

Kids are Hooked!



THE DANGERS OF VAPING

Driving test backlog Scandal!

TikTok: An agent of the Chinese state?

**Signatories of the Proclamation
Patrick Pearse**

**Shirley MacLaine
An unorthodox woman**

And lots more

New Digital
Edition

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Best of luck to all participating in the Homeless Street Soccer finals on April 24

IMPORTANT CONTACTS



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(10am to 10pm 7 days a week)
- 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

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01 222 6944
- Finglas County Council
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- South Dublin County Council
01 890 5090
- Dún Laoghaire - Rathdown County Council
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Ireland's National Police and Security Service

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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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Patrick Pearse: First Signatory of the Proclamation

The 'Proclamation of the Republic' was read by Patrick Pearse on Easter Monday, 1916. The document was a formal assertion of the Irish Republic as a sovereign, independent state. Liz Scales reports.

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The Scandal of Driving Tests Backlog

With over 31,000 people in Dublin alone waiting to take the driving test and an estimated 86,000 in the Republic as a whole, what can be done to expedite this lengthy process? Sineád Dunlop reports.



Obtaining a driver's license is a significant milestone for many individuals and for innumerable others its essential, whether that be for work, the school run or being remotely located. For most drivers, it's almost unfathomable not enjoying the freedom we take for granted holding a driving licence, so imagine being one of the tens of thousands of people desperately attempting to secure a test date? Is it any wonder that almost 1,800 learner drivers were fined in Dublin alone for driving unaccompanied in the past six months? Of course these individuals are breaking the law - but, to be fair, what else can we expect? People need to earn a living and they need to get from A to B (buses and other public transport are not always an option). I spoke with *Tony from Tallaght who explained the predicament he is in,

“I've been driving for a long time without a license.... I failed my first test, it was a long wait for that and now I'm waiting again... Me and my girlfriend have a 16-month-old daughter... I need to provide for her. I haven't been caught, but I don't draw attention to myself. I know a fair few who've been done [fined]..... I've been offered two different jobs through my work but both required a driving licence. This is a real spanner in the works. Something needs to be done.”

“I'm really struggling as a young adult learner driver I live with my mum who doesn't drive so its impossible for me to have a qualified driver beside me at all times especially as the waiting list for tests are in some cases over a year. I feel government inaction is forcing me to break the law.” Patricia, Dublin

Tony and Patricia are particularly unlucky. Tallaght's current backlog is just shy of 18,000 (and is the busiest test centre in Ireland). When Minister for Transport Eamon Ryan took office in June of 2020, there were less than 7,000 waiting in Tallaght. Yes, its comprehensible to some degree (pandemic) that there's a backlog but surely Mr. Ryan could do much more. Tallaght represents more than 10% of the entire backlog in a system that has 41 testing centres so why is Eamon Ryan not taking action?

Additional staff and lip service is doing nothing. The people of Tallaght are facing barriers in accessing education, employment and childcare through no fault of their own.

**Minister Ryan, do your job,
deal with this problem**

The RSA recently issued a statement revealing that the driving test service has experienced “unprecedented demand” over the past couple of years, with the number of applications soaring significantly each year (applications rose by 28% from 2021-2022 alone, to give some context). RSA went on to assert that they've seen “increased application volumes” in the past number of months, the reasons cited being the increase in learner permits in circulation, which they estimate have grown by 30% since 2019 - (as post-pandemic there was an increase in advanced driving instructors' capacity to deliver lessons to learner drivers).

The Solution?

The solution and there is one - as there is with everything – For a start, a test should be provided to an individual within 4 months, if the government cannot provide that they are failing in their duty. On foot of that they must offer an alternative to L-drivers who have waited beyond 4 months.

Solution: L drivers, provided they have a positive proficiency assessment provided by their driving school should be allowed to drive within an 8 mile radius of their home - but not on motorways - until such time as they are offered a test.

**People are facing barriers
in accessing education,
employment and childcare through
no fault of their own.**

Going forward TD Michael Healy-Rae called for the introduction of driver education in secondary schools so that every student leaving school would have a driving licence and the Leaving Cert. Surely this would be a positive initiative?

It's unlikely that Minister Ryan - who many believe has little interest in the motoring needs of his constituents - will do anything to address this problem. It is hardly surprising this Green Minister who cycles to work but allegedly has his ministerial car follow him with ministerial portfolios will appreciate the problems faced by those whose lives are directly affected by his stewardship of the transport ministry.

All those affected have one thing to say to Minister Ryan, do your job deal with this problem.



**BUILDING & ALLIED TRADES'
UNION**

**Best wishes to all taking part in the All Ireland
Homeless Street Soccer finals on April 24th**



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Letter to my Younger Self - Donna Ashworth

Each issue we ask a well-known person to write a letter to their 16-year-old self. This issue, Donna Ashworth (48) a Sunday Times bestselling author who lives happily in the hills of Scotland with her husband, two sons, and dogs, takes on the challenge.



“As I gather parchment skin between finger and thumb, I wonder, did I ever really know that I was young?”

The thing about age is, it creeps up. And despite a million warnings and a thousand ‘time flies’ quotes, it still surprises, like a jack-in-the-box we wound up ourselves.

You see, everything is relative, so it’s literally impossible to imagine the life ahead of us, other than in vague platitudes. The reality, the way we feel when we get there, is very different.

I would love to tell my younger self that the worry I worked so diligently on creating, was a waste of time. That all worrying is a waste of time. That worrying is actually putting yourself through bad things before they even happen - and why would you use your powers for that and not to visualise and manifest good?

I would ASSURE her that of course she would be okay. Of course she would be loved, accepted, of course she would be happy...

But that happiness is not a constant state, it’s an emotion. And it must come and go like all emotions should. And that’s okay - even if every emotion visits every 15 minutes on a confusing cyclical conveyor belt! That’s just being human, don’t sweat it.

The state of being you should be chasing, I would tell her, is peace. Not excitement, not romance, not fame or success. Peace. It makes the perfect base-camp on which all life can happen, you see. And it does all of that without the ravaging winds of drama and the storms of self-doubt which could raze it to the ground, in a mere moment.

And if peace was to be achieved, something very profound would have to happen.

I would say to her...do not attach your self-worth to something that moves. You are not your looks, or your dress size, you are not your relationship, or your talent. You are not your job and you are not what other people tell you you are.

Because all of that can change, in a heartbeat, leaving you floundering for acceptance like a trout on a pier.

Attach your self-worth to your you-ness. The things you know you do naturally well, the laugh you can’t contain that sets others off, the sparkle in your eyes when you do what you really love. The kindness of your heart when others need your help. The tears you shed at the silliest things. The joy in your soul when you are at one with your body. The memories of love stored safely in your heart. All of that is solid. It’s yours. Keep it safe.

And I would further add to my younger self, that age is only relevant when filling out a form, or answering someone’s question. It does not actually matter a jot.

A timeline set by society on when we should fall in love, procreate and ‘settle down’ is as ridiculous a concept as telling it to a cat. You travel at your own pace and you follow that gut instinct of yours, it’s your own personal GPS, your own clock and it will tell you your own timeline- as and when you need it.

Because one thing I know is that everything happened when it was meant to, for us, even the hard bits. And

trying to control time is like trying to blow away the wind. Let it blow, just flow.

Yield to the powers that be, like all things in nature - bend - don't resist. You will land where you will land and you will bloom there too. I promise.

The quicker you relax into this life you have been given, the better. You are not responsible for everything that will happen to you, for you and around you. But you can control the way you react to it - the phrases 'pause', 'let them' and 'this too shall pass' will be your saving.

Repeat them. Daily.

...do not attach your self-worth to something that moves. You are not your looks, or your dress size, you are not your relationship, or your talent. You are not your job and you are not what other people tell you you are.

Lastly, it will sting to see your skin begin to wrinkle and sag, mostly because you know you didn't appreciate it when it was young and firm. It will sting, oh yes it will sting. And as quick as one wrinkle appears, another rocks up in solidarity... my skincare advice? Let them.

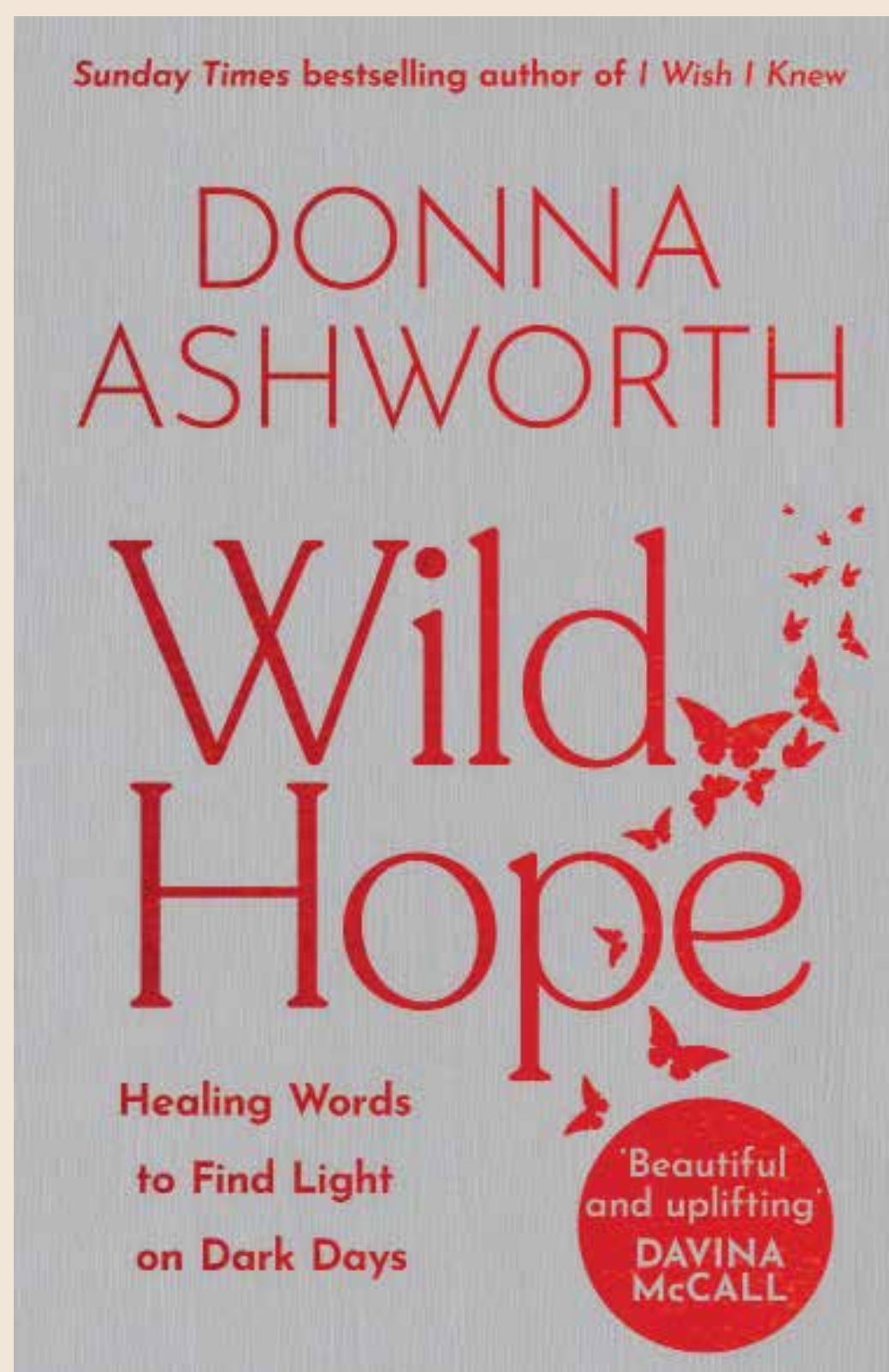
"Your body has been changing since the day you were born and it will continue to do so until the day you die."

And the only people who will really care about your changing appearance is the patriarchy. So you know what to do with that.

The thing about ageing is, you never really feel the age you are. So why remind yourself, unless you're filling out a form?

"As I dance and seize the day, my eyelids painted gold, I wonder, will I ever really know that I am old?"

Wild Hope - Healing Words to Find Light on Dark Days by Donna Ashworth (Black & White Publishing) is available in all good bookshops and online.



On the socials:

Instagram @DonnaAshworthWords

TikTok @DonnaAshworthWordy

The Dangers of Vaping for Teenagers

Christine Smith looks at the current vaping trend amongst tweens and teens and asks what can be done to get our kids puffing on the football field or the gym - not on nicotine-laden E-cigarettes.



Vaping: it's a trend that has taken the teenage world by storm. With its sleek devices, candy-flavoured liquids, and promises of a cool, rebellious image, it's hardly surprising so many young people are flocking to this new form of smoking - yet beneath the enticing allure lies a dangerous reality.

There's a real dark side of vaping, especially for kids and teenagers - from the health risks associated with addiction and lung damage to the deceptive marketing tactics used by vape companies. It's time we all peeled back the layers and shed light on the dangers lurking within those sweet-scented clouds. There you'll find a world where candy flavours mingle with synthetic drugs and where peer pressure aligns with targeted marketing strategies. It's no surprise kids are hooked? They've no chance against these multi-pronged marketing strategies.

What is Vaping?

For those unaware of what vaping is, it's the term for smoking an electronic cigarette (E-Cigarette). The device heats liquid, containing nicotine and other chemicals, into a vapour that can be inhaled. They can resemble cigarettes, pens, flash drives and other objects making it difficult for teachers and parents to notice them. Nicotine is extremely addictive we know, but what you might not know is that E-cigarettes deliver a lot of it: one pod of liquid contains the nicotine equivalent of an entire packet of cigarettes! Whilst there is evidence to suggest that vaping helps smoking cessation (a few randomised controlled trials have found evidence that E-cigarettes were a more successful quitting aid than nicotine replacement therapy, although people continue to use E-cigarettes longer after vaping. Unfortunately countless surveys indicate that many people who begin vaping use both regular and electronic cigarettes, rather than quitting altogether. While vaping assists those addicted to smoking cigarettes break the habit, unfortunately because vaping is viewed as edgy and cool, many kids gravitate towards it just to be part of the herd.

With its sleek devices, candy-flavoured liquids, and promises of a cool, rebellious image, it's no wonder why so many young people are flocking to this new form of smoking

Kids and Teens Across Ireland and Beyond Addicted to Nicotine

When kids and teens start vaping, the highly addictive nature of the nicotine means dependence takes over. *Beth from Newry just turned 14. She started vaping when she was 11 and was an addict by the end of her

first year of high school. *Beth's mother, who works as an interpreter in the city knew nothing about her daughter's problem until she was caught stealing vaping materials from the shop she worked in after school,

"It was a shock *Beth admitted why she'd stolen the vaping paraphernalia. We [she and her husband] initially thought she'd been bullied into it, but her wages were not covering her vaping habit and she said she 'felt desperate' and 'needed it' and resorted to theft ... something she'd never done in her life. We were horrified. It was like speaking with a cocaine addict ... her hands were shaking, she was crying... When she broke down she was inconsolable. She was frightened, ashamed and really felt quite lost.

