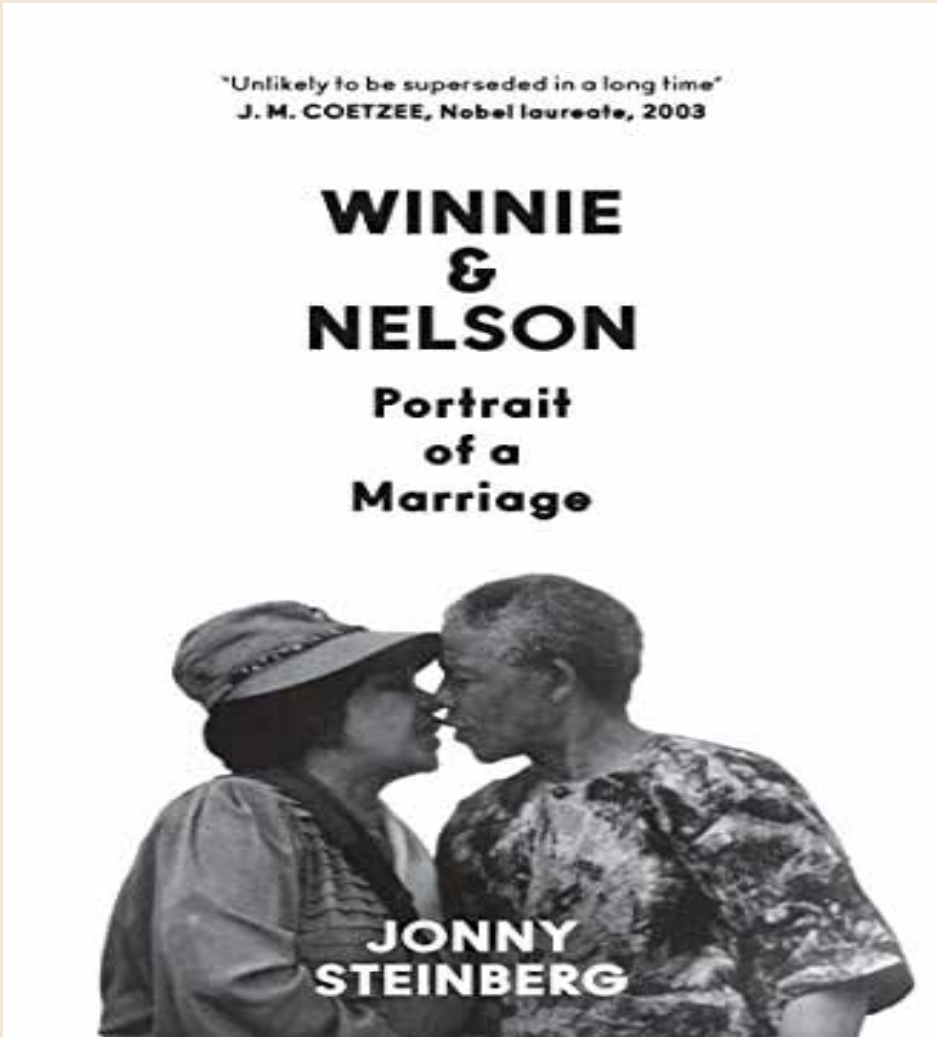
... they were real,
flawed human beings but that the
myths they lived and embodied were
necessary.

What do you hope to achieve with the book - why does this story matter?

I want both to demythologise Winnie and Nelson and to preserve their myths, if that makes sense. To show that they were real, flawed human beings but that the myths they lived and embodied were necessary. They both strived, quite self-consciously, for greatness, but one cannot be both great and happy. I want to really show that, rather than just say it. I want readers to feel it in their bones.

Jonny Steinberg
Senior lecturer in African Studies, Yale University
First published on The Conversation

Winnie & Nelson
(William Collins) by
Jonny Steinberg is
available now in
bookshops & online



MOVIES AND TV SHOWS THAT WOULDN'T AIR TODAY

Shaun Anthony casts his mind back over movies and TV shows from yesteryear that would never see the light of day today despite being huge hits at the time.



We are always evolving and (hopefully) improving as a society. Rewatching movies and TV shows we found entertaining at one stage and problematic now illustrates the fact. Let’s take a look at a handful of popular TV shows and movies that have not aged particularly well.

Movie:
Airplane! (1980)

Animal Cruelty, Paedophilic

There’s no doubt that the parody movie Airplane (which grossed a staggering \$171m) was considered hilarious when it came out (and decades later) in 1980 with endless gags and hilarious one-liners and puns - however, it would go down like a lead balloon for todays Woke generation, for instance, in the scene spoofing the romance film From Here to Eternity, Ted and Elaine are cavorting on the beach when a wave crashes over them, covering them in seaweed and fish. As they continue their romantic moment, a fish is seen flopping around in the sand. It appears to be a real fish that would be unacceptable by today’s standards. Airplane is a film with back-to-back faux pas, from Ted trying to civilise black natives on a remote island, to a young girl about 8 discussing coffee, “ I take it black Like my men.” Another scene in the film sees a young boy named Joey taken up into the cockpit to meet the pilot. The pilot greets him and asks him if he’s ever been in a cockpit before. The pilot’s questions gradually become stranger and more inappropriate,

“Have you ever seen a grown man naked?”

At the time I found it incredibly funny along with the rest of the movie, after all its only a movie and taken in context is still funny but I realise people’s sense of humour is different and the woke generation have a different perspective on things, while movie companies are now over sensitive to being cancelled.

Airplane with endless gags and hilarious one-liners and puns - would go down like a lead balloon with todays Woke generation

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TV:
The Dukes of Hazzards - Racist Symbolism?

Jan 1979 - Feb 1985

Despite The Dukes of Hazzard consistently ranking as one of the top-rated TV shows of the 1970s and ‘80s (at one point ranking second, only to Dallas) the show featured troubling symbolism that would not be considered acceptable today. Their car, the General Lee had a confederate flag on top of it, a reference to Robert E. Lee, general of the Confederate States Army and is nowadays considered a symbol of racial intolerance and slavery. When the show was recreated for the big screen in 2005 many people were incensed that the flag remained on the car and in 2015 in the wake of a racially motivated mass shooting in Charleston, South Carolina, TV Land dropped repeats of the series due to the flag and Warner Bros. removed it from Dukes of Hazzard toy cars. At the time, Ben Jones, who played the mechanic Cooter on the series wrote an editorial on the matter for USA Today, “Our beloved symbol is now being attacked in a wave of political correctness that is unprecedented in our nation of free speech and free expression.”



Movie:
Heathers
(1989)

Gun Violence, Mental Health, Bullying, Suicide, Self-Harm.

The notion of high school students murdering each other and themselves wasn’t nearly as sensitive a topic in 1989 as it is in 2023. Back then, Heathers (which grossed just \$1.1m in cinemas) about a girl (Winona Ryder) and her new boyfriend (Christian Slater) and their attempts to kill her school rivals in ways that make them look like suicides, played as very bleak satire about teenage cliques. Today, kids turning on one another violently isn’t outlandish comedy; it’s a depressing fact of life. Heathers itself remains popular enough that filmmakers have tried to update it in various ways.

Ironically, though, when Paramount Network rebooted Heathers for television a few years ago, they all but proved the film couldn’t be remade today — the premiere of the show was delayed repeatedly by real-life school shootings. Eventually the show did air, albeit heavily edited, with the aired finale actually consisting of the last two episodes combined into a single show.

