

IRELAND'S **BIG** **ISSUE**

CANCELLED **...BUT** **NOT BROKEN!**

Inside:

**Israel/ Palestine:
The West's
Double Standards**

**Dark Matters:
Scams of online
retailers**

**Orson Wells:
The time wasting
genius**

**Interview: Dr. Mary
Ryan
Menopause
Champion**

**&
lots more**

Father Ted writer

GRAHAM LINEHAN:

New Digital
Edition

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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.

Digital Edition Contacts:

Editor: Sean Kavanagh

Ireland's Big Issue

Email: info@irelandsbigissue.com

**Contribute via
PayPal at:**

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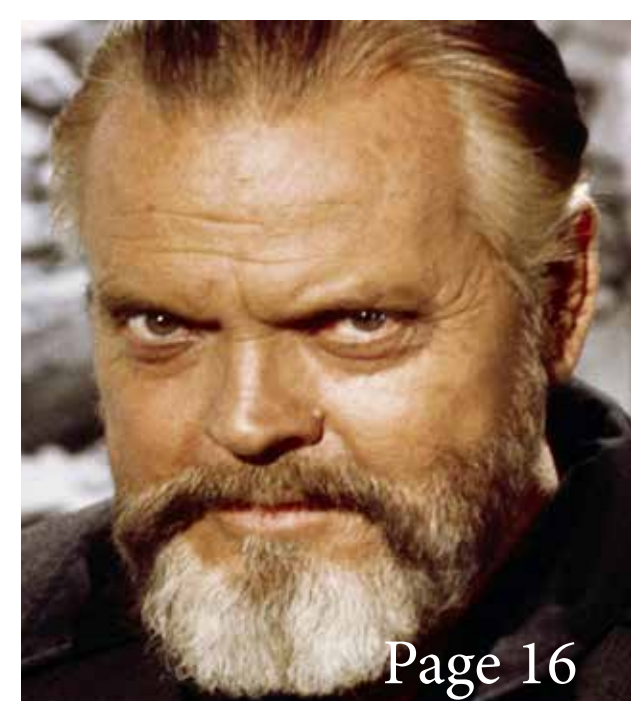
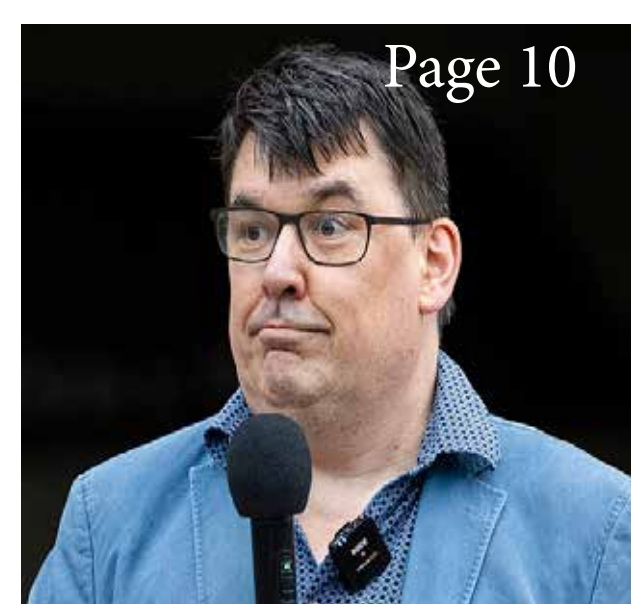
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Letter to my Younger Self - Lady Suzanne Heywood

Each issue we ask a well-known person to write a letter to their 16-year-old self. This issue, Lady Heywood of Whitehall (54) who overcame a deeply traumatic childhood, enduring years of psychological torment and physical dangers, has a word with her teenage self. Suzanne, despite lacking formal secondary education attended Oxford University and forged a successful career.



Right now, aged 16, you are living in a small shack – or bach as they are known – in New Zealand. I know it's tough. You are living with your younger brother far from the nearest town and your parents are about to sail away on Wavewalker, the boat on which you have grown up, and the only home you know.

I'm afraid I have more bad news for you – your parents won't return for many months. You will have little money and they will expect you to run their business for them and to look after your brother. Winter will come and it's going to get cold. That little rusty stove in the bach will be critical. Yes – I know it belches as much smoke as heat – but unless you figure out how to use it, you will struggle.

You are going to spend many days alone in the bach in the coming months trying to teach yourself by correspondence, while cooking and cleaning for yourself and brother.

**You
were shipwrecked half-way
across the southern Indian Ocean and
had your head operated on multiple times
without anaesthetic**

There won't be anyone looking out for you, so you will need to keep yourself safe. But what I really want you to know is that this is the last difficult part of your childhood. I know you've already been through a lot.