I immediately enrolled her in a private smoking cessation clinic as there was nothing we could access on the NHS but it's still an ongoing journey and she's still not out of the woods - in fact, far from it. She's currently having private psychological counselling too but it seems her only reason for vaping was because her friends were trying it - but unfortunately it took a hold on her and she couldn't stop.



I'm not proud when I say that my husband gives her four cigarettes a day - it's not ideal but we feel a sense of control and she knows that will be cut down to three, then two and eventually we expect her to quit. We were not aware that her vaping habit was the equivalent [in nicotine] to up to four packs a day..... that was terrifying to us. We've tried to maintain open dialogue and she knows we expect complete transparency. She has 'fallen off the wagon' as they say three times and each time she's admitted it right away. She wants to be free of vaping herself. The other day we were walking out of McDonalds and a group of kids were vaping, probably no more than 9-year-olds and she stopped and told them about her addiction. I was very proud of her. She wants to help others."

*Beth's story is far from unusual. Once teens start vaping its incredibly difficult to quit or control their usage - and because nicotine addiction not only affects physical health but also mental well-being, many other issues emerge like irritability, anxiety, and difficulty concentrating.

Another significant risk of vaping is lung damage. While some may argue that e-cigarettes don't produce harmful smoke like conventional cigarettes do, research suggests otherwise. The chemicals present in vape liquid can cause inflammation and irritation in the lungs over time, leading to respiratory problems such as coughing, wheezing, and even asthma.

Recently it was reported that a 12-year-old girl was left fighting for her life after a vaping addiction took hold and she had to be placed in a medically induced coma as her lungs had stopped working. In Ireland, north and south of the border there are daily, cases regarding vaping-related hospital admissions - whether it's due to asthma attacks, anti-freeze poisoning [taking too much vape] or lung problems.

Normalising Drug Use?

Some vape companies have also started producing cannabis liquid and synthetic drugs disguised as ordinary e-liquids. This not only puts teenagers at risk of unknowingly consuming dangerous substances but also normalises drug use among this vulnerable age group.

**our kids are hooked?
They've very little chance against these
multi-pronged marketing strategies.**

To combat this issue effectively requires strict government regulations on advertising practices aimed

at curbing underage usage while holding accountable those who target youth knowingly or otherwise through their deceptive marketing campaigns. It's crucial for parents, educators, health professionals, and policymakers alike, to address this alarming trend promptly. Platforms like Instagram and Snapchat are flooded with influencers who showcase their "vape tricks" or promote different flavours of e-cigarettes. Moreover, online communities dedicated to vaping have sprung up on various social media platforms, creating a sense of community among vapers. Teens seeking acceptance or looking to fit in may be drawn towards these groups where they can connect with others who share similar interests. Social media companies need to stop the algorithm marketing vaping materials to underage users as ads for candy-flavoured vape liquids or cannabis-infused products popping up while scrolling through feeds make them appear harmless or even exciting.

**E-cigarettes deliver
a lot of it: one pod of liquid
contains the nicotine equivalent of an
entire packet of cigarettes**

By law, vaping materials cannot be purchased by under 18s north or south of the border but this does not stop kids getting their hands on them as many young people ask older siblings or friends to stock up for them. Whilst there are penalties for this - how many are ever prosecuted? Do we need tougher laws? Perhaps we need more aggressive marketing strategies on social media to combat this - like the ones used to hook our kids in the first place.



Do you need help?

The HSE provides stop-smoking services which are free to use and are easily accessible nationwide. These services can also help people who want to stop vaping. Visit: www.quit.ie or call 1800 201 203 for more details.

Best of luck to all participating in the Homeless Street Soccer finals on April 24



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Clontarf All Weather Pitches, Alfie Byrne Road, Clontarf, D3. (01) 2226578

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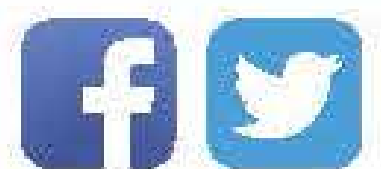
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Erased from Memory

Copa 71: John Williams tells how the first women's World Cup was erased from footballing history.



The young Gail Emms, who would later become world badminton champion, was great at sport. At school, she once proudly gave a detailed presentation about how her mother, Janice, had played football for England in a World Cup in the early 1970s. Her teachers enjoyed the story but thought Gail was fantasising. There was no official record of any such event taking place.

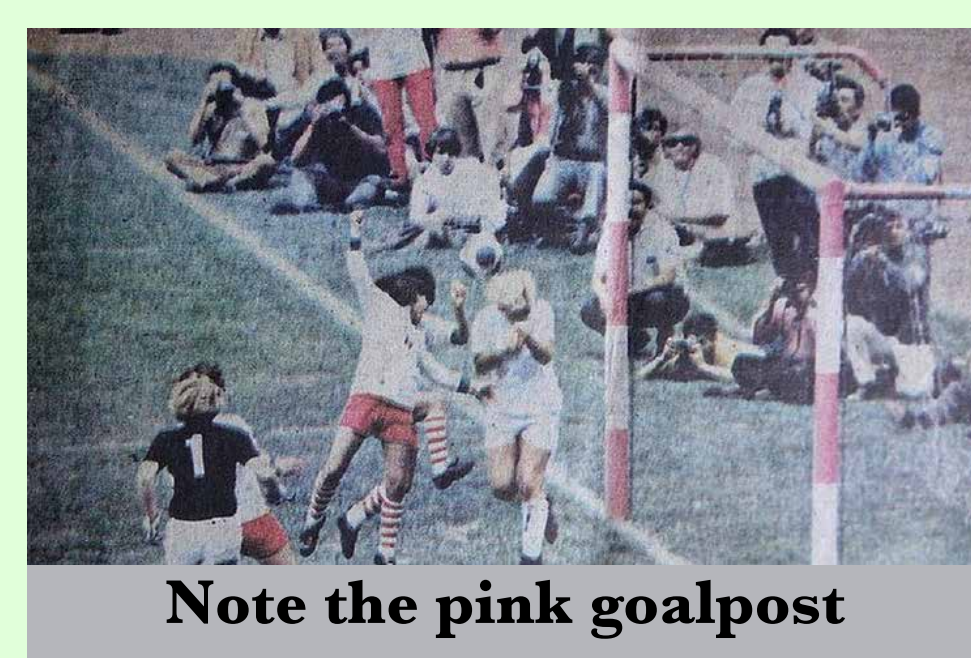
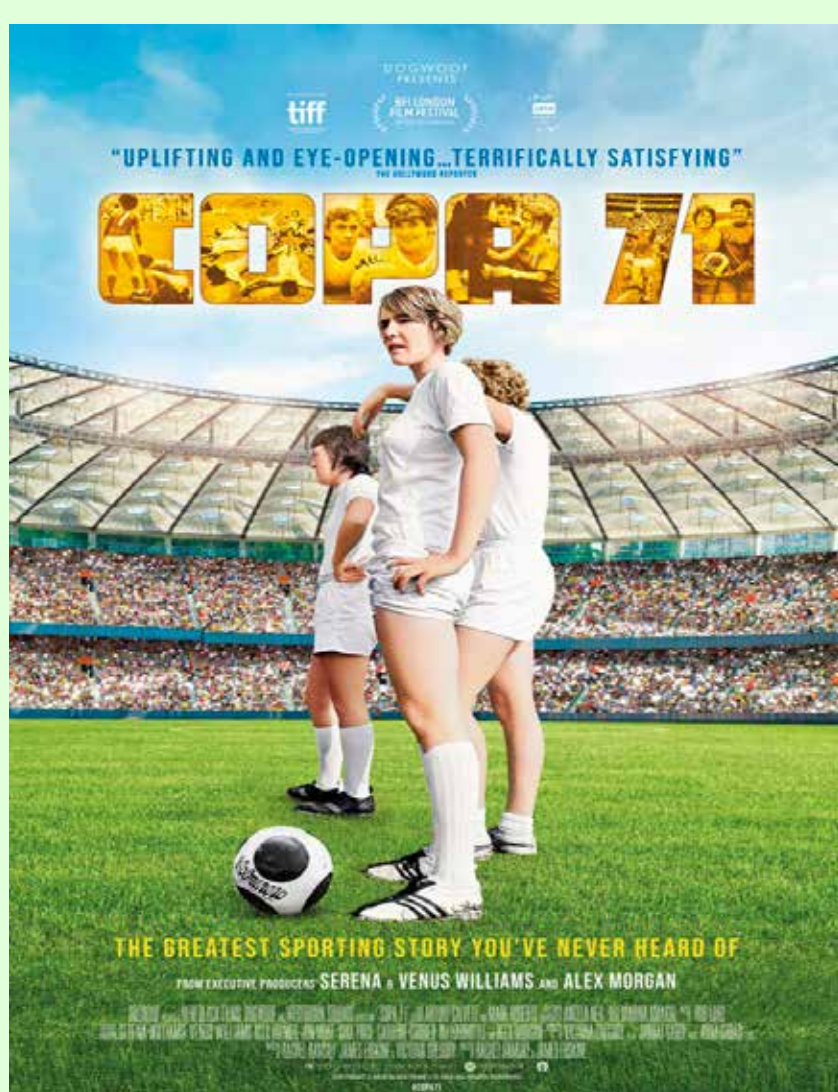
However, Janice Emms did indeed play for an England football team in Mexico City in 1971 – and in front of a crowd of 90,000 at that. The women and girls concerned hid their involvement because football's world governing body, Fifa, disapproved, and England's Football Association (FA) sought to ban those who had participated in this “unsanctioned” tournament.

The players involved seldom talked about Mexico later, even among themselves. But those who had been there would never forget it.

Copa 71, a new documentary film about this long-forgotten landmark tournament, lists US soccer star Alex Morgan and tennis legends Serena and Venus Williams as executive producers. It premiered recently at the British Film Institute and, to some acclaim, at the Toronto International Film Festival.

**Batt's
reward for all this
promoting of women and girls'
football in the international spotlight? A
rebuff from Fifa and a lifetime ban from
the FA.**

Released on March 8, it interviews some of those involved and emerges at a moment when the women's game is experiencing unprecedented commercial and popular success. The Women's World Cup is now a major money-spinner and a global TV event, and Fifa has even embraced women's football as the “future” of the game. Times have changed.





‘British Independents’

In the early 1970s, Italian drinks company Martini Rosso identified untapped commercial and marketing potential in women’s football. It argued for a privately funded international tournament in Mexico in 1971 – promising to pay for the kit, travel and accommodation of any Europeans willing to be involved.

Six countries took part, including four from Europe. In England, there was little point engaging with the FA on such matters: women’s football had been banned there for 50 years, and it was barely on the national agenda again. So, a Mr Harry Batt from Luton was contacted instead.

Early women footballers remember Batt fondly as a chain-smoking, rather swearsy bus driver in his sixties. He and his wife, June, had started up the Chiltern Valley Ladies football club in 1969. An unlikely moderniser, Batt had recognised the demand among young women in his area for a chance to play, and built a successful and competitive regional club.

So, when the man from Martini Rosso came calling and asked Batt if he could put a squad together to represent England in Mexico, he jumped at the chance. Batt’s scratch team of so-called “British Independents” ranged in age from the 13-year-old Leah Caleb to a handful of more mature women players. Parental approval was needed for some squad members even to travel.

Did Batt really know what he was doing? His inexperienced and youthful team had only ever performed in charity matches or on uneven park pitches in front of a smattering of dogs, friends and family members. Children played alongside adults because of the paucity of women players; there was nowhere decent even for female players to change.

In Mexico City, this patchwork 14-player squad – by now re-labelled as England – played between daft pink-and-white goalposts in some of the largest stadia in the world, in front of enormous and enthusiastic crowds. The England women suffered injuries and lost their matches, but respect for them abroad grew.

these international women footballers appear to have been as revered in Mexico as were men players. Some 112,000 fans watched the Final.

Disappearing from view

And Batt’s reward for all this promoting of women and girls’ football in the international spotlight? A rebuff from Fifa and a lifetime ban from the FA.

Thanks for nothing.

The New York Times had billed the Mexico tournament as “Soccer Goes Sexy South of Border”, with women’s football depicted as “a mixture between a sports event and a beauty contest ... the shorts will be as close as possible to hot pants”.

But in fact, these international women footballers appear to have been as revered in Mexico as were men players. Some 112,000 fans watched Denmark defeat Mexico 3–0 in the final. Autograph hunters and TV presenters followed every step of the visiting England team.

After this sort of adulation, coming home was a real let-down. Mexico ‘71 had barely registered in England.

It took the dinosaurs at the FA another decade, under protest, to take the women’s game in-house, and a blundering Fifa 20 years to organise the first official Women’s World Cup, in China. So many wasted years.

**Author John Williams
Associate Professor of Sociology, University of Leicester**

First published on The Conversation

Ireland Referendums:

Eoin Daly Analyses what went wrong for the government and why double defeat draws a line under a decade of constitutional reform.



Ireland, more than any other EU country, has a long and colourful history of referendums. Another chapter in that history has played out in the form of resounding defeats for two government proposals aimed at modernising the constitution.

One sought to remove a reference to a “woman’s” life “within the home” and recognise the value of “care” provided to others within the home. The other aimed to redefine the “family” as being based on “durable relationships” as well as marriage.

This enthusiasm for referendums – there have been 43 since 1937 – stems partly from an unusual quirk of the Irish constitution. Every amendment to the constitution, no matter how minor or obscure, requires a referendum, as well as an act of the Oireachtas (the national parliament). This is almost unique in Europe.

While a lot of these referendums have been about relatively technical matters, such as the court structure or the approval of new EU treaties, there has been a noticeable change in the way referendums are used in

Ireland in recent years.

For a long time, referendums were, most typically, proposed by governments as a sort of means to an end.

Every amendment to the constitution, no matter how minor or obscure, requires a referendum,

They were a way of permitting policies and acts which would otherwise have been unconstitutional, like making changes to the political system. Referendums were usually just a procedural requirement, imposed by the constitution, for making certain types of legal changes.

The ‘post-crash referendums’

In the years following the financial crisis of 2008 – which hit Ireland particularly badly – the approach to referendums noticeably changed. Amid a national crisis of confidence, following a crash of historic proportions, a degree of soul-searching was in evidence.