Movie:
Big (1988)
Statutory Rape?

In the 1998 flick, Big (which grossed \$152m), Tom Hanks played the magically-matured version of Josh Baskin, a 12-year-old boy whose wish to be big is granted by a carnival fortune teller game. Once he transforms, Hanks’ Josh runs away from home to New York City, where he finds a job at a toy company. The film is unnerving enough when it’s just about a child who allows his family to think he’s been kidnapped for months on end, but by the end of the movie, he’s also romanced by one of his co-workers (Elizabeth Perkins) as well. While nothing is definitively shown onscreen, it’s very strongly implied that Josh — a 12-year-old in a grown man’s body — has had sex with Perkins’ Susan. This film was not only a massive box office hit, it turned Tom Hanks into America’s sweetheart. This film would never be acceptable today - in fact, on Reddit and countless chatrooms online, Gen Zs and millennials cannot believe this movie passed the censors. Hard to believe!

... it’s very strongly implied that Josh — a 12-year-old in a grown man’s body — has had sex with Perkins’ Susan.

TV:
Friends - Lack of DiversitySept 1994 - May 2004

Decades after its end, Friends is still denigrated for its lack of diversity. While the show itself is still one of the most streamed, and several other networks have copied its format, Friends in its original composition would not make sense if launched as a new series in 2023 due to lack of diversity; every major character is white and countless Gen Zs have found the series fat-phobic and insensitive for its portrayal of a younger Monica - the object of derision in a fat suit, the fact Chandler was ashamed his father is a trans woman, Ross being homophobic for insisting a male nanny must be gay and Rachel using an abuse of power to sleep with a young employee.



Friends is still denigrated for its lack of diversity. While the show itself is still one of the most streamed

Movie:
Sixteen Candles (1984)
Ethnic Stereotype

John Hughes became synonymous with humorous, sensitive portraits of teens in films like The Breakfast Club, Ferris Bueller’s Day Off, and Sixteen Candles (which grossed \$23.7m). That sensitivity didn’t extend to every character in every movie though; looking at Sixteen Candles today, it’s hard to believe it features Long Duk Dong, a foreign exchange student who seems to represent almost every Asian stereotype in existence. There’s even a gong sound effect that plays whenever he appears on screen. This is unthinkable today.

TV:
Ironside - Ableism?
Sept 1967- Jan 1975

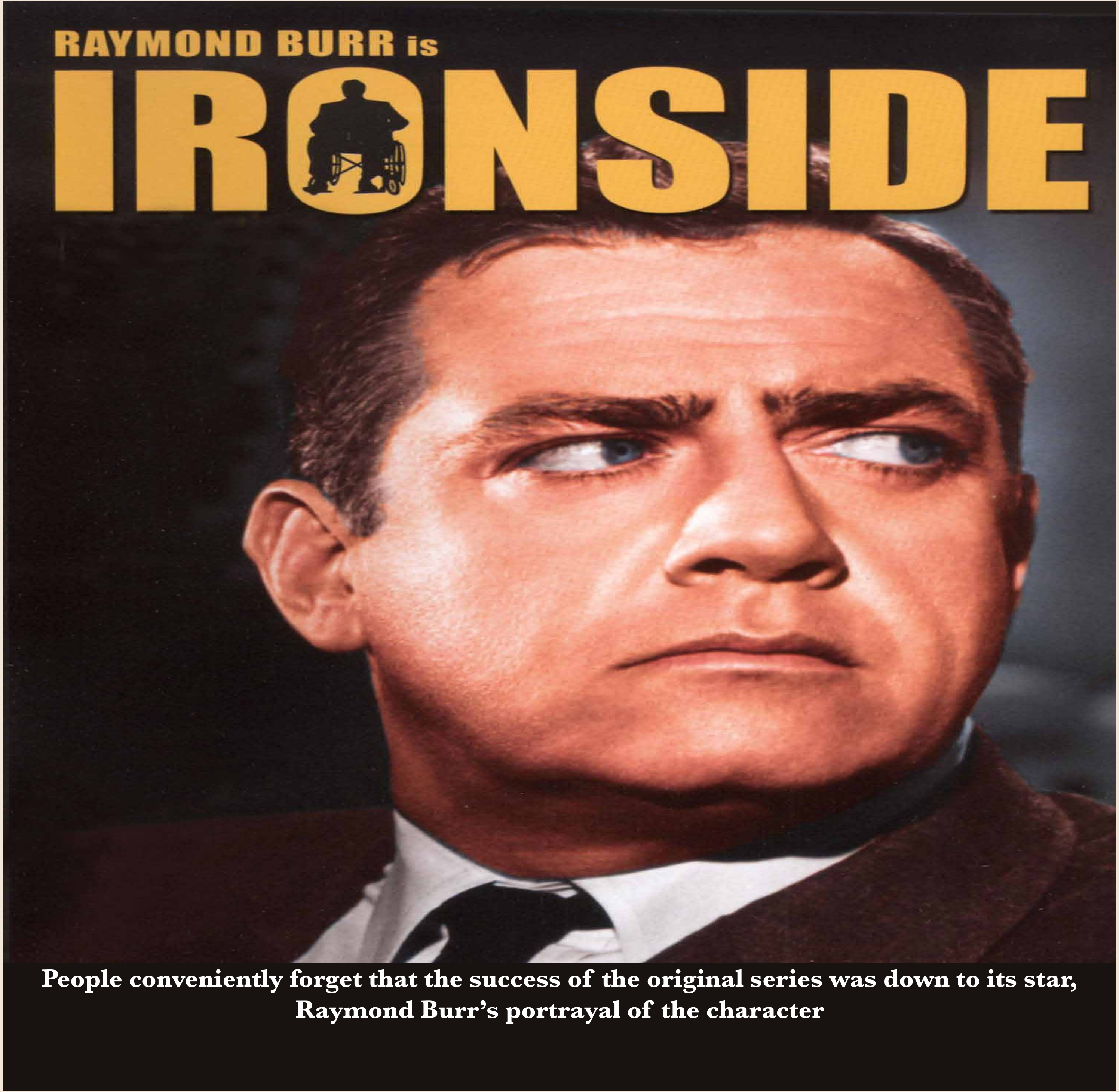
TV star Raymond Burr followed the original Perry Mason series with Ironside, a cop show about a gifted detective who carries on solving crimes after he’s paralysed from the waist down and confined to a wheelchair. Burr, of course, was not paralysed, something that would certainly become a point of contention if Ironside was made today.

Ten years ago NBC attempted to do a new Ironside with actor Blair Underwood as the title character, and drew complaints from disabled actors and audiences. This caused NBC to cancel it after just four episodes. People conveniently forget the success of the original series was down to its star Raymond Burr’s portrayal of the character, would giving the role to someone else just because they are wheelchair bound be correct or be seen as tokenism ?


The common denominator with all the above mentioned shows is they were all very successful. It is obvious that any movie or show made today would be different, time moves on and attitudes change but that does not mean we should censor the past or be deprived of viewing what is in fact entertainment history. I sometimes wonder are we now becoming a little too self-righteous and losing our ability to live and let live a little. Entertainemnt should not be confined within the constraints of wokeism or tick the boxes with tokenism but strike a balance without losing the essence of what entertainment is suppose to be.

Going forward there’s probably countless movies and shows today that will be considered inappropriate in 10, 20 or 30 years time as enlightened as we all think we are now, and that’s to be expected: attitudes change, society evolves and social norms alter.