You set sail from England on Wavewalker when you were only 7-years-old. You were shipwrecked half-way across the southern Indian Ocean and had your head operated on multiple times without anaesthetic when you at last found land. It has been almost impossible for you to have friends during your time at sea and you've barely been to school. Your relationship with your mother has deteriorated and she has treated you badly, often not speaking to you for weeks at a time. Your father promised your voyage would only take three years but he has kept extending it, and you have now been at sea for nine, without going home.

It is going to get worse before it gets better.

In the next few months, you will break down and ring Childline. But you will get through it. Somewhere inside of you is the determination that you will need to escape. And when you do, the feeling of freedom will

be overwhelming.

I want to tell you some things about your future because that may help you now. You will find that you are lovable (though sadly you will never win your mother's love – she is unable to give you that). You will meet a man who loves you unconditionally and, when you become a mother, you will learn how to return that love to a child (in fact to three).

You will also find – when this is all far behind you – that alongside the scars from your childhood, you have also gained strengths. Your resilience will take you far – even when things are tough. Many of the skills you have gained at sea will be less useful – you won't ever need to shoot a gun, change the oil in an engine or build a mast. But you will value your understanding of the different people you have met – from carpenters in boatyards, to drug addicts and kings.



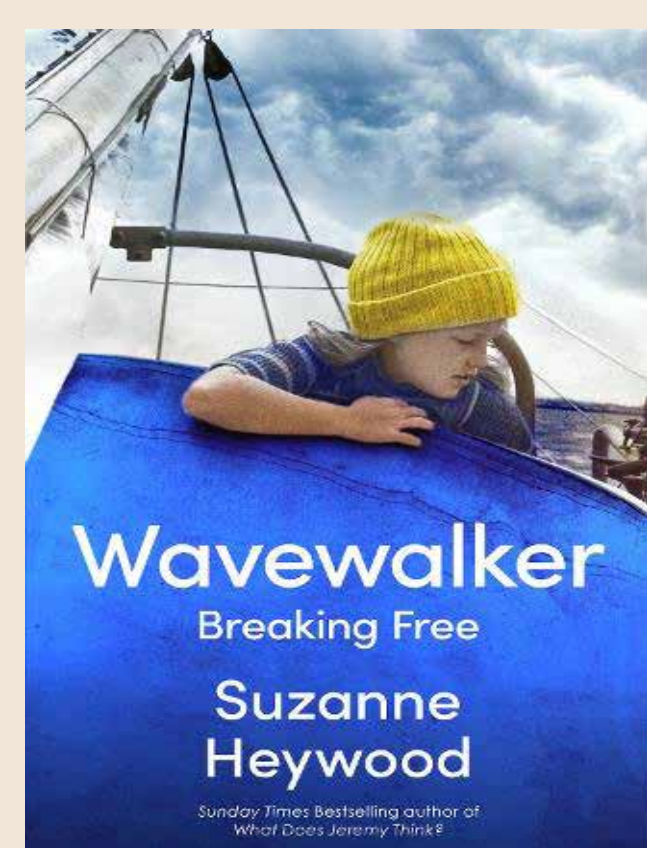
Suzanne (8) with her brother Jonathan (7) with their parents Gordon and Mary Cook. The family retraced the route taken by Captain James Cook in their schooner, Wavewalker

Above all you will never lose your love of the sea. You will also take into your future, alongside memories of whales and flying fish and sunrises and sunsets out on the ocean. Those images will sustain you, and you will often revisit them in your dreams.

**one
day, long after you
escape, you will find the
courage to write your story.**

Suzanne, I want to leave you with one final thought. You are about to face challenges that no 16-year-old should face alone. This is not your fault. It's going to be tough, but you will get through it. Many things in your future will be easier – and the food is certainly going to get better (you will never have to eat powdered egg or Spam again)! And one day, long after you escape, you will find the courage to write your story. Please make sure you don't let your parents stop you doing that, because it will spur on a conversation about the rights of children and the power of education to change a life.

Wavewalker, The Sunday Times best-selling true-story is available in all good bookshops & online (William Collins)



Israel/ Palestine: The West's Double Standards

The West's double standards are once again on display in Israel and Palestine. M. Muhannad Ayyash, Professor, Sociology at Mount Royal University reports.



In the days after Hamas launched Operation Al-Aqsa Flood against Israel, European and North American governments (with few exceptions) were quick to provide a unified and consistent message of support for Israel.