Themes of rebirth and renewal came to prominence within what was historically a conservative (and very stable) political system. There was much talk of a “new

republic”, or at least of reforming a political system seen as parochial and clientelist, and as bearing much of the responsibility for the scale of the property crash.

This period also coincided with a spate of revelations about the state’s historical complicity with staggering abuse conducted in religious-run industrial schools, mother and baby homes, and the notorious Magdalene laundries. A series of high-profile disputes between the church and the state followed over the country’s reckoning with this legacy.



And so, in this light, a new style of referendum arguably emerged. Beginning in around 2012, referendums came to be used as part of a distinctive project of constitutional modernisation. There was an emphasis on removing or updating various parts of the constitution seen as archaic, oppressive or outdated.

The children’s rights referendums made almost no material difference to the lives of children in practice

This began with a referendum to enshrine children’s rights in 2012, followed by two very high-profile referendums to permit marriage equality and abortion in 2015 and 2018. In 2018 and 2019, referendums were used to liberalise divorce law and decriminalise blasphemy.

These referendums were not simply a means of legislating. They were also part of a deeply symbolic and expressive project. They were understood not just as a route to changing the law, but as a way of asserting a new national identity and values.

They became a way of making collective statements about “who we are”. They were also a way both of reckoning with dark aspects of the past and forging a new national “brand” for the future. It is true, of course that some of these liberalising referendums, which removed controversial aspects of a Catholic-influenced constitution, related to materially significant issues of sometimes existential importance. The referendum repealing notorious abortion restrictions in the constitution was certainly that. On the other hand, there was, running through these

referendums, a noticeable narrative about national image – both Ireland’s self-image, and its image externally. These constitutional changes were a way of making a statement – of crafting a new national identity.

The Irish people were putting distance between themselves and a conservative past, and even making the country a beacon of liberalism and progress in a troubled world.

Some of these liberalising referendums were, indeed, purely symbolic. The children’s rights referendums enacted some grandiose-sounding language about the human rights of children, but made almost no material difference to the lives of children in practice. The blasphemy referendum removed an arcane criminal offence which some regarded as having been effectively impossible to prosecute anyway.

End of an era

It’s in this context that we must understand the latest referendums. The 39th amendment proposed to reform article 41 of the Irish constitution to provide that a “family”, in constitutional law, could be based not only on marriage but also on “durable relationships”. Again, this was understood as liberalising and modernising a constitutional framework where only traditional marital families were given constitutional recognition.

The 40th amendment proposed to remove a controversial gendered provision of article 41, which recognises that, “by her life within the home, woman gives to the State a support without which the common good cannot be achieved”, and goes on to say: “The State shall, therefore, endeavour to ensure that mothers shall not be obliged by economic necessity to engage in labour to the neglect of their duties in the home.”

However, the amendment also added a vaguely worded new article on “care”, in which the state was to recognise the care provided “by members of a family to one another by reason of the bonds that exist among them” and pledging to “strive” to support that care.

In the course of the campaign, the opacity and uncertainty both of the phrases “durable relationship” and of “striving” to support care were widely criticised. They were also the subject of sometimes outlandish speculation bordering on disinformation – for example, the idea that recognition of “durable relationships” would enshrine legal rights for “throuples”, or affect inheritance.



Both amendments were roundly defeated, with an historic 73.9% rejecting the “care” proposal in particular. And while no exit polling gave any comprehensive account of why these referendums were defeated, what is clear is that the symbolic aspects of them – the mere signalling of values they represented – failed to resonate with the public.

**public was unenthused
by the promise of mere
recognition or of symbolic change, in a
context of growing, social problems that
obviously require concrete material
solutions.**

These referendums showed the limits of the project of constitutional liberalisation that has been conducted since the great recession. It seems unlikely that the problem lay in this liberalisation “going too far”, or in a decisive conservative shift in public opinion.

Rather, the public was unenthused by the promise of mere recognition or of symbolic change, especially in a context of growing, and very concrete social problems that obviously require concrete material solutions. These referendum defeats are therefore likely to draw a line under a recent pattern of symbolic and “expressive” referendum use in Ireland.

Eoin Daly
Lecturer Above The Bar, School of Law, University of Galway

First published on The Conversation

Best of luck to all participating in the Homeless Street Soccer finals on April 24

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A LITTLE BIT OF IRISH

Phrase:	Translations:	Pronunciation:
Go hiontach!	Wonderful!	guh hee-un-tukh
Tús maith, leath na hoibre	A good start is half the work.	Toos mah, lah na hib-reh
Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí.	Praise the youth and they will flourish.	Moll ahn oh-ig-eh ah-guhs chukh-ee shee.
Ar scáth a chéile a mhaireann na daoine.	People live in each other's shadows.	Air skaw ah khay-leh ah in nah deen-eh.
Is maith an scéalaí an aimsir.	Time is a great storyteller.	Iss mah an shkayl-ee an aim-sir.

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. Knapsack	nap-sak	1. A canvas, nylon, or leather bag.
2. Obduracy	ob-doo-ruh-see	2. Stubborn; unyielding.
3. Raucous	raucous	3. Harsh.
4. Logorrhea	law-guh-ree-uh	4. Pathologically incoherent.
5. Largess	lar gess	5. Generous bestowal of gifts.
6. Forbearance	fawr-bair-uhns	6. Refraining from something.
7. Spurious	spyoor-ee-uhs	7. Not genuine.
8. Protean	proh-tee-uhn	8. Readily assuming different forms or characters.
9. Fatuous	fach-oo-uhs	9. Foolish or inane
10. Obdurate	ob-doo-rit	10. Unmoved by persuasion.
11. Vicissitude	vi-sis-i-tood	11. A change or variation occurring.
12. Inveterate	in-vet-er-it	12. Settled or confirmed in a habit.

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

Shirley MacLaine - No Ordinary Old Broad

Shirley MacLaine has enjoyed an impressive career in film, television and the theatre for more than seven decades. Shaun Anthony takes a look at the star of films including ‘The Apartment’ and ‘Terms of Endearment’ who has led quite the unorthodox life.



Born on 24 April 1934, Shirley MacLaine was born Shirley MacLean Beaty (she adapted her mother’s maiden name, MacLean, into her stage name of MacLaine) in Virginia to parents Kathryn, a drama teacher and Ira, a professor of psychology. Her little brother, Warren, came along three years later. In many respects the family were typical Southerners, outwardly genteel but both mum and dad had unfulfilled showbiz ambitions of their own and dreamed of their children pursuing a career in the dramatic arts. According to MacLaine,

“I think the stage was always set in my parents minds that we [she and Warren] would pursue stardom ... We were very aware, very early, that we needed to learn how to act in order to get attention, after all, mother was a teacher of dramatics and an actress herself in little theatre work and dad was a musician, a teacher, and an actor of supremely high standing in the living room. They both had personalities like very subtle vaudevillians; therefore, finding out how it was done became a high priority very early in our lives. How else could we compete with them for attention.... After all, they both acted out our family psychodramas in the living room daily.”

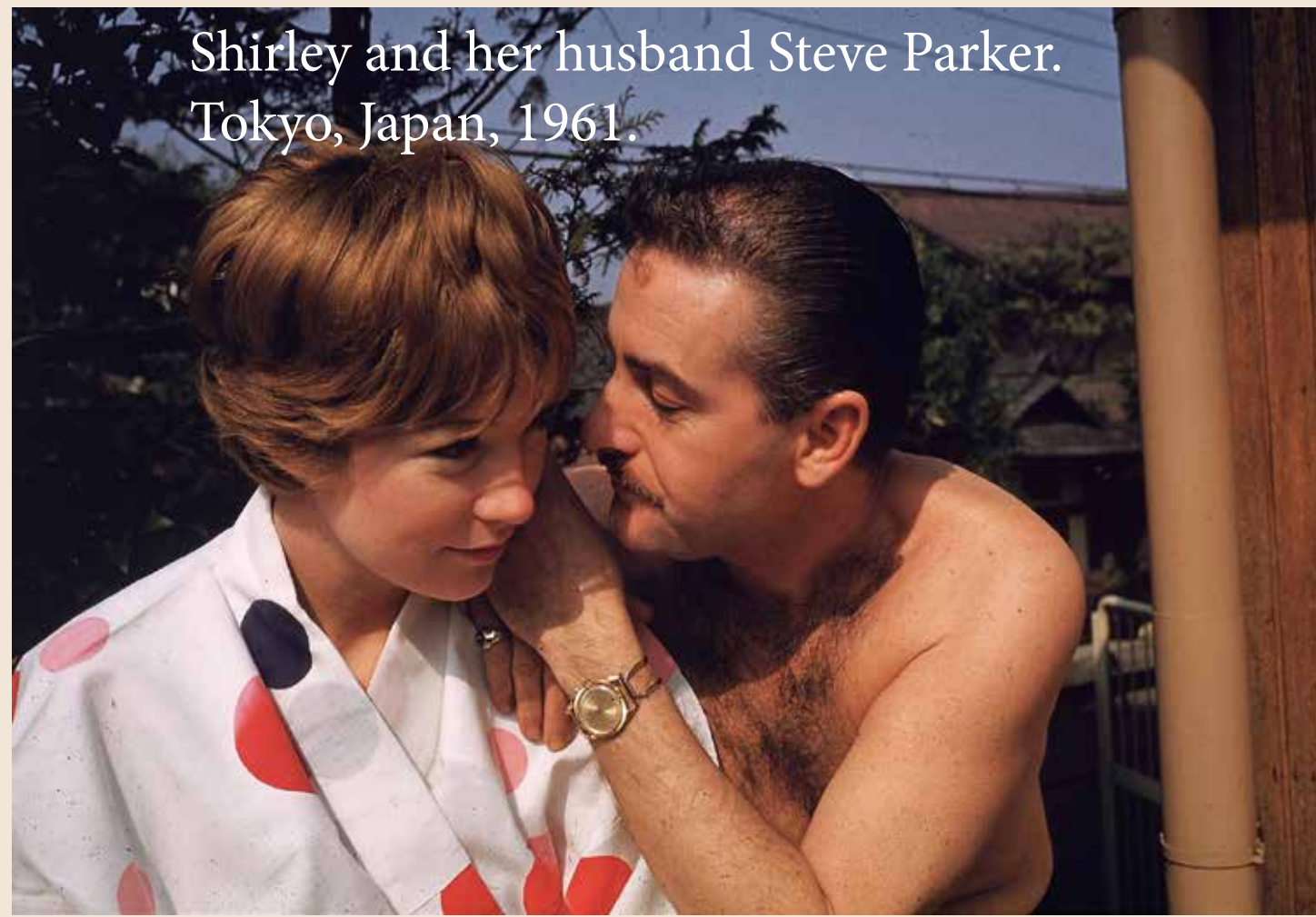
Shirley had been a ballerina since she started walking, as a doctor recommended ballet to strengthen her weak ankles and she loved it - more so the attention she received after her first standing ovation following an impressive dance recital. Despite her tender age, Shirley was dedicated to her craft and “never missed a class - even if she was ill” according to her ballet coach, and because she was so dependable, both in attendance and ability, her teacher would allocate most of the lead roles to her.

**....dad
was a musician,
a teacher, and an actor of
supremely high standing in the
living room.**

As Shirley got a little older she’d be given all the male roles due to her height but it soon became apparent that she didn’t have the frame of a ballerina and despite being “deeply disappointed”, resolved to advance on to other forms of the performing arts which resulted in her spending her summer holidays in New York City studying and training with a view to pursuing her showbiz career upon leaving school. In the summer prior to her last year, aged just 17 she lived in the Big Apple and earned a living on the musical Oklahoma, informing her parents she was staying there, however, they swiftly demanded she return home to complete her final year and obtain her high school diploma.

Shirley’s big break came at the age of 18 with the Broadway musical The Pajama Game. Having eloped and married (despite her family’s misgivings) her husband Steve Parker decided to call Paramount Pictures’ Hal Wallis to the theatre and he immediately signed her to a five year contract. Parker knew his wife was gifted and it’s been suggested he used her talent to propel his own career. Wallis swiftly cast Shirley, aged just 19 in her film debut, The Trouble with

Harry directed by Alfred Hitchcock, however, the Master of Suspense became quite taken by the ingenue and the pair would eat out in all the top restaurants. Hitchcock was a married man but rather than Paramount reprove him, they instead threatened Shirley that they'd tear up her contract if she didn't stop eating out with her director. When she won the Golden Globe Award for New Star of the Year - Actress that year, the power balance shifted significantly and Paramount ceased nagging the young star (who continued to have dinner anytime she chose with Hitchcock!)



Shirley and her husband Steve Parker.
Tokyo, Japan, 1961.