Finally, in the immortal words of Bugs Bunny, ‘Chill out Folks’ (Rumours that a woke Bugs Bunny is seeking compensation from Disney for his stereotypical portrayal in movies & TV are untrue).



***What TV shows and movies do you enjoy that
would not be considered
politically correct today?
Tweet us: @BigIssueIreland***



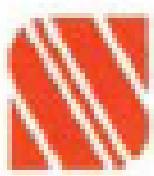
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‘Piracy’ in Ballycotton

An act of piracy took place off the south coast of Ireland, in a small fishing village outside of Cork city during the closing phase of direct British influence on the island. The incident would shock Michael Collins, throw the British government into disarray and change the course of the Irish Civil War. Sineád Dunlop reports.



March 1922, three months after the Anglo-Irish Treaty was signed, Ireland was heading swiftly towards Civil War. Despite the fact the anti-Treaty IRA had influence over significant part of the countryside, Michael Collins, the chairman of the pro-Treaty Provisional Government, was carefully reinforcing his position and securing the advantage. As in any war, arms, ammunition and information form an essential element in the winning of a conflict. In this the Free State Army were to enjoy a distinct advantage, namely that of British material and political support for the emergent new state. On the other hand, the anti-Treaty contingent, despite an excellent system of intelligence gathering, found their traditional sources of material were generally no longer available to them, hence faced with limited financial support and diminishing military resources, they were forced to rely on other localised means. Raids mounted against police stations, lightly manned military posts and the ambush of Free State patrols became their course of action.

‘Pirates’ Attack

On 29 March, like a bolt out of the blue, the anti-Treaty IRA in Cork seized the RFA (Royal Fleet Auxiliary) Upnor, a small British naval armament freighter on passage from Cork to Devonport, in south west England.

Many, including the press likened it to an attack by pirates.

Many, including the press likened it to an attack by pirates. Coming ashore at Ballycotton, 25 miles east of Cork city, they dragged away 80 tons of weapons, which included 266 cases of rifles and machine gun parts, 1,440 cases of smallbore ammunition, 222 cases of 4-inch and 12-pounder cartridges, 1,300 cases of shells, 750 cases of fuses and fireworks and 600 cases of small arms. This was loaded on 60 lorries by 200 men, at Ballycotton during the night.

The Upnor’s armoury was not of the highest quality, but its seizure reinforced the IRA in the south and almost certainly contributed to the more intensive use of mines in the war.

News spread through Ireland and beyond like wildfire, The Times in the UK described the incident as “a clever and daring coup” and even the New York Times reported that it was a “sensational affair...carried out with great audacity.”

The Fate of the Treaty Hangs in the Balance

Collins and his government appeared highly vulnerable and the fate of the Treaty was uncertain. There was apprehension in Whitehall, where the authorities falsely accused Tom Barry, the commander of the West Cork Flying Column. General Nevil Macready, the departing British commander in Ireland, likened the terror in Downing Street to the outbreak of WW1,

“The declaration of war in 1914 was as nothing to the wild excitement consequent on the capture of Mr. Barry of one of His Majesty’s ships of war.”

Macready worried that,

“...this seizure turns the balance heavily against the Provisional Government.”

Nobody was as shocked as Michael Collins. When General Macready met Collins he found him in a very anxious state of mind. Though he sardonically stated,

“Poor Michael is distressed that we turn over arms to Mr Barry of Cork from a ‘man of war’ and we won’t give him any.”



Collins Suspects British Duplicity

Collins was infuriated with the Royal Navy’s impotence in safeguarding the arms, but he also suspected British deception, complaining to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Winston Churchill, about,

“...how desirous certain sections of the English military authorities were to arm Irish men against each other.”

He expanded,

“It is generally believed here that there was collusion between those responsible on your side and the raiders. Also generally believed that the capture was enormously larger than you stated.”

He was incorrect on the first detail, but correct on the second.

Churchill had to recant and he reluctantly divulged that the navy bore responsibility, though he denied any complicity. Churchill, knowing that Collins was the only Irish leader capable of implementing the Treaty, warned him,

“I trust you will remain as much as possible at the centre of affairs and not expose yourself more than is necessary...I have been informed that attempts are designed against your life.”

At the same time he allowed the British army to supply Collins’ newly formed National Army with 8,000 rifles, 4,000 revolvers and 20 Lewis machine guns. This was a decision that led further down the road to civil war, which, of course broke out less than three months later when the National Army attacked the IRA garrison in the Four Courts in Dublin.

Winston Churchill described it as “brilliantly conceived” and grudgingly expressed his admiration: “The Irish have a genius for conspiracy.”

The Civil War resulted in, almost as many deaths as the War of Independence, the destruction of much of the country’s infrastructure particularly in Cork and left a legacy of bitterness that persisted for decades. The weapons and ammunition from the Upnor played a crucial role in the bloodshed. A senior British civil servant declared,

“By this mischance, the taking of the Upnor, the rebels got vast stores of ammunition and prolonged their resistance.”

While a leading official in the Dublin government complained,

“If the British forces had not negligently permitted the capture of this vessel by the republicans the latter forces would have been much more easily suppressed.”



One of the biggest calamities of the war transpired on 22 August 1922 when Michael Collins was ambushed and killed at Beál na Bláth. Given that the majority of the Cork IRA’s weaponry came from the Upnor it’s more than likely that the rifles used in the ambush and the bullet that killed him were from the haul.

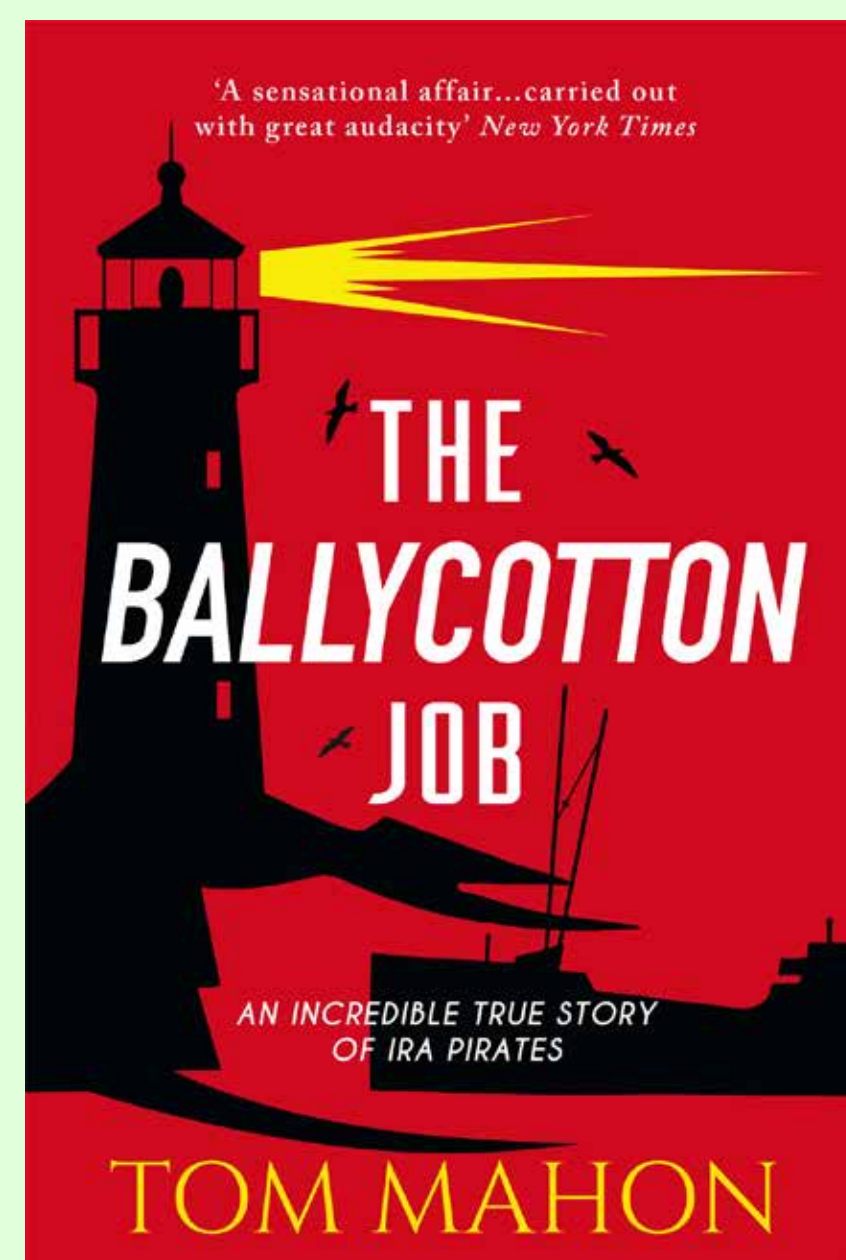
Collins and his government appeared highly vulnerable and the fate of the Treaty was uncertain.