That message contains at least four interconnected elements:

- **Israel is the victim of an unprovoked terrorist attack;**
- **Israel has the right to defend itself;**
- **The West fully stands with Israel against the barbaric and wanton violence of the Palestinians;**
- **Hamas is to blame (either partially or fully) for all civilian deaths on both sides since they began these hostilities and forced Israel's hand while hiding behind civilians.**

**Many
who have voiced solidarity
with Palestinians have lost their jobs,
been rebuked, suspended and faced
doxing.**

Palestinians erased

There are a few important features of this message, but I want to focus on two that highlight the West's double standards. First, is the advancement of anti-Palestinian racism in the West. It is critical to underscore a salient feature of anti-Palestinian racism: the silencing of the Palestinian critiques of Zionism and Israel.

This is a dynamic which has its roots in the Nakba (Arabic for catastrophe) and erases Palestinian voices, history, presence, aspirations and identity from public discourse.

Political, media and educational institutions in the West regularly sideline and silence Palestinians and their supporters. This is not just an issue among the right-wing or even centrists, but occurs across the political spectrum. Left-wing politics, including progressive spaces, that purport to be anti-racist often remain hostile to Palestinian voices. Here in Canada, a statement by progressive Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow painted a rally in support of Palestinians as allegedly supporting violence and as a threat to the safety and security of Canadian Jews. That statement is still up on her X account.

This is precisely the anti-Palestinian narrative that has permeated in the West for years: that all support for Palestine is inherently violent and driven by antisemitic hatred of all Jews. Thus, in the name of anti-racism, Palestinians and their supporters are denounced and even criminalised.

Differing reactions to civilian death

Second, the double standard is on display in the reactions we have seen to the killing of Israeli civilians and the reactions — or lack thereof — to the killing of Palestinian civilians. Many are rightly highlighting

western hypocrisy by drawing comparisons to how the West responded to Russia's war on Ukraine.

We need to look at how western governments have responded to the killing of Israeli civilians versus the killing of Palestinian civilians. For the Israeli state and Israeli victims, political, military, economic, cultural and social institutions have fully mobilised to provide support.

The same is entirely absent for the Palestinians. For the Palestinians, there are no evacuations. Aircraft carriers are not sent to provide military support. Mainstream political and cultural discourse does not humanise Palestinian life and mourn Palestinian death. Aid relief is withheld and used as a bargaining counter. Economic support is not forthcoming. Institutions do not send Palestinians messages of support. In some ways, this silence is not surprising. No one expressing support for Israel risks losing their livelihood. Many who have voiced solidarity with Palestinians have lost their jobs, been rebuked, suspended and faced doxing.

Photos: Hosny Salah



Western self-interest

States are not moral entities, but act purely in self-interest. Palestinian freedom and liberation does not align with the interests of the U.S.-led West. Therefore, western institutions repeat the increasingly weak talking point that “terrorism” is the cause of all the violence. This talking point is used to provide Israel with the green light to unleash uninhibited violence against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, West Bank and Jerusalem.

The idea that western governments and institutions are horrified by violence against civilians rings hollow because of their silence when it comes to violence against Palestinian civilians and other groups around the world.

For decades, Palestinians have been expelled from their land, killed and maimed in great numbers, including in mass atrocities and many well-documented cases of sexual violence and torture in Israeli prisons. This only scratches the surface of the violence that Palestinians continuously experience, and have experienced, since well before Hamas was formed.

Palestinians continue to suffer what Palestinian scholars Nahla Abdo and Nur Masalha have called an ongoing Nakba and genocide of the Palestinian people. Yet, when Palestinians suffer, as they are now in Gaza, what Israeli historian and expert on genocide Raz Segal has called “a textbook case of genocide,” western governments remain silent.

There was no western outrage when Israel ordered more than a million Palestinians to leave their homes in 24 hours. In February, Israeli settlers went on an hours-long rampage in the Palestinian town of Huwara after two settlers were shot by a Palestinian. Western condemnations of the rampage were muted or non-existent.

No one expressing support for Israel risks losing their livelihood.

Hundreds of scholars and practitioners of international law, conflict studies and genocide studies are now sounding the alarm about the possibility of genocide being perpetrated by Israeli forces against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

The stories of Palestinian lives that end with the sudden drop of a bomb are not told. Palestinian voices that explain the settler colonialism they suffer remain sidelined. And Palestinian aspirations for decolonized liberation are denied.

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The West's institutional reaction is not just hypocritical, it is an expression of where western governments stand on the question of Palestine. The West is an active participant in the erasure of Palestine, and when moments of intensified violence like this happen, the West's true position becomes clear for all to see.