MacLaine would rise in stardom during these later years of the Golden Age of Hollywood, excelling and showcasing her finesse in movies like *Around the World in Eighty Days* - a box-office hit that won Best Picture at the Academy Awards. High on the success of *Eighty Days* she had four movie releases in 1958 including *Some Came Running*, for which she picked up her first Best Actress Academy Award. The swinging Sixties were just around the corner and Shirley was never out of work, appearing in hits like *Can-Can* with Frank Sinatra, however, the world would view one of her best performances in rom-com *The Apartment* where she co-starred with Jack Lemmon. She was nominated for Best Actress at the Oscars and while she didn't walk away with the gong, the film won Best Motion Picture. The critical success of this movie helped launch her career as a dramatic actress, opening the door to such serious works as *The Children's Hour* with Audrey Hepburn and *Two for the Seesaw* with Robert Mitchum, with whom she had an intense three-year affair. Recalling why she was attracted to the Hollywood bad boy almost two decades her senior she said,

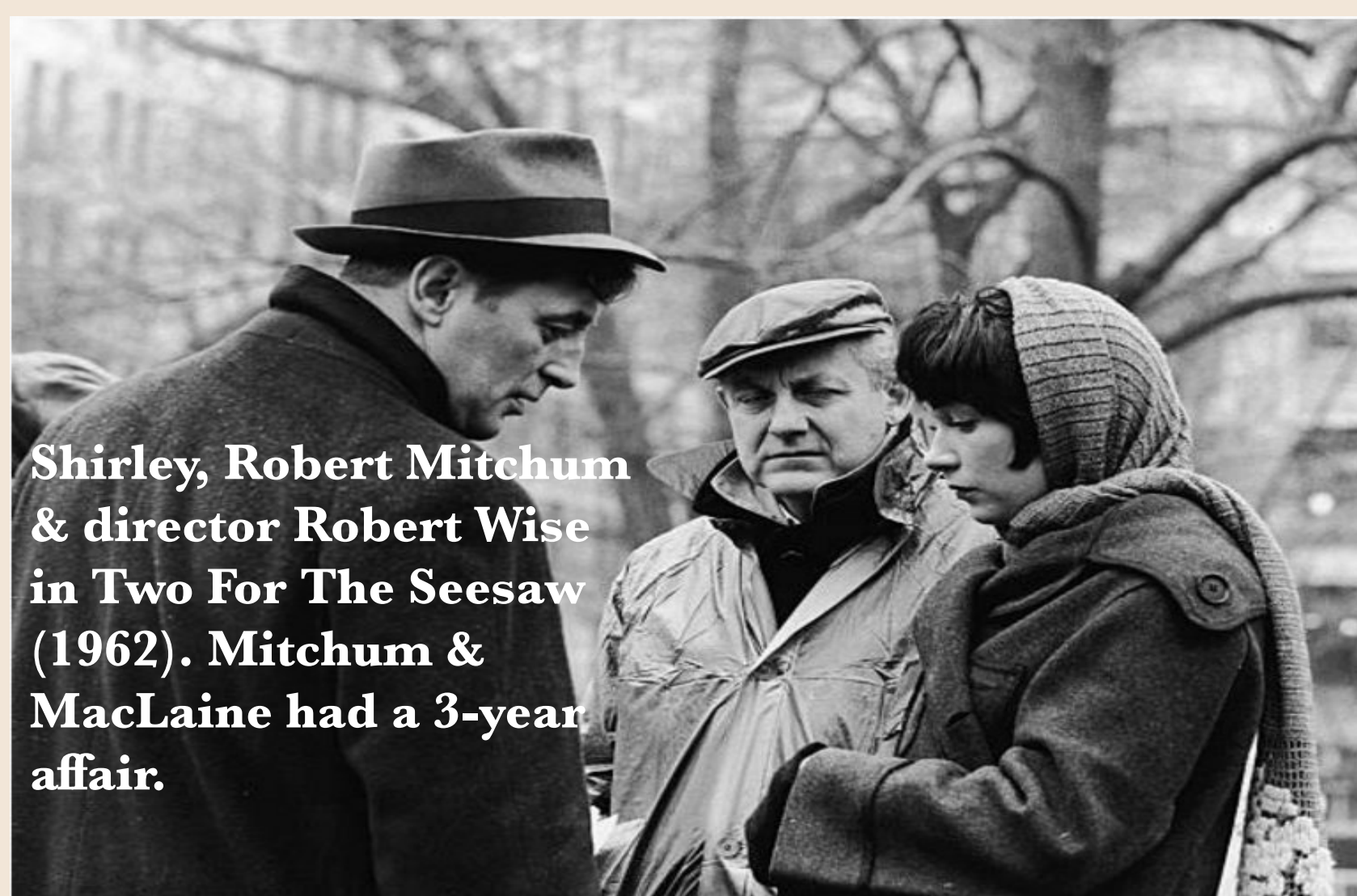
"I found him to be ironically witty, shy to the point of detachment, and incapable of expressing what he personally desired...Perfect...He became my project."

...

Shirley is no stranger to criticism - nine years ago she infuriated the world when she claimed that Jews "experienced the results of their own karma"

Shirley was obsessed with Mitchum (who was also married) and it seems he was very taken with her, describing her as "treacherously beautiful... like a little goblin" and both wayfarers, they globe-trotted together,

"I remember our trip to New Orleans where for three days we ate nothing but fresh oysters washed down with absinthe until I thought I would go blind... he was everything to me....He literally became Cajun, and when we moved onto a barge on the bayou, he lay back, gazed at the stars, and became a fisherman. It was another world; a real one, somehow."



Shirley, Robert Mitchum & director Robert Wise in *Two For The Seesaw* (1962). Mitchum & MacLaine had a 3-year affair.

In the end, it was Mitchum's inertia (which she says extended to the bedroom) which drove MacLaine away,

"Robert enabled me to take charge of my own ambition.... It's not enough to wait on things happening."

her daughter claims her mother had "no interest" in her as she was "completely self involved"

MacLaine has never made any secret of her high sex drive and the fact she and Steve her husband enjoyed

an open relationship, but despite being deeply in love with him (he spent most of their marriage residing in Japan) she would enjoy dalliances with many other well-known men including Danny Kaye and Yves Montand. She also had a fascination for politicians and had flings with Canadian Premier Pierre Trudeau, Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme and Andrew Peacock, who at the time of their affair was Australia's foreign minister. She claims the reason she had "so many affairs" was because,

"My husband was never possessive with me Nor I with him."

Despite her unorthodox love life, Shirley claims she's never had her heart broken by a man and claims the only thing that came close was when she lost her beloved dog!



MacLaine claims the only thing close to heart-break she's ever felt was losing her beloved dog (inset)

Sadly MacLaine's career started dipping as the 1980s dawned and very aware of the fact, she chose her next script very carefully, choosing *Terms of Endearment* - an excellent choice that utilised her talent. Unfortunately Shirley and co-star Debra Winger (who played her daughter in the film) did not get on from the moment they met. Winger once slithered up the bottom of the bed (during a scene with Jack Nicholson) and began licking Shirley's legs. MacLaine was furious and kicked her hard in the stomach. That evening Winger lifted her skirt and broke wind in her co-star's face. Their relationship was rocky, but it turned almost completely to ice when they were both nominated for the Best Actress award at the Oscars. Placing them in competition like that sealed the deal on their shared loathing for each other. In the end, it was MacLaine who won. Her reaction was to shout "I deserve this!" Winger knew this was directed at her!

MacLaine tried to recapture the success of *Terms of Endearment* with the 1994 sequel *The Evening Star*, but without much success and despite shining in grandmother roles as the feisty matriarch and a memorable performance in *Downton Abbey* we've never seen her return to her former glory - which says more about Tinsel Town's ageism and less about her.



Brother, Warren Beatty who it is said is very protective of his sister

Strange Beliefs

Shirley has enjoyed a successful career as a writer, a skill she uses to evangelise others in her (rather bizarre) New Age beliefs on everything from reincarnation to aliens (in 1983's *Out on a Limb*.) More books soon followed. In 2000 she shared her personal pilgrimage in *Camino: A Journey of the Spirit*. Her beliefs are off-centre: UFOs, healing crystals, trance channelling..... She also claims she is reincarnated, having previously been a Japanese geisha, an orphan reared by elephants, and, while a resident of Atlantis, the brother of a 35,000-year-old spirit named Ramtha. According to Sachi, Shirley's daughter, "my abusive, conman father encouraged these silly beliefs and took advantage of her mindset to take both her child and her money." Sachi claims her father convinced MacLaine that he was the clone of an extraterrestrial named Paul (Sachi's true father), who did important work for the US government in outer space. MacLaine paid Parker a huge monthly stipend, which was then allegedly used to fund Paul's space travel.

These days Shirley spends a great deal of time proselytising others in the art of searching your past lives (she charges \$300 pp for her seminars). Many have criticised her extortionate fees for workshops that offer “very little except theories that have no evidence to support them.” Of course Shirley is no stranger to criticism - nine years ago she infuriated the world when she claimed that Jews “experienced the results of their own karma” [in the Holocaust].



MacLaine has also received a lot of criticism from her daughter who claims her mother had “no interest” in her as she was “completely self involved.” she claimed that her mum badgered her into losing her virginity as a teenager and had a pair of sex therapists in the house during the experience. MacLaine dismissed the allegations, exclaiming,

“I’m shocked and heartbroken that my daughter would make statements about me that are virtually all fiction

Despite hating her mother, it was Sachi who informed her that her dad was stealing from her account - however, this brought them no closer and MacLaine has [according to Sachi] “hired a psychic to destroy my career”. Sachi has also claimed her mother would be sick with jealousy over any of her achievements and has never given her a penny - in fact she claims she’s had to rely on food stamps to get by during difficult times.

**Shirley
is no stranger to
criticism**

MacLaine is definitely not your run of the mill, cookie cutter woman, actress, mother or wife but then again would anyone be talking about her if she was? What is it they say - good women rarely make history and it seems Shirley MacLaine embodies that aphorism.



TikTok

Is TikTok's parent company an agent of the Chinese state?

In China Inc., it's a little more complicated. Shaomin Li reports.



Does the Chinese government have officials inside TikTok's parent company, ByteDance, pulling the strings? And does the storing of data from the popular social media app outside of China protect Americans? These questions appear to dominate the current thinking in the U.S. over whether to ban TikTok if its owner, Chinese technology giant ByteDance, refuses to sell the platform.

But in my opinion – forged through 40 years as a scholar of China, its political economy and business – both questions obscure a more interesting point. What's more, they suggest a crucial misunderstanding of the relationship between state and private enterprise in China.

Simply put, there's no clear line between the state and society in China in the same way that there is in democracies. The Chinese Communist Party – which is synonymous with the Chinese state – both owns and is the nation. And that goes for private enterprises, too. They operate like joint ventures in which the government is both a partner and the ultimate boss. Both sides know that – even if that relationship isn't expressly codified and recognizable to outside onlookers.

ByteDance under the microscope

Take ByteDance. The company has become the focus of scrutiny in the U.S. largely due to the outsized influence that its subsidiary plays in the lives of young Americans.

Some 170 million Americans are TikTok users, and U.S. politicians fear their data has a direct route back to the Chinese state via ByteDance, which has its head offices in Beijing.

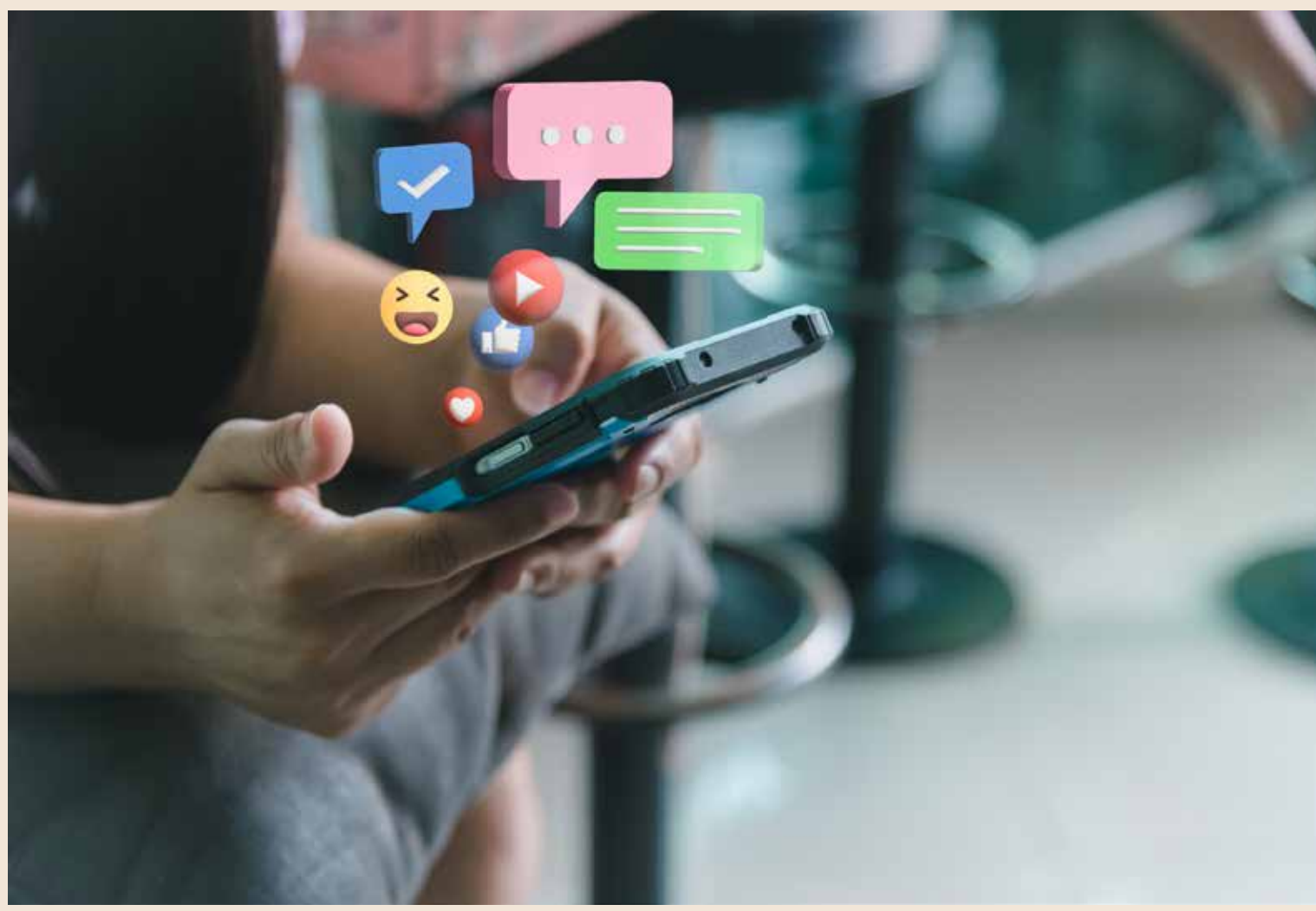
Location aside, concerned voices in the U.S. cite the evidence of former ByteDance employees who suggest interference from the Chinese government, and reports that the state has quietly taken a direct stake and a board seat at Beijing ByteDance Technology Co. Ltd., ByteDance's Chinese subsidiary.

Grilled by the House Committee on Energy and Commerce in March 2023, TikTok's Singaporean CEO Shou Zi Chew said unequivocally that ByteDance was not “an agent of China or any other country.”

The history of the Chinese government's dealings with private companies suggests something more subtle, however.

The rise of China Inc.

Over its century-long history, the Chinese Communist Party has sought to exercise control over all aspects of the country, including its economy. In its early days, this control took the form of a heavy-handed command economy in which everything was produced and consumed according to government planning. China took a step in a more capitalist direction in the latter half of the 20th century after the death of Mao Zedong, founder of the People's Republic of China. But even the reforms of Deng Xiaoping in the late 1970s and 1980s – credited for opening up China's economy – were in the service of party goals. Because China's economy was in ruins, the party's emphasis was on economic development, and it loosened its grip on power to encourage that. The continuation of party control was still paramount – it just needed to reform the economy to ensure that goal.



That didn't mean the party wanted pluralism. After decades of economic growth, and with a GDP surpassing that of the U.S. when measured by purchasing power parity, the Chinese government once again started to shift its focus to a comprehensive control of China.

In recent years, under the increasingly centralized control of Xi Jinping, the Chinese government has evidently opted to run the entire country as a giant corporation, with the ruling party as its management.

A party with unusual power

Unlike political parties in democracies, which people freely join and leave, the Chinese Communist Party resembles a secret society. To join, you need to be introduced by two party members and tested for an extended period, and then pledge to die for the party's cause. Quitting it also needs approval by the party. Orders are implicit, and protecting one's superior is crucial.