A Flawless Operation

The detention of the Upnor on the high seas was indeed daring, but was in the final analysis, the result of excellent intelligence, planning, co-ordination, timing and speed of execution. It was flawless. Even Winston Churchill described it as “brilliantly conceived” and grudgingly expressed his admiration: “The Irish have a genius for conspiracy.”

Recommended Reading:

The Ballycotton Job
(Mercier Press) by Tom Mahon



A Little Bit of Irish

Phrase:	Translations:	Pronunciation:
Cá bhfuil an leithreas?	Where is the bathroom?	Kaw will nah leh-rish
Cad a mholfá?	What do you recommend?	Cod a fall fa
Táim go maith	I'm fine	Tam go ma
So-bhlasta	Delicious	So flasta
Corcaigh	Cork	Kor-kig
Haigh!	Hi	High
Olc	Bad	Owlk

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. Arbitrary	Ahr-bi-trer-ee	1. Subject to individual will or judgement without restriction.
2. Dean	Deen	2. The head of a faculty, school, or administrative division in a university or college.
3. Auricle	Awr-i-kuhl	3. Projecting outer portion of ear.
4. Armada	Ahr-mahduh	4. Fleet of warships.
5. Subplot	Suhb-plot	5. A secondary or subordinate plot in a play, novel or other literary work.
6. Tungsten	Tuhng-stuhn	6. A rare metallic element, bright grey in colour.
7. Swathe	Sweyth	7. Wrap, bind or swaddle.
8. Trattoria	Trah-tuh-ree-uh	8. A usually inexpensive or informal restaurant or cafe specialising in Italian dishes.
9. Sociopath	Soh-see-uh-path	9. A person with a psychopathic personality whose behaviour is antisocial, often criminal, and who lacks a sense of moral responsibility or social conscience.
10.Kith	Kith	10. Acquaintances, friends, neighbours or the like.
11. Stateless	Steyt-lis	11. Lacking nationality.
12. Croupier	Kroo-pee-er	12. An attendant in a gambling casino who rakes in money or chips and pays winners at a gaming table.

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

SCREEN

SCENE

Take Care of Maya ***

Starring: N/A
Run Time: 90 mins
Streaming on: Netflix
Available: From 19th June

Take Care of Maya, which airs on Netflix from 19th June is a documentary centred around the events that led to 10-year-old Maya Kowalski being taken away from her parents by the state and their desperate attempt to bring her home.

An excellent film on how an accusation of child abuse and Munchausen Syndrome destroyed an entire family.

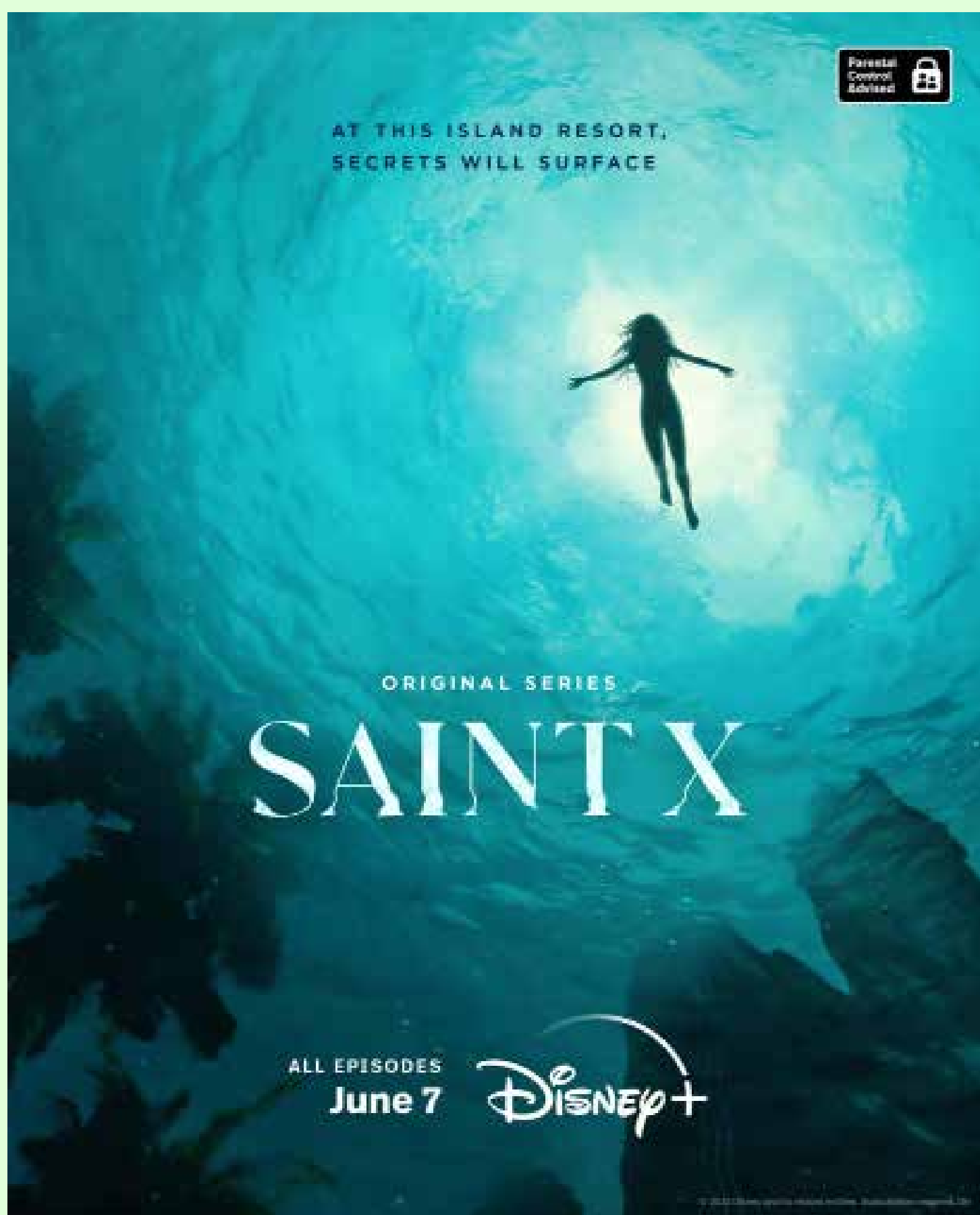


Saint X **

Starring: Alycia Debnam-Carey, West Duchovny
Run Time: 4 x 60 mins
Streaming: Disney+
Available: From 7th June

The psychological drama “Saint X,” which is told via multiple timelines and perspectives, explores and upends the girl-gone-missing genre. It’s a show about how a young woman’s mysterious death during an idyllic Caribbean holiday creates a traumatic ripple effect that eventually pulls her surviving sister into a dangerous pursuit of the truth.