However, people power across the world, including in the U.S., provide reason for hope. Increasingly, many in the West are disgusted and ashamed by the erasure of Palestine and the killing of Palestinian civilians.

More people are joining the protests and calling for the siege on Gaza to be lifted once and for all. More people power is needed to demand that governments do everything they can to resolve this issue, which can only begin to move towards peace and justice when the Palestinian people are free.

**Author: M. Muhannad Ayyash
Professor, Sociology, Mount Royal University**

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CANCELLED, SHUNNED BUT NOT BROKEN:

Graham Linehan

Graham Linehan, best known for co-creating hit TV series *Father Ted* is better known these days for being a victim of cancel culture. Sam Bailie talks with the Dublin-born writer about his memoir, death threats and losing everything.



Graham Linehan (55) grew up in Whitehall, on Dublin's Northside where he attended Catholic University School before obtaining employment at Hot Press magazine, where he met future collaborator Arthur Matthews, which would result in innumerable segments in sketch shows like *Alias Smith and Jones*, *Harry Enfield & Chums* and *The Fast Show* which resulted in the pair being named one of the funniest acts to work in television by *The Observer*. These early successes led to the opportunity to pen *Father Ted* which of course went on to be a worldwide success as well as countless other successful shows like *Black Books*, *The IT Crowd* and *The Walshes*.

Graham Linehan is incredibly upbeat for someone who receives death threats on a daily basis, been shunned by friends and colleagues and stripped of his right to earn a living in the craft he's refined over decades.

You seem to be doing well, how have you managed the stress?

"By writing this book mainly [laughs]. I realised that no amount of explanation was having any effect, so in the end I felt the only way was to write a book, get it down on paper to explain to people what my views are, why I have them and what is actually going on."

...
trans activism is a different thing entirely. It's militant; a form of terrorism aimed at women

There was a lot of misinformation?

"Yes, and not just around me but around the subject in general [trans activism]. I really don't think I should have had to write a book for friends to offer support and help fight what I think is a dangerous movement."

Let's clarify; it's the activism and not identifying as trans that you're talking about?

"Yes, trans activism is a different thing entirely. It's militant; a form of terrorism aimed at women, girls and gay people. I asked people to sign a letter for a more civilised debate and the only person who signed it was James Dreyfus [from *The Thin Blue Line*] And you know what? He hasn't worked since he did... he's been blackballed from the industry. What does that tell you?"

Nailing one's colours to the mast can mean losing everything; you've lost your wife, your agent, your address was leaked and you, your wife and daughters all had death threats issued.... You can see why many people keep quiet. You're bound to regret speaking yourself?

"No I don't. And you know why? It revealed what people are really like and I'd rather know than not know. The good people have stayed with me. And how moral is it to ignore these issues - what kind of person could? It's out of the question to suggest I would have done anything different because when I think of little girls getting double mastectomies, young women having to get hysterectomies because of what these cross sex hormones have done to their ovaries I can't keep quiet.... I doubt the morality of anyone who could."

But Graham, look at the cost.

"Yes, it's been a disaster, financially, socially and in every other way you can think ... just look at how I was

treated regarding the Father Ted Musical for instance, Arthur Matthews and Neil Hannon let them [Hat Trick] try to remove me from that. (Hat Trick allegedly offered Linehan £200k to walk away from the project despite having co-written the script. Hat Trick managing director Jimmy Mulville does not deny the account, saying that the show was a ‘surefire’ West End hit – but only if Linehan was not directly linked to it, other than as a co-creator of the original sitcom.) Have you any idea how crushing that is? So yes, I know the cost but I’ve also made such amazing friends from various fields like academia who’ve been bullied out of their jobs, doctors who’ve had their funding and research stopped for not playing along with the narrative, writers who’ve had to quit writing because they’ve been bullied out of publishing by woke lunatics. These people are all my friends now - and you know what, they’re the only people I trust.”



You’ve said you’re not anti-trans, you’re pro-female.

“Yes, I’ve seen the evidence that shows the effects of the trans movement on women. People mistakenly think a girl can take testosterone and if she changes her mind, just walk away from it - you can’t. I’ve seen young women with male pattern baldness. My friend Elaine Miller who’s a physio told me that when a young girl is given testosterone, she’ll go into menopause 30 years early.... Do you know what that means? She’s at a huge risk of dementia and osteoporosis. All women should have their own sports and their own private spaces but if you make a statement like that you’re transphobic and you’re cancelled just for stating the facts. Look at the journalist Abigail Shrier who spoke out about the danger of the trans movement in her book [Irreversible Damage: The Transgender Craze Seducing Our Daughters] and how she was cancelled.”