**in 2020,
authorities confiscated all
his assets and sentenced him to
18 years in prison.**

People who don't cooperate face serious consequences. In 2022, an official warned a resident who disobeyed the official's order in COVID-19 testing that three generations of the resident's descendants would be adversely affected if he were uncooperative. The same is true of businesses: Ride-sharing company Didi incurred the party's displeasure by listing its stocks in the U.S., and was harshly punished and forced to delist as a result – losing more than 80% of its value.

**the Chinese
Communist Party
resembles a secret
society. People who
don't cooperate
face serious
consequences**



Since those who disobey the party are weeded out or are punished and seen to have learned their lessons, all surviving and successful private businesses are party supporters – either voluntarily or otherwise.

The rapid emergence of China Inc. has caught even seasoned Chinese entrepreneurs off guard. Consider the case of Sun Dawu, a successful agricultural entrepreneur known for advocating for rural reform and the rights of farmers. That offended the party, and in 2020, authorities confiscated all his assets and sentenced him to 18 years in prison.

As if that weren't enough, China's National Intelligence Law granted broad powers to the country's spy agencies and obligates companies to assist with intelligence efforts. That's why some American lawmakers are concerned that ByteDance could be forced to hand over Americans' private data to the Chinese state. TikTok denies this is the case. However, recently leaked files of I-Soon, a Chinese hacking firm, reveal public-private collusion in data sharing is common in China.

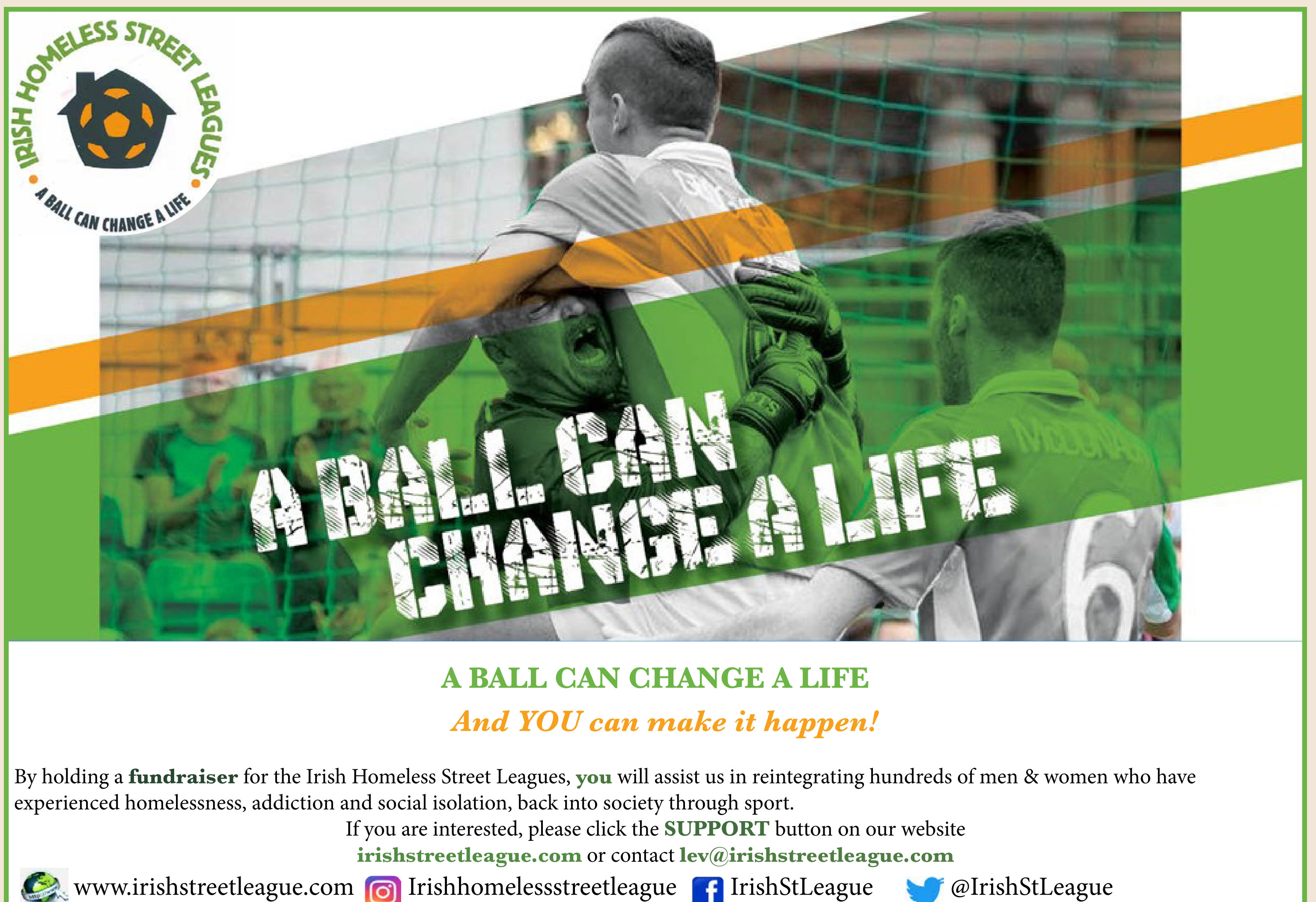
That's why I'm not convinced by TikTok's argument that American users' data is safe because it's stored outside of China, in the U.S., Malaysia and Singapore. I also don't think it's relevant whether the party has members on the ByteDance board or gives explicit orders to TikTok.

Regardless of whether ByteDance has formal ties with the party, there will be the tacit understanding that the management is working for two bosses: the investors of the company and – more importantly – their political overseers that represent the party. But most importantly, when the interests of the two bosses conflict, the party trumps.

As such, as long as ByteDance owns TikTok, I believe ByteDance will use TikTok to support the party – not just for its own business survival, but for the safety of the personnel of ByteDance and TikTok, and their families.

Shaomin Li

Eminent Scholar and Professor of International Business, Old Dominion University






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S C R E E N

S C E N E

Irish Wish ***

Starring: Lindsay Lohan, Ed Speleers
Run Time: 93 mins
Streaming: Netflix
Available: Currently

When the love of her life gets engaged to her best friend, Maddie puts her feelings aside to be a bridesmaid at their wedding in Ireland. Days before the pair are set to marry, Maddie makes a spontaneous wish for true love, only to wake up as the bride-to-be. With her dream seeming to come true, Maddie soon realises that her real soulmate is someone else entirely.

Beautiful scenery (it was filmed in Wicklow) and will be a huge hit with Hallmark movie fans but inevitably will not be for everyone.



Franklin ****

Starring: Michael Douglas, Noah Jupe
Run Time: 8 x 60 mins
Streaming: Apple TV+
Available: From 12th April

Based on Pulitzer Prize winner Stacy Schiff's book, "A Great Improvisation: Franklin, France, and the Birth of America," "Franklin" explores the thrilling story of the greatest gamble of Benjamin Franklin's career. In December 1776, Franklin is world famous for his electrical experiments, but his passion and power are put to the test when — as the fate of American independence hangs in the balance — he embarks on a secret mission to France. At age 70, without any diplomatic training, Franklin convinced an absolute monarchy to underwrite America's experiment in democracy. By virtue of his fame, charisma and ingenuity, he outmanoeuvred British spies, French informers and hostile colleagues to engineer the Franco-American alliance of 1778 and the peace treaty with England in 1783. The eight-year French mission stands as Franklin's most vital service to his country, without which America could not have won the Revolution. Diplomats and historians still regard it as the greatest single tour of duty by an ambassador in their nation's history.

Well worth viewing.



Thank You, Goodnight: The Bon Jovi Story ***

Starring: Jon Bon Jovi, David Bryan
Streaming: Disney+
Run Time: 4 x 56 mins
Available to stream: 26 April.

The four-part, all access docuseries chronicles the epic past and uncertain future of one of the most recognizable bands in the world and its front-man Jon Bon Jovi. A 40-year odyssey of rock and roll idolatry on the precipice as a vocal injury threatens to bring everything to a screeching halt. “Thank You, Goodnight: The Bon Jovi Story” premieres 26th April on Disney+.

The series joins the band in February 2022 and follows their real time journey with its fits and starts as they attempt to chart out their future. As thrilling as the story of a once-in-a-lifetime talent is, it is even more rare that a legend like Jon Bon Jovi lets the world into his most vulnerable moments, while he’s still living them.

40 years of personal videos, unreleased early demos, original lyrics, and never before seen photos that chronicle the journey from Jersey Shore Clubs to the biggest stages on the planet. The series relives the triumphs and setbacks, greatest hits, biggest disappointments, and most public moments of friction.

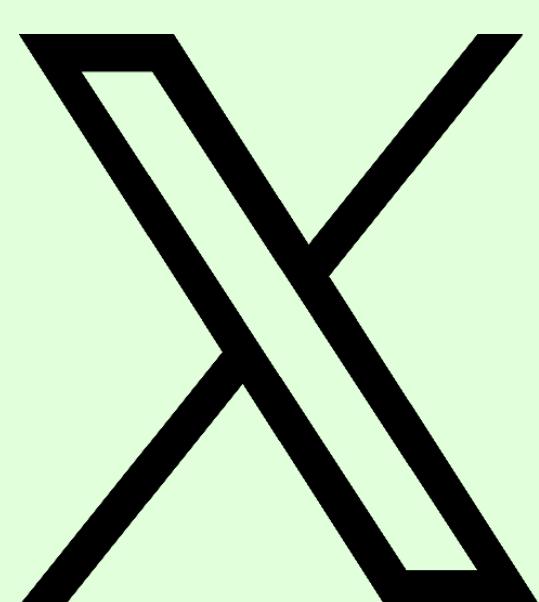


Godzilla X Kong: The New Empire **

Starring: Rebecca Hall, Dan Stevens
Streaming: At the cinema
Run Time: 113 mins.
Available to watch: Currently

This latest entry in the Monsterverse franchise follows up the explosive showdown of Godzilla vs. Kong with an all-new cinematic adventure, pitting the almighty Kong and the fearsome Godzilla against a colossal undiscovered threat hidden within our world, challenging their very existence – and our own. The epic new film will delve further into the histories of these Titans, their origins, and the mysteries of Skull Island and beyond, while uncovering the mythic battle that helped forge these extraordinary beings and tied them to humankind forever.

This isn’t going to be to everyone’s taste but we all know it’s going to be a huge box office success just like its predecessor, Godzilla vs. Kong because the hardcore fans will no doubt see this multiple times at the cinema before discussing it scene by scene on Reddit!



What are you streaming?
Tweet us @BigIssueIreland



Because laughter is the best medicine!

A man wakes up to find his dog, dead, lying next to the bed on the floor. He doesn't believe his dog is dead, so he takes him to the vet, and the vet says, "I'm sorry, but your dog is dead." The man doesn't believe him and says, "I want a second opinion."

The doctor goes into the back and brings out a cat. The cat jumps all over the dog and bites it and says to the vet, "Meeoowrr." The vet says again, "I'm sorry, sir, your dog is dead."

The man says, "No, I want another opinion."

So the doctor brings out a Labrador Retriever and he jumps all over the dead dog and tugs at it and barks at it and says to the vet, "Rrrrr." The vet says, "I'm sorry, sir, but your dog is dead. that will be 500 dollars."

"\$500 to tell me my dog is dead?" asks the man.

"Well," the vet replies, "I'm 100 dollars, the cat scan was 300 and the lab test was 200 dollars."

There was a little guy sitting at a bar drinking a beer. A while later a huge guy walked into the bar and he went up to the little guy and karate chopped him in the back. The little guy fell off his bar stool and when he got up the big guy said, "That was a karate chop from Korea."

The big guy went to the restroom and the little guy ordered himself another beer. About 20 minutes later the big guy came back and karate chopped the little guy in the back again. The little guy got up and dusted himself off and the big guy told him, "That was a karate chop from China."

The little guy got up and decided he wasn't going to take any more of this, so he left the bar. About an hour later the little guy comes back to the bar and he hits the big guy in the back. The big guy is knocked out cold and he's on the floor. The little guy tells the bartender, "Tell him that was a crowbar from B&Q!"

I had been teaching my three-year old daughter the Lord's Prayer. For several evenings at bedtime, she would repeat after me the lines from the prayer. Finally, she decided to go solo. I listened with pride as she carefully enunciated each word, right up to the end of the prayer: "Lead us not into temptation," she prayed, "but deliver us some E-mail. Amen."

And one particular four-year old prayed, "And forgive us our trash baskets as we forgive those who put trash in our baskets."

This last one is out of the mouth of my co-workers 3-year old son Reese: "Our father, who does art in heaven, Howard is his name..."

A Sunday school teacher asked her little children, as they were on the way to church service, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?" One bright little girl replied, "Because people are sleeping."

Six-year old Angie and her four-year old brother Joel were sitting together in church. Joel giggled, sang & talked out loud. Finally, his big sister had had enough. "You're not supposed to talk out loud in church." "Why? Who's going to stop me?" Joel asked. Angie pointed to the back of the church & said, "See those two men standing by the door? They're hushers."

Wife: "How would you describe me?" Husband: "ABCDEFGHIJK." Wife: "What does that mean?" Husband: "Adorable, beautiful, cute, delightful, elegant, fashionable, gorgeous, and hot." Wife: "Aw, thank you, but what about IJK?" Husband: "I'm just kidding!"

A wife comes home late one night and quietly opens the door to her bedroom. From under the blanket, she sees four legs instead of just her husband's two. She reaches for a baseball bat and starts hitting the blanket as hard as she can. Once she's done, she goes to the kitchen to have a drink. As she enters, she sees her husband there, reading a magazine. He says, "Hi darling, your parents have come to visit us, so I let them stay in our bedroom. Did you say hello?"

Got a good joke you'd like to share?

Why not Tweet us on X (formerly Twitter)
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Best of luck to all participating in the Homeless Street Soccer finals on April 24



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Homeless Street Soccer Finals

As the Irish Homeless Street leagues celebrate their 20th anniversary a unique opportunity exists for Players to showcase their football skills as they compete for the title of All Ireland champions.



“That was probably the best experience of my life ever.”

*Chloe, Captain
Ireland at HWC 23*

“All the girls come together and support each other - it’s like a big family.”

*Chantel (21) HWC player
2023*

Male & female teams will compete for the title of male & female All Ireland Street Soccer Champions 2023. The tournament will take place on Wednesday 24th April at Andy Moore Park, Kiltipper, Road, Tallaght 10 am to 3 pm.