Not for everyone but fans of the book will like it.



The Crowded Room ***

Starring: Amanda Seyfried, Tom Holland

Streaming: Apple TV+

Run Time: 10 x 60 mins

Available to stream: 9th June.



Starring and executive produced by Tom Holland, “The Crowded Room” is a gripping, 10-episode limited series that stars Holland as Danny Sullivan, a man who is arrested following his involvement in a shooting in New York City in 1979. A captivating thriller told through a series of interviews with curious interrogator Rya Goodwin (Amanda Seyfried), Danny’s life story unfolds, revealing elements of the mysterious past that shaped him, and the twists and turns that will lead him to a life-altering revelation.

Fans of psychological thrillers are going to love this.

True Crime Daily ****

Starring: N/A

Streaming: YouTube

Run Time: Varies

Available to watch: Currently

True Crime Daily delivers in-depth true crime sagas showcasing the very best of crime journalism. From unsolved murders to compelling mysteries, undercover investigations and shocking crimes caught on camera, True Crime Daily brings some of the most interesting crime cases to YouTube - and unbelievably, this content is available free of charge.

With over 5 million subscribers and over 4.2 thousand videos (so lots to binge watch), host Ana Garcia is joined by crime experts, police officers, defense attorneys, and other leading authorities in their fields.

It’s really no wonder this channel has almost 3 billion views! This channel also has a podcast available here:

<https://truecrimedaily.com/pages/podcasts/>

and an accompanying website <https://truecrimedaily.com>

Well worth checking out.



What are you streaming?
Tweet us @BigIssueIreland

Girls Faking Mental Illness?

Why are teenage girls faking mental illness on social media? Is this mass sociogenic illness or is it a form of medical student syndrome? Sam McMurdock reports.

I was speaking with an old friend and her 15-year-old daughter *Lisa who has Tourette’s Syndrome (TS) recently. Lisa is in Year 11 at high school and in the last year alone has broken her wrist, slapped herself so hard across the face she had a black eye and has even suffered from whiplash due to physical tics. Lisa has had TS for many years and has suffered abuse in public spaces and is even excluded from some extended family gatherings for her “outbursts”. Lisa wanted to tell me how “offensive” she finds the number of TikTok mental health influencers who post videos of themselves, whilst showcasing, what she believes are bogus physical and vocal tics,

“Some of these girls, my age have hundreds of thousands of followers and millions of views... I find it hurtful and offensive because I have had the rude comments on the street, wasn’t invited to a family wedding and hurtful things like that, whereas these girls present a cute video, making it all seem like candy and roses.... It’s not. It’s just a way to be popular and get loads of views.”

Lisa tells me that a girl at her school has a “really popular” TikTok account in which she documents her Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID),

“*Niamh switches in and out of all her different personalities.... She’s sort of celebrity and says she gets brands deals.... I don’t now if she really does or if that’s just to make other girls jealous... loads of my friends totally fangirl over her [are obsessed by her].”

It’s easy to see how individuals like Lisa, who’ve been formally diagnosed with TS and have experienced the harsh reality of the condition feel angry, believing influencers are faking it in order to gain views, fame and a hefty income - but are they?



Posed by model

Is it a Mass Sociogenic Illness?

Psychologists recently noticed a wave of Gen Z girls claiming to suffer from TS and other rare mental health conditions not typically seen in teen girls, and a common factor between these symptomatic teenagers was determined - TikTok, the video hosting service that has a viewership, chiefly made up of, yes, you’ve guessed it, Gen Z girls!

Dr. Caroline Olvera of Rush University Medical Centre in Chicago recently carried out research on females who all exhibited the same tic - shouting ‘beans’ in an English accent - interestingly, many of these girls did not even speak English. When these teenagers’ TikTok accounts were analysed, there was a common denominator - they all watched a British Tourettes influencer who had the exact same tic - a TikTok ‘star’ with 16 million followers. Dr. Olvera’s research paper is available online but in a nutshell, her findings illustrated that TikTok tics are,

“...distinct from what is typically seen in patients with TS, although share many characteristics with functional tics.”

Olvera believes this to be,

“...an example of mass sociogenic illness, which involves behaviours, emotions, or conditions spreading spontaneously through a group.”

....a common factor between these symptomatic teenagers was determined - TikTok ...

Dr. Olvera went on to suggest that,

“A modern clinician needs to remain abreast of social media sources as knowledge of media content is essential in managing patients in the current environment.”



Was the Pandemic to Blame?

We have to ask why teenage girls would want to fake mental illnesses in the first place. Perhaps a couple of years of lockdowns, schools being closed, navigating a scary, unprecedented period and spending more time online all played a part. It’s no surprise that many teens were incredibly lonely during the lockdowns and according to a UN report, 80% of this demographic were struggling with their mental health.

Floundering and looking for answers, its no surprise that many Gen Zs turned to the Internet - and let’s face it, the pandemic gave them plenty of time to delve into their mental health. If these girls even sourced one mental health video on TikTok, YouTube or any of the other platforms, the algorithm would kick in and serve up a never-ending array of similar content. Teenage girls are generally suggestible. Is it really any wonder that the results have been, what Dr. Jean Twenge, professor of psychology at San Diego State University described as a “social contagion.” Twenge says that, “social contagion has always been more prevalent among teen girls than other demographic groups” so we should not be surprised to see this explosion in mental health conditions - even if, in many cases they are imagined.

Medical Student Syndrome

Before the days of the Internet, and in my first year of university I found an old medical dictionary. I’ll never forget the gut-wrenching, enveloping fear I had for months that I was developing a brain tumour. Eventually, I went to my GP, told him, that according to my book I was developing a brain tumour - and he laughed. He told me my brain was fine, but I did have ‘medical student syndrome’. I said, “I’m not a medical student.” He explained that in his first year of university, he and his peers would believe they had whatever disease they were currently studying, eventually, their lecturer gave a talk on “temporary hypochondria” as many of the class were experiencing what was called “medical student syndrome” - or as his humorous professor deemed it, “disease of the week.”

I can’t help but believe the stress of the pandemic, fear of the unknown, a Google search on something

innocuous like anxiety-management, the algorithm and many free hours in the day exacerbated this social contagion. Many people are criticising these Gen Z girls for faking mental illnesses - and yes, I’m sure there are some that are doing just that, but one can’t help but feel there’s just as big of a chance they are experiencing the “temporary hypochondria” that new medical students experience. We do know that heightened anxiety can cause mass sociogenic illness (as was deemed to be the case 10 years ago when 19 teenagers spontaneously developed TS in LeRoy High School, New York). Saying that, a recent study showed that 40% of people with ‘TikTok Tics’ need to attend hospital because they can’t suppress their movements, whereas only 5.1% of people with Tourettes need hospitalisation for their tics, so that does make one wonder. It’s certainly a head scratcher.