Trans activists shut down her book launch and her publisher was not allowed to buy ads on Amazon due to the backlash.

“Exactly. These people are militants and I won’t apologise for standing up for women’s rights. I don’t want my daughters in a changing room with a man [a trans woman]. This is not a bigoted position. I believe many people are of the same opinion but don’t have the guts to say it. But by keeping quiet, these individuals are not making life any safer for future generations of females. I had to laugh at Arthur Miller saying ‘He’s not a bigot’ like that was standing up for me ...[laughs] ... that is not standing up for me.”

**All
women should have their
own sports and their own private
spaces but if you make a statement
like that you’re transphobic and you’re
cancelled just for stating the facts.**

You’ve a couple of very good celebrity friends who’ve stood by you.

“Yes, Jonathan Ross and Richard Ayaode [who’ve received dreadful backlash for reviewing Graham’s memoir and James Dreyfus. They’ve all been brilliant and Jonathan has been incredibly brave and has been great to me and my family. I really hope that their bravery will encourage others to just say what they think

on the subject.”

I know we are here to talk about your book but I can’t not ask about Father Ted. What made it such a success do you think?

“They were a family.... When you create a family, families watch it. You’ve Dougal the son, Mrs. Doyle the mother, Father Ted the dad and Jack is the grandfather. Viewers like something they see themselves reflected in and a family situation does that, so I do believe that was a large part of the success. This gave it its heart although me and Arthur weren’t interested in giving it heart, we just wanted to be funny [laughs]! Arthur and me were extremely influenced by American comedy like The Simpsons and Seinfeld - shows that experimented with the sitcom so when we found ourselves in that world we had this wonderful playground

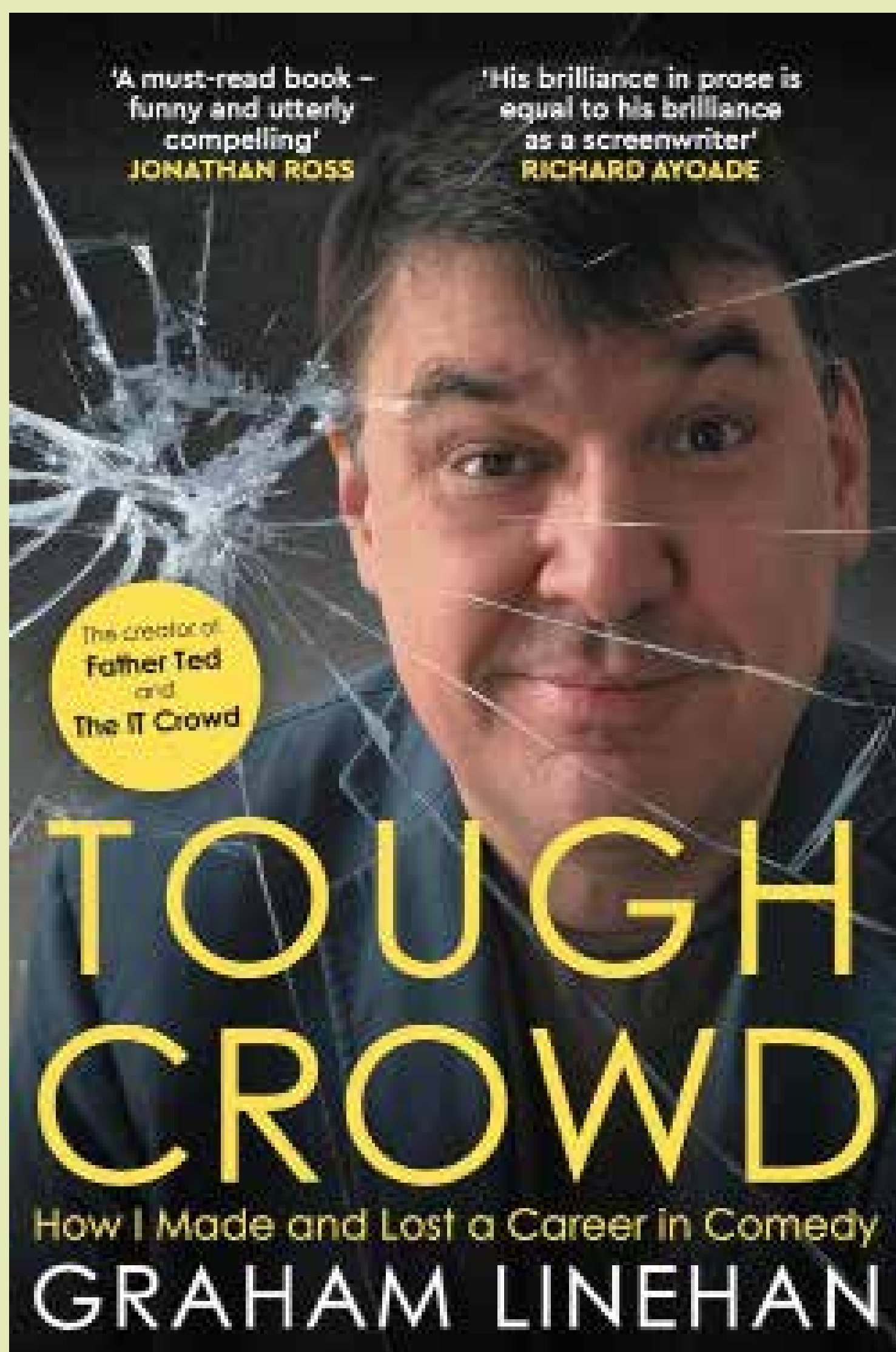
where we could just make up complete nonsense because the priesthood is a very isolated and mysterious world; like do you remember the episode where priests socks are especially black and there's no other darker colour in the world than priest's socks?"