It promises to be an exciting day for all the players with the IHSL coaching staff using the occasion to monitor players from within the leagues with a view to selecting a panel of players male & female from which eligible players will be chosen to represent Ireland at future International tournaments including our 20 years International Tournament in June and the Homeless World Cup in Seoul, South Korea in September.

Good luck to all the players as they prepare for the tournaments ahead.

A Ball Can Change a Life.

Best of luck to all participating in the Homeless Street Soccer finals on April 24



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Change Starts Here

Sinn Féin

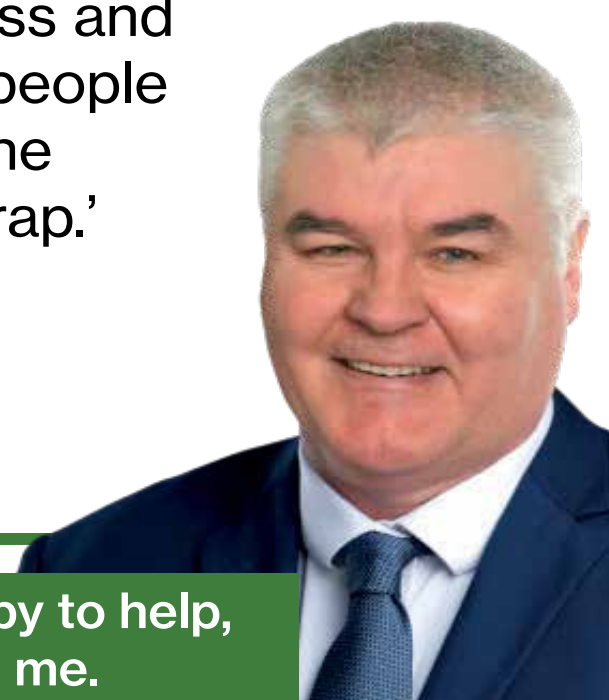


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na hÉireann
Irish Prison Service

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'I am glad to support the Big Issue in tackling homelessness and supporting people out of the poverty trap.'



I am always happy to help, should you need me.

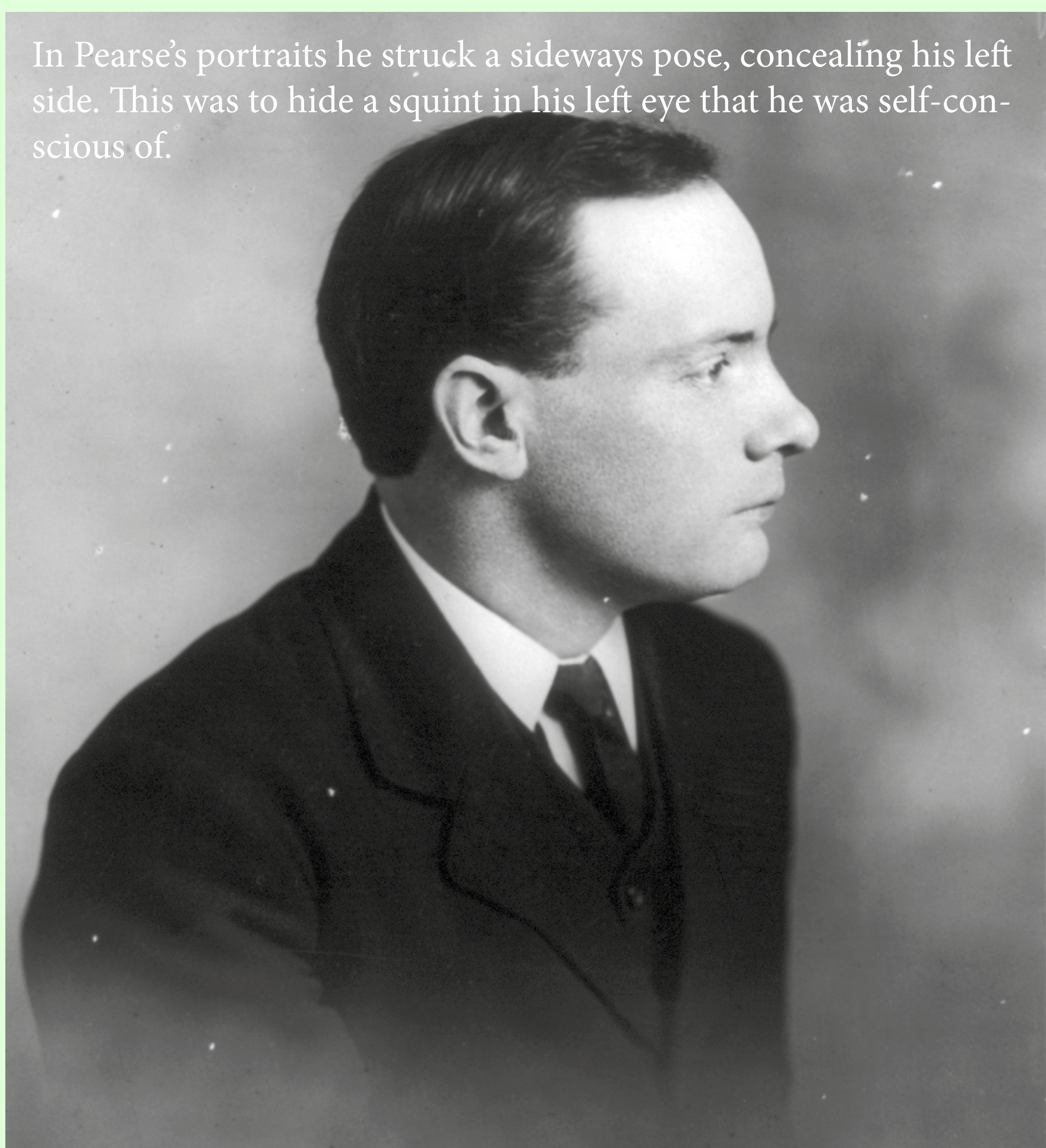
Johnny Mythen TD Co.Wexford

Phone: 087 114 2100 
Email: john.mythen@oir.ie

PATRICK PEARSE: FIRST SIGNATORY OF THE PROCLAMATION

The ‘Proclamation of the Republic’ was read by Patrick Pearse in front of the General Post Office in Dublin at 12.45 pm on Easter Monday, 24th April 1916. The document was a formal assertion of the Irish Republic as a sovereign, independent state, and also a declaration of rights. Over the next seven issues we’ll be taking a look at the lives of each of the signatories. We begin with Patrick Pearse. Liz Scales reports.

In Pearse’s portraits he struck a sideways pose, concealing his left side. This was to hide a squint in his left eye that he was self-conscious of.



Patrick Henry Pearse, educator, writer, poet, and revolutionary, was born on November 10, 1879 at 27 Great Brunswick Street, Dublin. His father, James Pearse, was a stone carver from Birmingham who had moved here hoping to find more work in his trade. His mother, Margaret Brady Pearse, was a Co. Meath native. Stonework was plentiful for James Pearse and the family, and although not wealthy, they managed to maintain a decent middle class lifestyle. Patrick, who was named after American patriot Patrick Henry, was one of four children born to James and Margaret.

Despite his father being Unitarian, Patrick was educated at the Christian Brothers School in Westland Row in Dublin. Pearse’s father had little formal education and was self-educated so Patrick grew up in a home surrounded by books on just about every subject imaginable and spent most of his time absorbed in everything from religion to mathematics. His Irish-speaking grand-aunt Margaret would have a huge influence too and Patrick was drawn to the history, myths and stories of ancient Ireland and developed a deep interest in the mother tongue and unsurprisingly became fluent. Pearse recalled that at the age of ten he prayed to God, promising to dedicate his life to Irish independence.

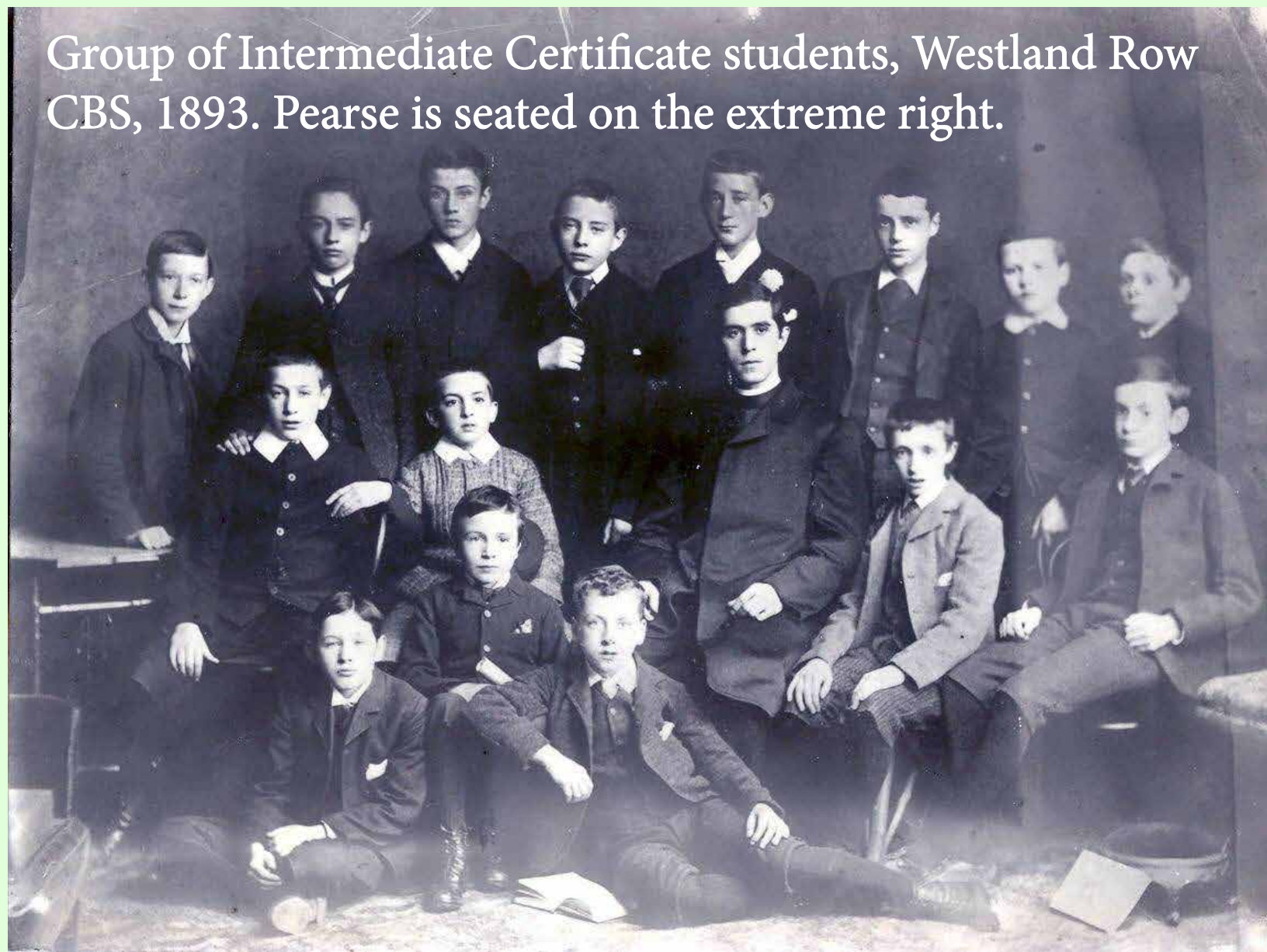
**It
was Pearse’s first
and only court appearance
as a barrister.**

It’s no great surprise then that Patrick did incredibly well at school and became involved in the Gaelic revival. With impressive marks he entered Royal University of Ireland where he studied Irish, English and French and was awarded a B.A. in Modern Languages. In his last year of university he was also enrolled as a Barrister-at-Law at King’s Inn and was called to the bar in 1901. Pearse’s first case was representing Neil McBride, a poet and songwriter from Co. Donegal who had been fined for having his name displayed in “illegible” writing (i.e. Irish) on his donkey cart. The appeal was heard before the Court of King’s Bench

in Dublin. It was Pearse's first and only court appearance as a barrister. The case was lost but it became a symbol of the struggle for Irish independence. Patrick decided to abandon the legal profession - believing he could achieve more working with young people.

Pearse began teaching Irish at the Christian Brothers School and at the Jesuit University College in Dublin (one of his pupils for a time was a young James Joyce)! He joined Douglas Hyde and Eoin MacNeill in the Gaelic League in 1895 and in 1903 he became the editor of its newspaper *An Claidheamh Soluis*, a position he held for six years. During these years he took a great interest in the education system of Ireland and he came to see the teaching of children as the way forward not only for the Irish Language but for the whole Irish cultural and political scene of his country. He penned the following regarding the Irish language,

“When the position of Ireland's language as her greatest heritage is once fixed, all other matters will insensibly adjust themselves. As it develops, and because it develops, it will carry all kindred movements with it. When Ireland's language is established, her own distinct culture is assured. To preserve and spread the language, then, is the single idea of the Gaelic League.”



In September 1908, borrowing a large sum of money and using his life savings, Pearse founded St. Enda's School for boys. To advance his ideas of a free and Gaelic Ireland the school offered a bilingual education that placed heavy emphasis on Irish literature, Irish culture and Irish mythology. Painted on a mural at the school were the words of the mythological Irish hero Cú Chulainn,

“I care not though I were to live but one day and one night if only my fame and my deeds live after me.”

Pearse was an excellent teacher and was well respected by the pupils at St. Enda's. His younger brother Willie Pearse gave up a career as a stonemason to join the teaching staff as well. Another great supporter of Pearse was Thomas MacDonagh, who was deputy headmaster of the school for the first three years. Also teaching at Saint Enda's for a time was Con Colbert who taught P.E. These men, along with Pearse, were destined of course to play a larger role in the coming Easter Rebellion.

**Pearse
was the primary
author and first signatory of the
Proclamation, which formally declared
Ireland to be a republic and separate
from Britain.**

Patrick built a small cottage at Ros Muc in Co. Galway and spent his summers in this Irish-speaking area. These trips into the Gaelteacht, immersed him even more into the Gaelic culture and language. He also established St. Ita's, a school for girls in Dublin, but financial difficulties forced its closing after only a few years despite working tirelessly (including a trip to the U.S. in 1914) to raise much-needed funds.



Political Career

Initially in his political career, Pearse was a moderate. He supported John Redmond and the Home Rule movement, but he soon conceived the idea that a free and independent Ireland could only be achieved by force and sacrifice and that meant removing the rule and influence of England. In 1915, through the sponsorship of former Fenian Thomas J. Clarke, he joined the secret Irish Republican Brotherhood where he soon was named to membership on the Supreme Council. The IRB was committed to the violent overthrow of British rule in Ireland. Pearse joined the Irish Volunteers and was soon elected to the Provisional Committee of that organisation and took over editing their newspaper The Irish Volunteer.