We do know that heightened anxiety can cause mass sociogenic illness...

The Positive

People can be quite judgmental of Gen Zs, or ‘The Snowflake Generation’ but if nothing else, it’s great to see that this generation have rejected the stigma attached to mental health and have chosen to talk openly about their struggles if they have them - that’s something good that has come out of all this. Time will tell whether the rise in mental health problems amongst this generation is genuine, whether they actually believe it or whether it’s a vehicle for fame and fortune like Lisa and many others living with the condition believe. Dr. Jean Twenge recently suggested that,

“TikTok is a breeding ground for mental disorders. The evidence that social media is harmful to young mental health is both mounting and damning. And it’s time that Gen Z — and their parents — started taking notice.”

Perhaps it is time to raise the age for TikTok from 13 to 16 - or, avoid it altogether because sadly its not all silly dances and cat videos.

* Lisa and Niamh are not their real names



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Glin Road Sports Hall, Coolock, D17. (01) 8478177

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All Winners at Street League Finals 2023

Season's end finale at Andy Moore Park, Postal Club, Tallaght, sees Longford and Moyross take home Men & Women's All Ireland team trophies.



IHSL Volunteers and sponsors AWS with Ladies Champions Moyross 1



Stephen Kenny being interviewed by Virgin News at Finals



Ladies runners up Moyross 2 with SDCC Mayor Cllr Emma Murphy



Male winners Longford



Mullingar male runners up

Congratulations & best wishes to all who took part in the Homeless Street Soccer finals on April 26th.

Jim O'CALLAGHAN TD

FIANNA FAIL

Irish Republican Party

Please contact me if I can assist you in any way.
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Sinn Féin



Mary Byrne,IHSL with SDCC Mayor Emma Murphy presenting Alison Ryan with female Player of the Year, Pearse St League



Orla McGovern presenting player of the tournament award to Ciara Walsh Pearse St. League



Stephen Kenny, with Joanne Reynolds AWS presenting AWS All Ireland Fair Play Award to Robin Maher



Moyross Ladies League Player of the Year, Kasey Hayes with Mayor Emma Murphy and Laura



Ballyfermot ladies League Player of the League (centre) Laura Cunningham



Goalkeeper of the Tournament Award Willie Stokes (Longford) with Father Peter McVerry



Tallaght/Greenhills player of the year Teslem with Stephen Kenny

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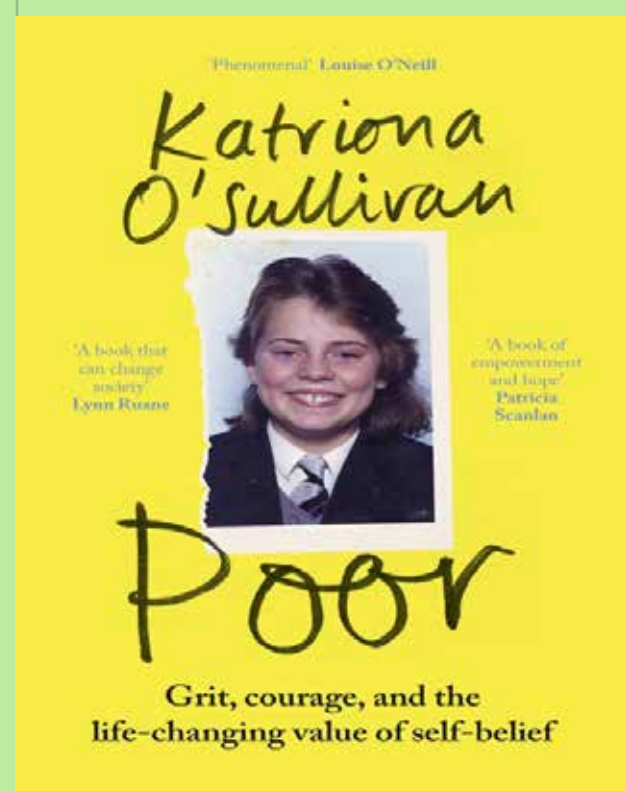
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Patricia Scanlan's Book Club



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. In this monthly feature, Patricia brings you her favourite reads of the moment.

Poor: Grit, courage, and the life-changing value of self-belief. – **Katriona O’Sullivan – Sandycove.**

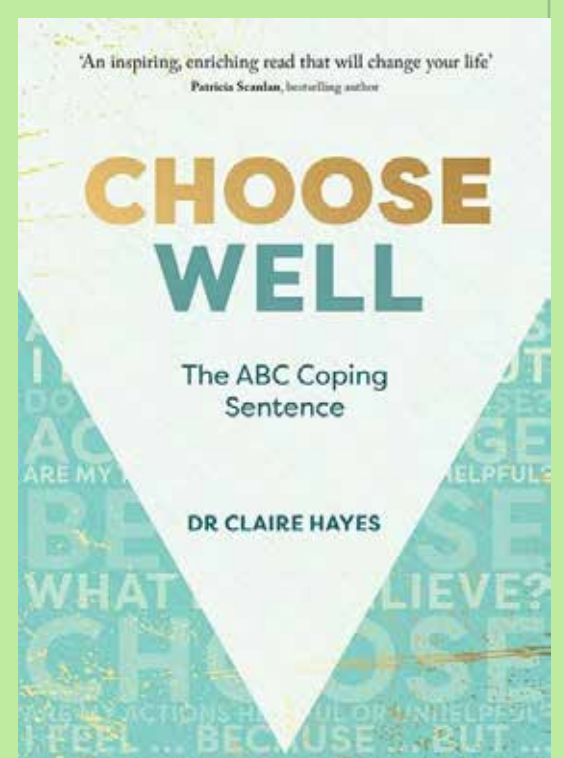


‘We love a rags-to-riches story, and we love to see someone triumph through sheer determination. But the story is rarely that simple. My story isn’t, anyway. It is extraordinary to think of how lucky I have been.’

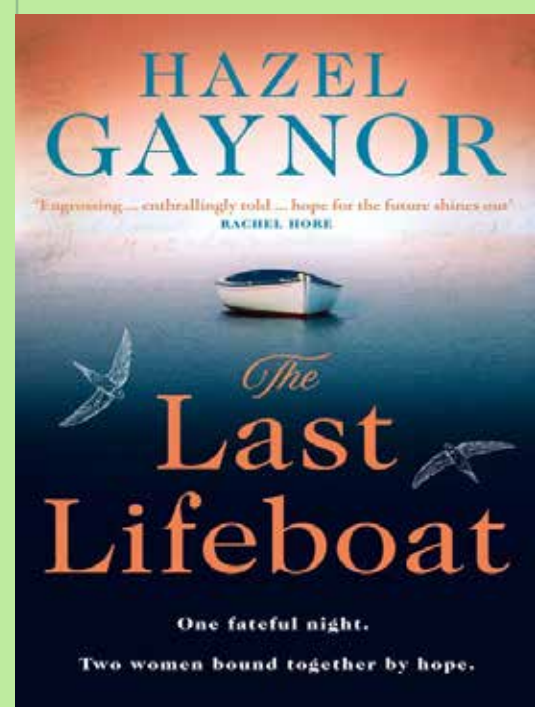
As the middle of five kids growing up in dire poverty, the odds were low on Katriona O’Sullivan making anything of her life. She became a mother at 15 and ended up homeless. Five rackety years followed - barely coping, drinking to escape - until Katriona, now living in her father’s native Dublin, hit rock bottom. Poor is the extraordinary story - moving, funny, brave, and sometimes startling - of how Katriona turned her life around. During her schooldays there had been teachers who looked out for her - beacons of stability in a chaotic childhood. They planted seeds of self-belief. In Dublin when she sought help, she found mentors whose encouragement revived that self-belief. She got her act together, got a flat and a job as a cleaner, and got into Trinity College. Today Dr Katriona O’Sullivan is an award-winning lecturer whose work explores barriers to education. Despite her professional success, and happiness in her marriage and as a loving mother, Katriona lives with the indelible legacy of her early years. Her book is a stirring argument for the importance of looking out for our kids, of giving them hope, practical support and meaningful opportunities. Katriona O’Sullivan’s unflinching honesty and integrity in writing this gritty, powerful autobiography shows us the strength of her unbreakable spirit. It is ultimately a book of empowerment and hope for all who walk the same path. She is a beacon of light.