Nobody went out when Father Ted was on.

"[Laughs] True... I remember someone telling me that a pub used to close its blinds as soon as it came on and everybody settled in to watch it. The Irish loved it and that was important as if it wasn't a hit in Ireland, it wouldn't be a hit - that's why Hat Trick and Channel 4 had us involved in every small detail to ensure it appealed to the Irish audience."

We're laughing Graham, which I think makes it all the more poignant, just what you've lost.

"I'm just another story Sam. Look at JK Rowling, look at many others like us. We lose friends, we lose fans, we become isolated. We live in a very woke generation. Just look at the news today; a man [identifying as a trans woman] was sentenced to 20 years in Scotland for kidnapping and abusing an 11-year-old girl."



I'm sure the trans community do not stand by this individual's actions.

"Sam, we've always known that predatory men will use a trans identity to get into women's spaces, to have young girls like this girl trusting them and these men abuse this new ability that they've been given by woke idiots. I'm deeply saddened that it took the abhorrent abuse of a child in this way for opinions like mine to be vindicated. People will repeatedly see this happen before they even realise we have a problem."

Who do you think the woke are?

"They're privileged - they have to be to push this nonsense and not realise the damage it has the potential to do. Women need single sex spaces. These advantaged members of the woke brigade have clearly never needed a women's shelter, rape crisis centre or any of the other places ordinary women find themselves requiring the services of. It makes me very angry. These clueless people are leading the narrative around how people view sex and gender and its wrong - they're wrong."

**It's
frightening how one can be
cancelled and find themselves not only
out of work but a target**

Are there any comedians you respect right now for not censoring their material?

"Dave Chappelle, Michelle Wolf and Shane Gillis ... I sniff out groupthink or wokeness very quickly but I like these three."

As someone who believes passionately in free speech I'm really disheartened that any person or group has the power to completely destroy someone's life. Whether you agree or disagree with Linehan, what does it really say about us as humans if our immediate reflex is merciless revenge? Just because one belongs to a marginalised community does not give them the right to operate outside the law or behave in a socially unacceptable manner. No one - absolutely no one should have the right to thwart a person's right to earn a living or live free from intimidation and fear.

Linehan's memoir 'Tough Crowd' (Eye Books) is available in all good bookshops and online

CANCEL CULTURE

“It’s time we woke up to this insidious cancel culture and put an end to it.”

Whether or not you agree with Graham Linehan views, he has a right to his opinion, **his** right to free speech, he’s not invoking hatred. His views may or may not be different from you or I but so be it, they’re his opinions and he’s entitled to them.

So why is he Cancelled?

Essentially it would appear he is concerned that young people are being unduly influenced by woke culture regarding their sexuality before they are mature enough to make a decision about their sexual orientation.

Going through puberty can be difficult for teenagers; they can be vulnerable and easily influenced, going through many different emotions as their hormones kick in. To be advocating medical intervention at this stage in whatever form it may take, for what may be a passing phase of a child’s natural development is wrong. Graham has been cancelled, vilified and threatened because he has expressed his concerns.

It’s frightening that you can be cancelled and find yourself not only out of work but a target for extreme woke warriors. Linehan has lost his wife, who could not live with the constant fear of being attacked or having their girls harmed, he’s lost long-term friendships and lost his chief source of income - all that whilst battling cancer. It’s a lot for one person, whether or not you agree with his views.