**He surrendered,
“To prevent the further slaughter of
unarmed people and in the hope of saving
the lives of our followers.”**

The Irish Volunteers were originally founded as a defensive group in response to the arming of the Protestant Ulster Volunteer Force in the North. Under the leadership of Pearse and other IRB members within the Volunteer's organisation, the Volunteers split from their original purpose and took on a definite offensive capability. This fit perfectly with the IRB plans for the coming revolution. When the remains of former Fenian Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa were brought back to Ireland from America for burial, Pearse was selected to deliver an oration at the graveside. On August 1, 1915, at Glasnevin Cemetery, Rossa was buried after a huge funeral procession through the streets of the city. Pearse, wearing the uniform of the Irish Volunteers, rose to speak. He praised Rossa and his fellow Fenians who lie buried in the ground of Ireland.

POBLACHT NA H EIREANN. THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF THE IRISH REPUBLIC TO THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND.

IRISHMEN AND IRISHWOMEN: In the name of God and of the dead generations from which she receives her old tradition of nationhood, Ireland, through us, summons her children to her flag and strikes for her freedom.

Having organised and trained her manhood through her secret revolutionary organisation, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, and through her open military organisations, the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army, having patiently perfected her discipline, having resolutely waited for the right moment to reveal herself, she now seizes that moment, and, supported by her exiled children in America and by gallant allies in Europe, but relying in the first on her own strength, she strikes in full confidence of victory.

We declare the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland, and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies, to be sovereign and indefeasible. The long usurpation of that right by a foreign people and government has not extinguished the right, nor can it ever be extinguished except by the destruction of the Irish people. In every generation the Irish people have asserted their right to national freedom and sovereignty: six times during the past three hundred years they have asserted it in arms. Standing on that fundamental right and again asserting it in arms in the face of the world, we hereby proclaim the Irish Republic as a Sovereign Independent State, and we pledge our lives and the lives of our comrades-in-arms to the cause of its freedom, of its welfare, and of its exaltation among the nations.

The Irish Republic is entitled to, and hereby claims, the allegiance of every Irishman and Irishwoman. The Republic guarantees religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens, and declares its resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and of all its parts, cherishing all the children of the nation equally, and oblivious of the differences carefully fostered by an alien government, which have divided a minority from the majority in the past.

Until our arms have brought the opportune moment for the establishment of a permanent National Government, representative of the whole people of Ireland and elected by the suffrages of all her men and women, the Provisional Government, hereby constituted, will administer the civil and military affairs of the Republic in trust for the people.

We place the cause of the Irish Republic under the protection of the Most High God, Whose blessing we invoke upon our arms, and we pray that no one who serves that cause will dishonour it by cowardice, inhumanity, or rapine. In this supreme hour the Irish nation must, by its valour and discipline and by the readiness of its children to sacrifice themselves for the common good, prove itself worthy of the august destiny to which it is called.

Signed on Behalf of the Provisional Government,

THOMAS J. CLARKE,

SEAN Mac DIARMADA, THOMAS MacDONAGH,

P. H. PEARSE, EAMONN CEANNT,

JAMES CONNOLLY, JOSEPH PLUNKETT

Pearse and the Volunteers began planning in earnest for the revolution. Arms were smuggled into Dublin from Germany aboard Erskine Childers yacht. Some of the guns were actually stored in the basement of St. Enda's. Roger Casement was sent to Germany to seek additional arms and German military intervention for a general rising to be held around Easter of 1916. Pearse encouraged the Socialist and labour organiser, James Connolly to join in the coming rebellion. Connolly's Irish Transport and General Workers Union had its own, armed defensive force, the Irish Citizen Army. Vowing, "We Serve Neither King nor Kaiser" and drilling under the flag of the Plough and Stars, Connolly and the Citizen Army joined with the Volunteers and the IRB as they prepared for military action. Due to disorganisation within the Volunteer's command structure the nationwide rising planned for Easter Sunday didn't fully materialise.

Easter Rising

On Easter Monday, April 24, 1916, what has become known as the Easter Rising, began. The Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army joined forces in Dublin to occupy key buildings throughout the city. Pearse served as Commander-in-Chief of the Irish forces and President of the newly declared Provisional Irish Republic. The headquarters of the Republican forces was the GPO in Dublin. Soon after occupying the building, Pearse, Connolly and the other officers emerged and from the front steps they read aloud the Proclamation of the Irish Republic. Pearse was the primary author and first signatory of the Proclamation, which formally declared Ireland to be a republic and separate from Britain. The rebels hoped that the rest of Ireland would see their action and rise in their support. For various reasons, including the failure of Roger Casement's mission to gain German assistance and the last minute countermanding of Pearse's general orders to assemble, their hopes would not be realised. With a few exceptions in the countryside, the 1916 Easter Rising was fought primarily in Dublin.

**His body was
thrown into a lime pit and mass
grave along with the other executed
leaders.**

The Rising took the Dublin authorities completely by surprise and the rebel force was able to capture and occupy most of the prearranged positions around the city. The British military forces bombarded the city indiscriminately with artillery fire. The rebels held out much longer than anyone could have expected and Pearse finally was forced to surrender to overwhelming odds.

At about two o'clock on April 29, 1916 Patrick Pearse, surrendered unconditionally to the British military authorities. He surrendered, in his own words,

"To prevent the further slaughter of unarmed people and in the hope of saving the lives of our followers."

Pearse was arrested along with the other officers of the Volunteers and Irish Citizen Army. They were quickly tried by a military tribunal and found guilty of treason and rebellion against the Crown. All were sentenced to death by firing squad. Pearse and the others were imprisoned in Kilmainham Jail to await execution. On May 3, 1916, Patrick Pearse was taken from his cell and was executed by firing squad. His body was thrown into a lime pit and mass grave along with the other executed leaders.

Pearse's legacy lives on in the hearts and minds of the Irish people, who continue to honour his memory and strive to uphold the values of independence, patriotism, and cultural revival that he so passionately championed.

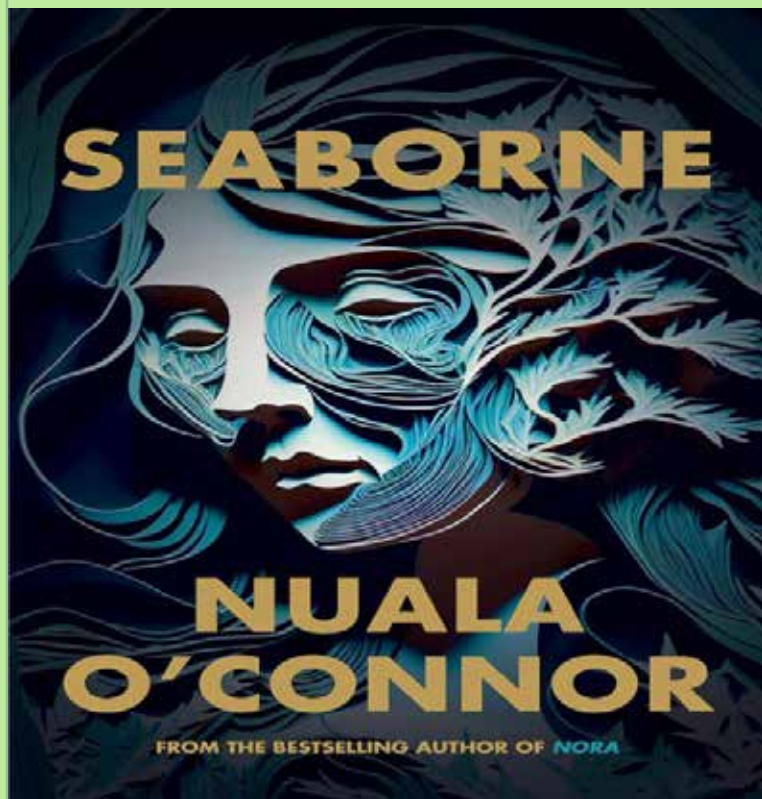
Pearse's legacy lives on in the hearts and minds of the Irish people, who continue to honour his memory and strive to uphold the values of independence, patriotism, and cultural revival that he so passionately championed.

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.

Seabourne – Nuala O'Connor – New Island Books

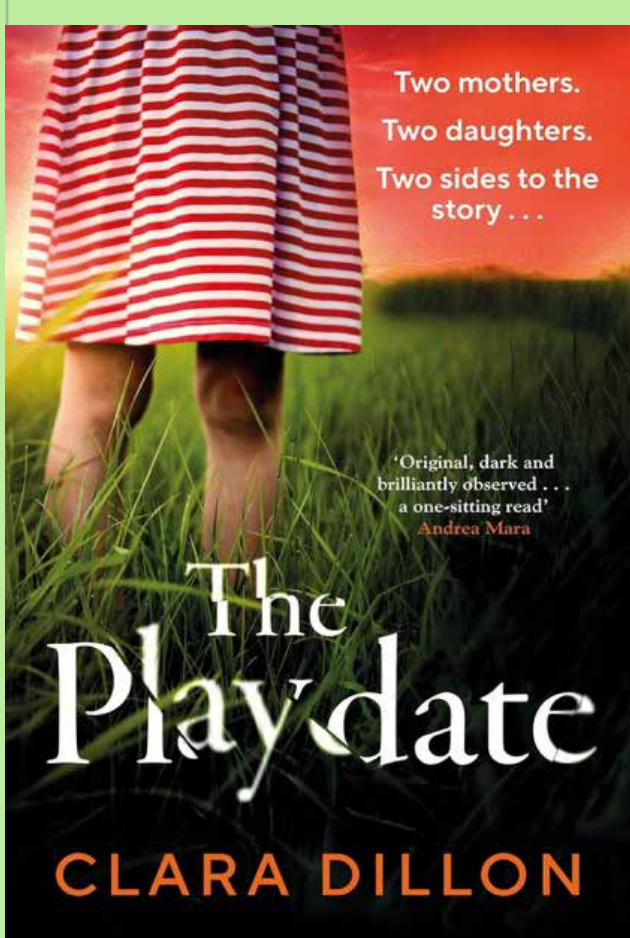
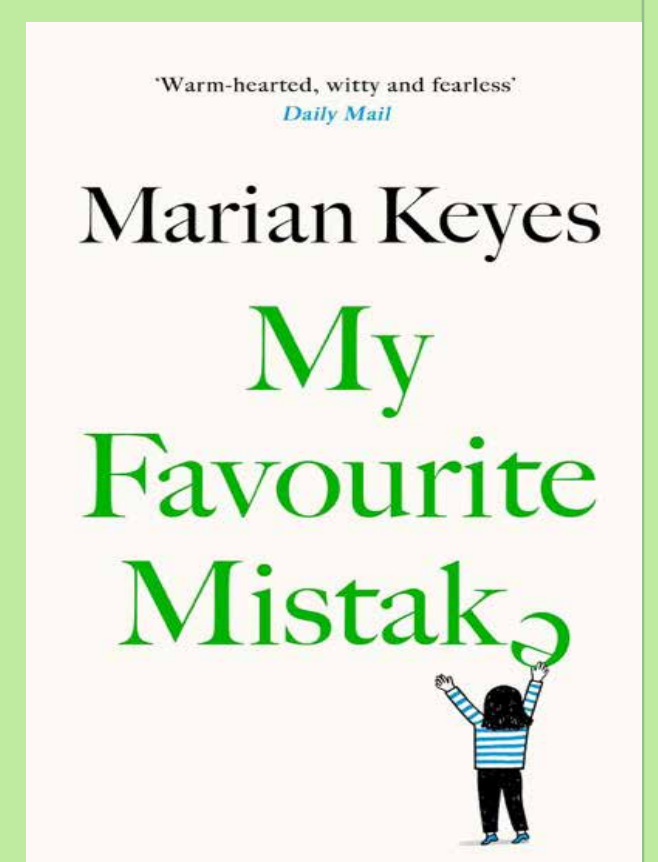


03, Kinsale, County Cork. Anne Coleman is the illegitimate child of a local lawyer and his maid; disguised as 'Anthony' to protect reputations, the mask suits Anne just fine. But, fixated on boats and the sea, she struggles to fit in, and her devoted mother fears for her fiercely independent and impulsive daughter. When their secrets are exposed, the family emigrates to the new colony of Carolina, but this fresh start will bring devastating loss and stifling responsibilities. Lonely and transgressive, Anne finds comfort only with Bedelia, servant and intimate friend. But her craving for the sea-wandering life and a misjudged marriage to young Gabriel Bonny will compel Anne to take to the sea again, this time around the islands of the Caribbean, famous for plunder and piracy. Adventure, passion and

freedom await, but so do violence and disappointment. And, as she tries to stay true to herself, her hopes and her few precious friendships, Anne Bonny must also face her own privilege and the sacrifices required for enduring love. Seabourne is the thrilling and sensuous portrait of a young woman out of step with her time and place, but never her heart.

My Favourite Mistake – Marian Keyes – Michael Joseph

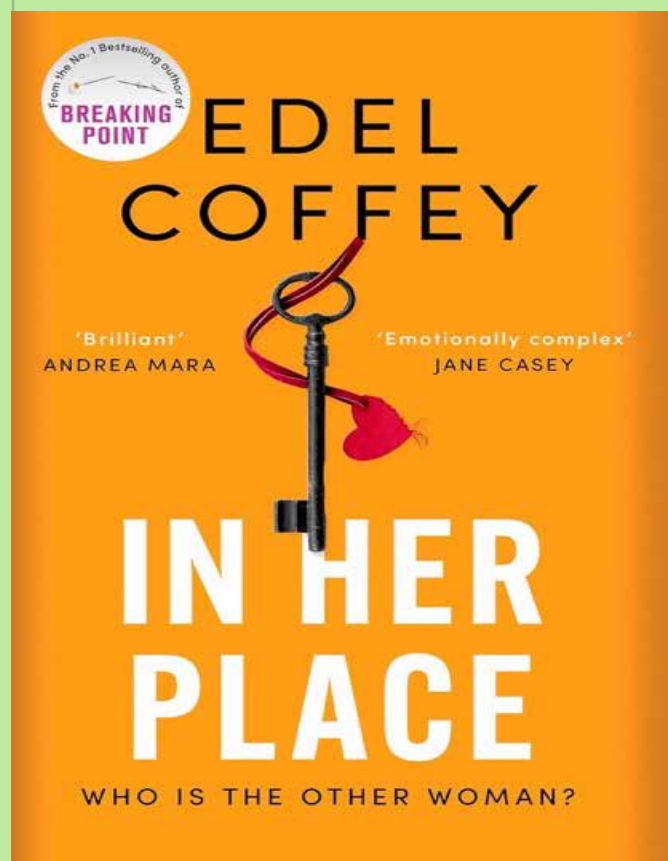
Anna has just lost her taste for the Big Apple...She has a life to envy. An apartment in New York. A well-meaning (too well-meaning?) partner. And a high-flying job in beauty PR. Who wouldn't want all that? Anna, it turns out. Trading a minor midlife crisis for a major life event, she switches the skyscrapers of Manhattan for the tiny Irish town of Maumtully (population 1,217), helping old friends Brigit and Colm set up a luxury coastal retreat. Tougher than it sounds. Newflash: the locals hate the idea. So much so, there have been threats – and violence. Anna, however, worked in the beauty industry. There's no ugliness she hasn't seen. No wrinkle she can't smooth over. There's just one fly in the ointment – old flame Joey Armstrong. He's going to be her wingman. Never mind their chequered history. Never mind what might have been. Because no matter how far you go, your mistakes will still be waiting for you . . .