Choose Well: The ABC Coping Sequence – **Dr Claire Hayes – Veritas books**

Dr Claire Hayes is a Consultant Clinical Psychologist based in Ireland. She has gained over 25 years’ experience of working with children, adolescents and adults across a wide range of psychological issues, including anxiety and depression. She is the author of Finding Hope in the Age of Anxiety, How to Cope, and Stress Relief for Teachers: The Coping Triangle. She hosts the You OK? podcast.



In this, her fourth book, Choose Well: The ABC Coping Sequence presents a simple and effective tool for people to use to improve the quality of their relationships with themselves and with other people. It focuses on the third step of ‘The Coping Triangle’ process, developed by Dr Hayes to present the key principles of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) in a preventative, coping way. Choose Well: The ABC Coping Sequence is an inspiring, enriching read that will change your life.



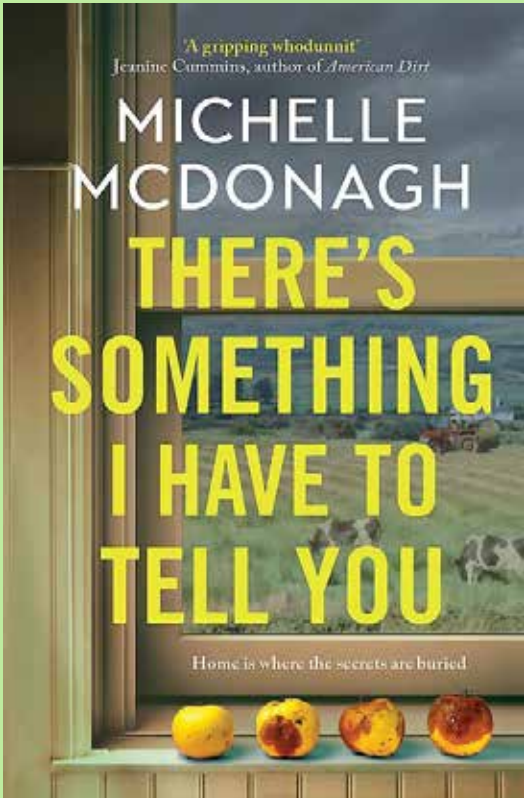
The Last Lifeboat – **Hazel Gaynor – Harper Collins**

Liverpool 1940. Alice King stands on the deck of SS Carlisle, waiting to escort a group of children to Canada as overseas evacuees. She is finally doing her bit for the war. In London, as the Blitz bombs rain down and the threat of German invasion looms, Lily Nicholls anxiously counts the days for news of her son and daughter’s safe arrival. But when disaster strikes in the Atlantic, Alice and Lily – one at sea, the other on land –

will quickly become one another’s very best hope. The events of one night, and the eight unimaginable days that follow, will bind the two women together in unforgettable ways. Inspired by a remarkable true story, The Last Lifeboat is a gripping and triumphant tale of love, courage and hope against the odds. Endearing characters, terrific plot, and a superb sense of time and place made this riveting book unputdownable. I loved it.

There’s Something I Have To Tell You – Michelle McDonagh – Hachette Books Ireland

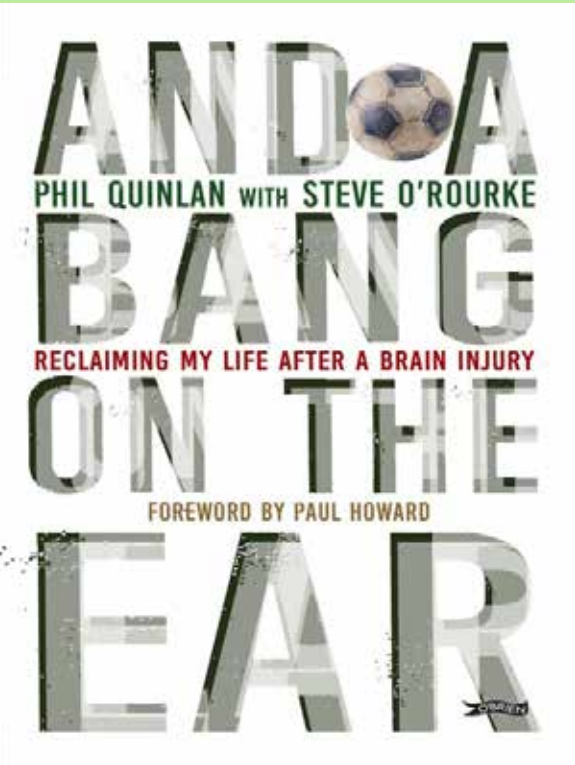
When the bodies of wealthy matriarch Ursula Kennedy and her farmer husband, Jimmy are pulled from the slurry pit on Glenbeg Farm, shock ricochets throughout the family and community. Was this a tragic accident? Or is there more to it than meets the eye? Their son Rob, once destined for a high-flying legal career, is now involved in the family business. He seems distraught about his parents’ deaths, but rumours soon spread about tensions on the home front.



Rob’s wife, Kate had a difficult relationship with Ursula. Life will certainly be easier now, without her every move being controlled by her imperious mother-in-law. Meanwhile, Christina, the victims’ fragile daughter, is carrying a private pain she’s never been able to speak about. As vivid memories rush back of another tragic death on the farm some years ago, a toxic secret is set to come to the surface, one that has been simmering for decades . . .

There’s Something I Have To Tell You is a gripping, immersive page-turner that keeps you hooked to the very last page. A terrific debut novel.