Perhaps it is time that people stood up and made a stand and challenged these woke bullies and their enablers.

I’m all for diversity, inclusion and people’s right to have an opinion; my life is based on those principles. I’ve no problem with men transitioning to women or vice versa I disagree however with trans women taking part in elite female sports for the obvious reason – its not a level playing field-

This **opinion** does not however go down well with a minority of woke zealots who seem to have lost the plot. They hold the rest of us to ransom (with the threat of been cancelled all too real) because we let them. It seems their message is simple, **Agree with us or we’ll cancel you**– well I’m sorry but you can ‘sod off’, I for one will stand by my opinions as is my right.

As for gender pronouns and having to sign off as (He/Him) (She/Her), (they/them) why is this necessary? If you want to identify as a male or female just use your first name as an identifier. It’s common sense, it just seems as though some woke people are looking for ways to ambush you and take out of context something you say or do not say.

For the record I call people by their name, if they want to be called Pat or Patricia I’ve no problem with that or whatever name they wish to be called by, I’m not insulting or demeaning anyone, it just makes common sense to me, something that appears to be in short supply with the wokes and their enablers.

I feel very sorry for Graham and a little perturbed that fellow show-business personnel lack the moral courage to support him. I realise it is not easy to put your livelihood at risk, but the reality is, evil thrives when good people do nothing. It is surely time for people to band together to put an end to this ridiculous and dangerous cancel culture.

Finally, for the record, I am not a racist, bigot or whatever tag some may wish to label me with. If I do not like someone, its not because of their Colour, Ethnicity, Gender or the fact they are a Man Utd supporter, its because there is something about their personality that is distasteful to me, but alas I may not be Woke but I am Human.

Editor

Dark Patterns

How online companies strive to keep your money and data when you try to leave.



Have you signed up to an online service for a free trial, decided it isn't for you, but still ended up paying for it months – or even years – later? Or tried cancelling a subscription, and found yourself giving up during the painstaking process? If so, there's a good chance you have encountered a “dark pattern”.

Dark patterns are clever tricks built into apps and websites to encourage you to do things you may not necessarily want to do. They make it easy to “accept all” tracking cookies for example, and swiftly agree to terms and conditions while you hurry along with making your purchase.

They also make it easy to sign up to a service – but time consuming and frustrating to leave. And our recent research shows how most of the time they benefit companies at the expense of consumers. This imbalance has not gone unnoticed by regulators. The US Federal Trade Commission (FTC), which aims to protect consumers from unfair business practices, believes an increasing number of companies are “using digital dark patterns to trick people into buying products and giving away their personal information”.

“consumers who attempted to cancel Prime were faced with multiple steps to actually accomplish the task of cancelling”.

For instance, the FTC is currently investigating Amazon over its alleged use of dark patterns to enrol customers into its Prime service, while making it difficult for them to leave. Our research supports the agency's observation that “consumers who attempted to cancel Prime were faced with multiple steps to actually accomplish the task of cancelling”.

In a statement on its website, Amazon said the suit showed the FTC's “misunderstanding of retail”. It also said: “We make it clear and simple for customers to both sign up for or cancel their Prime membership.”

The FTC is not alone in its concerns about dark patterns. The EU recently passed legislation which can be used to fine companies that use dark patterns, and the UK's Financial Conduct Authority has launched rules designed to protect consumers from dark patterns in financial services. Meanwhile, the UK's Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) recently announced its first investigation into dark patterns with an open letter warning business against what it calls “harmful online choice architectures”.

“Choice architecture” is a term coined by the authors of the extremely popular and influential book Nudge. They describe it as the “the design of different ways in which choices can be presented to decision makers”. For instance, a “choice architect” could help a consumer by reducing the amount of irrelevant information presented to them, allowing space for a considered, focused decision to be made. But most dark patterns work by manipulating choice architecture.

Rather than helping consumers, the architecture is designed to hinder choice. So instead of removing irrelevant material, it may bombard a user with excessive information, extra steps and distractions to stop them cancelling a subscription.