The Playdate – Clara Dillon – Sandycove

When Sara leaves her high-flying London life to move to Dublin, her only concern is her nine-year-old daughter, Lexie. For Lexie's sake she tries to get to know other mothers at the school gates, but they appear uninterested - particularly their leader, the beautiful and charismatic Vanessa, whose daughter rules the playground. After a simple misunderstanding between Vanessa and Sara, none of the other kids at school want anything to do with Lexie. Desperate to mend fences, Sara offers to look after Vanessa's daughter one afternoon. But when the playdate ends in catastrophe, Vanessa is convinced that what happened wasn't an accident. With allegations flying in all directions, Sara is forced to ask herself what she has unleashed? And how far a mother will go to protect her daughter?

In Her Place – Edel Coffey – Sphere

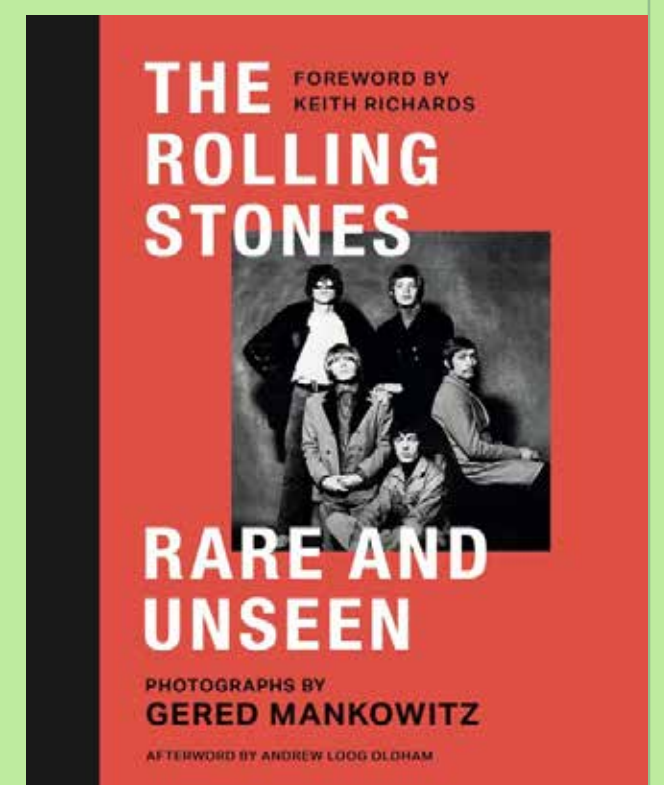


Who is the other woman? That's for you to decide. Ann devoted years to her mother's care - and now she's gone, Ann feels lost. Justin is also grieving, but his wife is still alive. Deborah is in a coma and she doesn't have long left. When the two meet, they are instantly drawn to one another and, before long, they've fallen deeply in love. Ann quickly moves in with Justin and his little girl, making them the perfect family. But just as Ann settles into her new life, Justin's is turned upside down. Unexpectedly, his wife has survived. Deborah is coming home. Neither knows what to do. But one thing is certain: Ann has earned the life Deborah left behind, and she plans to keep it . . .

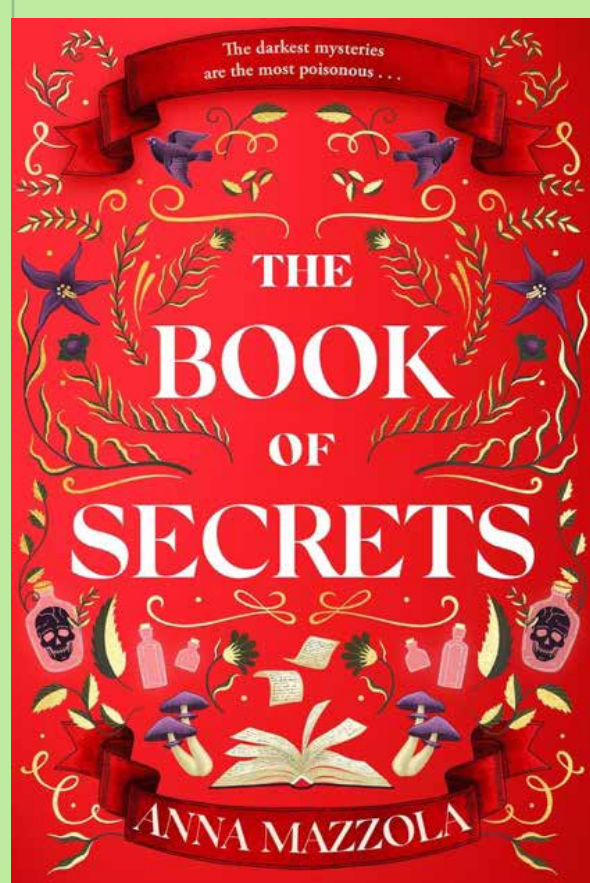
The Rolling Stones Rare and Unseen: Foreword by Keith Richards, afterword by Andrew Loog Oldham – Gered Mankowitz – Welbeck

Gered was at one with the band. More than that, for that special time, he was in the band.' -ANDREW LOOG OLDHAM

'He was a hell of a lot of fun. That's why he was a good photographer.'- MARIANNE FAITHFULL Delve into the unseen archive of iconic photographer Gered Mankowitz as he shares rare and newly discovered images of his time with the Rolling Stones, alongside his most iconic shots. Just a teenager, Mankowitz took some of the best-loved photographs of the Stones in their frantic, formative years. Now for the first time he looks beyond those famous images - unearthing frames that have never been seen before, plus those rarely used. Also featuring Gered's first-hand stories and a host of expert writers on the band and their music - including The Times' chief rock and pop critic Will Hodgkinson, Ben Sisario of the New York Times as well as academics, fashion writers and more - The Rolling Stones Rare and Unseen is a fresh look at the greatest story in rock 'n' roll.



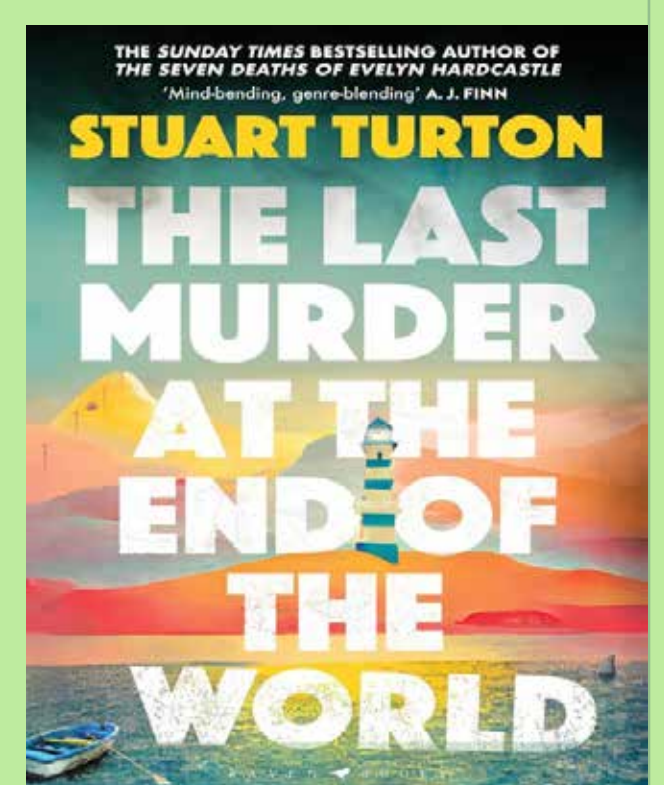
The Book of Secrets – Anna Mazzola – Orion



Rome, 1659. Months after the plague has ravaged Rome, men are still dying in unnatural numbers, and rumour has it that their corpses do not decay as they should. The Papal authorities commission prosecutor Stefano Bracchi to investigate, telling him he will need considerable mettle to reach the truth. To the west of the Tiber, Girolama and her female friends are at work, helping other women with childbirths and foretelling their futures. Elsewhere in the city, a young wife, Anna, must find a way to escape her abusive husband. But in a city made by men for men, there are no easy paths out. Stefano's investigation at the Tor di Nona prison will introduce him to horror, magic and an astonishing cast of characters. He will be left wondering if certain deeds should remain forever unpunished... The Book of Secrets is inspired by real events that took place in 17th century Italy.

The Last Murder at the End of the World – Stuart Turton – Raven Books

Outside the island there is nothing: the world destroyed by a fog that swept the planet, killing anyone it touched. On the island: it is idyllic. 122 villagers and 3 scientists, living in peaceful harmony. The villagers are content to fish, farm and feast, to obey their nightly curfew, to do what they're told by the scientists. Until, to the horror of the islanders, one of their beloved scientists is found brutally stabbed to death. And they learn the murder has triggered a lowering of the security system around the island, the only thing that was keeping the fog at bay. If the murder isn't solved within 107 hours, the fog will smother the island - and everyone on it. But the security system has also wiped everyone's memories of exactly what happened the night before, which means that someone on the island is a murderer - and they don't even know it.



What are you reading right now?

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The Podcast Review

We source the best selection of podcasts each issue. This time we bring you, It Can't Just Be Me, Darknet Diaries, Sounds Like a Cult and Class of 88 With Will Smith.



It Can't Just Be Me (Life)

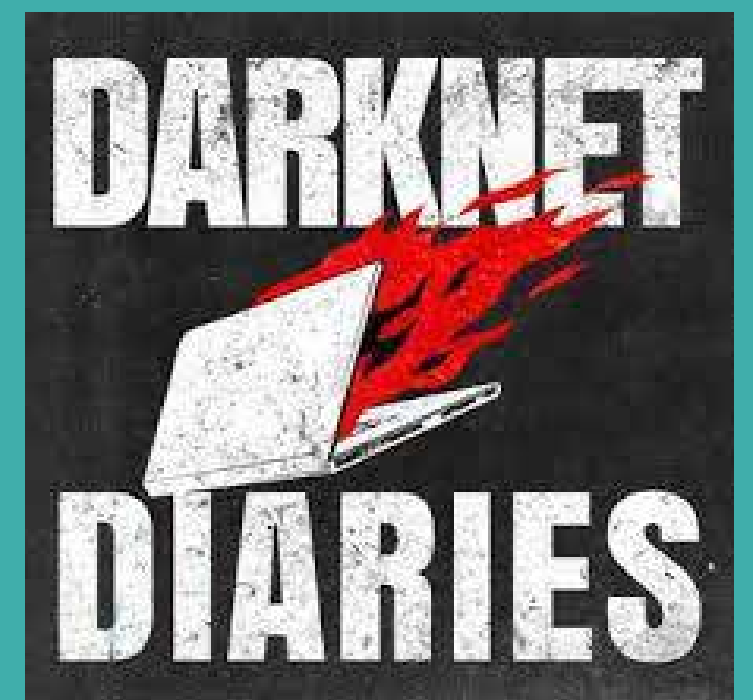
Anna Richardson is primed and ready to solve that big dilemma in your life. And she's invited some very special celebrity guests and experts to help.

Have questions about sex? Divorce? Motherhood? Menopause? Mental health? With no topic off limits, Anna's here to prove that whatever you're going through, it's not just you.

If you have a dilemma you'd like unpacked, visit <http://itcantjustbeme.co.uk> and record a voice note. Or tell Anna all about it in an email to itcantjustbeme@podimo.com

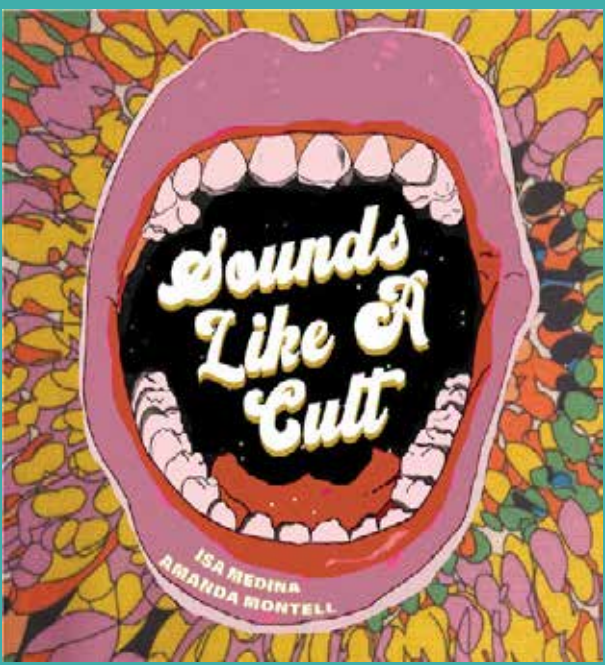
Darknet Diaries (The Web)

Explore true stories of the dark side of the Internet with host Jack Rhysider as he takes you on a journey through the chilling world of hacking, data breaches, and cyber crime.



Sounds Like A Cult (Society)

Hosted by Amanda Montell and Isa Medina, 'Sounds Like A Cult' is an addictive easy-to-listen series centred around the modern-day 'cults' we all follow. Whether it be pop culture phenomena like The Real Housewives' franchises, Mom-fluencers and Taylor Swift or more serious topics such as spiritual scammers and doomsday preppers, all topics are approached with genuine curiosity and a sense of humour. Each episode analyses the different groups and asks – are they a cult? And if so, how bad are they?



Class of 88 With Will Smith (Music)

You don't need to be a die-hard hip-hop fan to love 'Class of 88', but if you are, you're in for a treat. Presented by Will Smith, this limited series music podcast looks back at 1988, the year hip hop established itself as what became, in Smith's words, 'the genre of all genres'. 'Class of 88' is fun, punchy and full of 80s nostalgia, and is brought to life by a series of star-studded guests, from Queen Latifah to Public Enemy, who all have a great laugh looking back at the genre's defining year.



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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