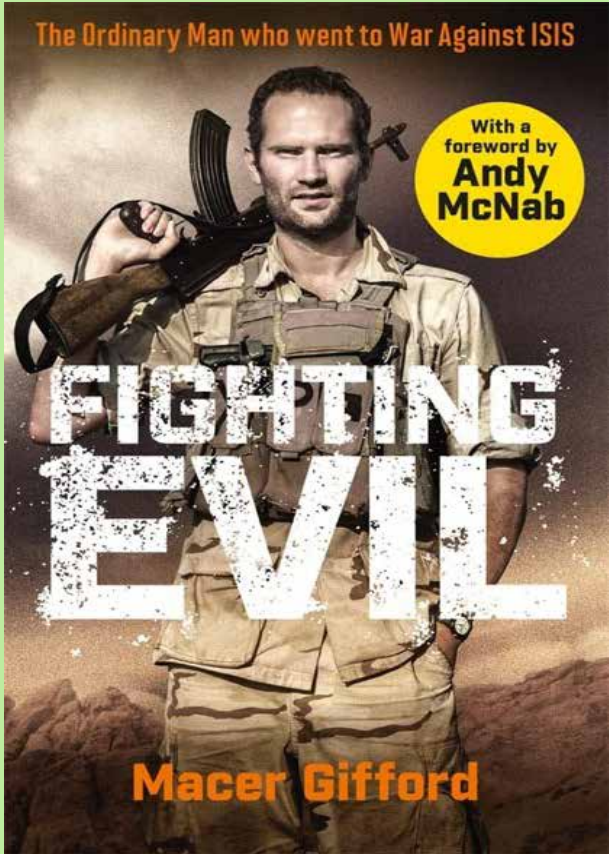
And a Bang on the Ear: Reclaiming My Life After a Brain Injury – Phil Quinlan – O’Brien Press



Philip Quinlan was a promising 15-year-old athlete who packed his bags one Sunday morning in November 1989 to play a game of football. A day later, his mother was told he had a 25% chance to live. Part investigative tale, part time capsule, And a Bang on the Ear sees Philip painstakingly piece together the events that led up to, and followed, the accidental clash of heads that left him in a coma before waking up to 30 years of pain and paralysis. Full of hope and humour, rage and rehabilitation, this is an autobiography unlike any other.

Fighting Evil: The Ordinary Man who went to War Against ISIS – Macer Gifford – Seven Dials

In the summer of 2014 the world watched in horror as the black flag of ISIS swept all before it. Mosul, the second largest city in Iraq fell, ISIS proclaimed the caliphate and the horror mounted: from the mass murder, rape and enslavement of the Yazidis to the public beheading of journalists by British jihadis.



For Macer Gifford it wasn’t enough to ask why more wasn’t being done, he knew he had to act. So, he left his job in the city, split from his girlfriend and a few weeks later found himself illegally crossing the border into Syria to join the Kurdish YPG in their fight against the savagery of ISIS.

Macer Gifford became one of longest serving British International Volunteers and one of the only few to be promoted to be a Commander in the YPG. He fought alongside the Kurds (and their Syrian Allies) for three long tours of duty from the dawn of the caliphate all the way to its military defeat in the ruins of Raqqa in 2017, sniping at the final deadly wave of suicide bombers as they burst from the rubble. Along the way, he made - and lost - many friends. This is the only complete account of the war against the Caliphate by the Kurds and the remarkable and often eccentric band of international volunteers who fought alongside them.





Because laughter is the best medicine!

After ordering a milkshake, a man had to leave his seat in the restaurant to make a telephone call.

Since he didn’t want anyone to take his drink, he took a paper napkin, wrote on it, “The World’s Strongest Weightlifter,” and left it under his glass.

When he returned from making his call, the glass was empty. Under it was a new napkin with new writing that said:

“Thanks for the treat!”
“The World’s Fastest Runner”

Two young boys were spending the night at their grandparents’ house. At bedtime, the two boys knelt beside their beds to say their prayers. The youngest one began praying at the top of his lungs:

“I PRAY FOR A NEW BICYCLE. I PRAY FOR A NEW IPOD. I PRAY FOR A NEW PLAY STATION...”

His older brother leaned over and nudged the younger brother and said, “Why are you shouting your prayers? God isn’t deaf.”

To which the little brother replied, “No, but Grandma is!”

Two rednecks, Bubba and Earl, were driving down the road drinking a couple of bottles of Bud.

The passenger, Bubba, said “Lookey thar up ahead, Earl, it’s a police roadblock!! We’re gonna get busted fer drinkin’ these here beers!!”

“Don’t worry, Bubba,” Earl said. “We’ll just pull over and finish drinkin’ these beers then peel off the label and stick it on our foreheads, and throw the bottles under the seat.”

“What fer?”, asked Bubba.
“Just let me do the talkin’, OK?,” said Earl.

Well, they finished their beers, threw the empties out of sight & put label on each of their foreheads.

When they reached the roadblock, the sheriff said, “You boys been drinkin’?”

“No, sir,” said Earl while pointing at the labels. “We’re on the patch.”

Bob, a 70-year-old, extremely wealthy widower, shows up at the country club with a breathtakingly beautiful and very sexy 25-year-old blonde who knocks everyone’s socks off with her youthful sex appeal and charm. She hangs on Bob’s arm and listens intently to his every word.

His buddies at the club are all envious. They corner him and ask, “Bob, how’d you get the trophy girlfriend?”

Bob replies, “Girlfriend? She’s my wife!”

They’re knocked over, but continue to ask. “So, how’d you persuade her to marry you?”

Bob says, “I lied about my age.”

His friends are fascinated, “What do you mean? Did you tell her you were only 50?”

Bob smiles and says, “No, I told her I was 90.”

True marketing errors

Below are fine examples of what happens when marketing translations fail to reach a foreign country in an understandable way.

Coors put its slogan, “Turn it loose,” into Spanish, where it was read as “Suffer from diarrhea.”

Pepsi’s “Come alive with the Pepsi Generation” translated into in Chinese “Pepsi brings your ancestors back from the grave,”.

Clairol introduced the “Mist Stick,” a curling iron, into German only to find out that “mist” is slang for manure. Not too many people had use for the “manure stick”.

The Podcast Review

We source the best selection of podcasts each issue. This time we bring you Becoming Wise, Code Switch, Feel Better, Live More, Disaster Trolls and A Life Less Ordinary with Sophie Elwes.

Becoming Wise (Educational)



Gain new insight on life and what it means to be human in the time it takes to make a cup of coffee with this podcast from On Being’s Krista Tippett. Episodes feature chats with thought leaders such as the late John Lewis and Brené Brown. Expand your horizons in minutes.

Code Switch (Social Issues)



Race, social justice and the complex issues facing marginalised communities are weighty topics, but the Code Switch team addresses them in ways that are digestible and approachable even for audiences who are new to the conversation. It’s an important one, so give it a listen.



Feel Better, Live More (Health)

Lots of health and wellness advice brings up more questions than answers. Not Dr. Chatterjee’s. He has almost two decades of experience, so his conversations with other professionals and straightforward advice simplifies the most complicated subjects into something you can actually use.

Disaster Trolls (True Crime)



A new conspiracy investigation from the BBC’s Marianna Spring, who also fronted the excellent Death by Conspiracy?, Disaster Trolls is all about the ghouls who bombard survivors of traumatic events like the Manchester Arena bombing with messages telling them they’re liars and fakers. Infowars’ Alex Jones, who for a long time denied the reality of the Sandy Hook school shooting, is perhaps the most famous example. Unfortunately, most of these types of trolls don’t get rinsed for the thick end of a billion dollars by the courts, as Jones has, and British trolls are taking up his mantle. Most frighteningly, they’re taking their harassment offline too.



A Life Less Ordinary with Sophie Elwes (Triumph Over Adversity)

In 2011, Sophie Elwes became a wheelchair user at the age of 22 after breaking her back. Her new podcast features conversations with other people who’ve had to come to terms with and overcome huge events in their lives, including 16-time Paralympic medallist Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, mental health campaigner Ben West, who lost his brother to suicide in 2018, and actor Ashley Belal Chin.

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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