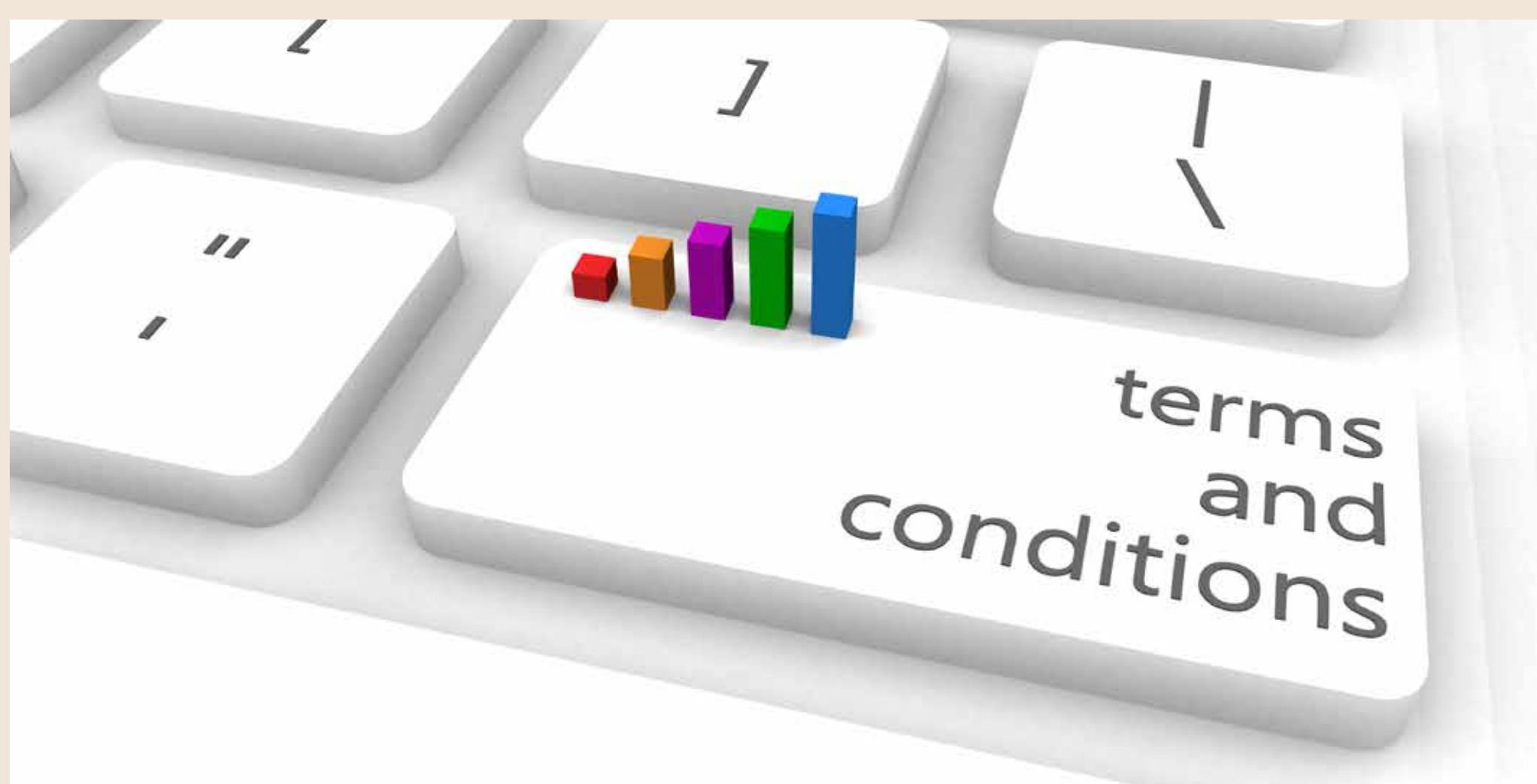
As the CMA notes, in today's online world

“businesses can design and control every aspect of their interactions with us to an extent that is unprecedented in traditional brick and mortar businesses”.

Research suggests the CMA is right, and that online companies have an almost unlimited ability to refine their interactions with consumers. Online experiences are increasingly personalised, and tech-savvy firms have more ways than ever to engage with – and manipulate – us.

Seeing the light

And while regulators tend to focus on dark patterns as a way of getting consumers to part with their money or data, others have expressed concerns about potential psychological harms and a loss of freedom by users of online services.



With these risks in mind, we have used insights from behavioural science to identify some of the processes which make dark patterns work and created a simple framework to describe the most pervasive strategies.

“Detours” for example, is the name we have given to the tools used to delay and distract us, such as requiring an excessive number of actions to cancel a subscription.

“Roundabouts” try to bore or frustrate us to the point of giving up, like clicking on link after link, taking users round in circles.

And “shortcuts” offer an immediately easy – but potentially costly – choice, like the “accept all” buttons on cookie prompts or requests to accept terms and conditions. In one study, a particularly long terms and conditions document led 98% of participants to agree to hand over their firstborn child as payment.

**FTC
is currently investigating
Amazon over its alleged use of dark
patterns to enrol customers into its Prime
service, while making it difficult for them to
leave**

Our framework of terms is designed for simplicity – to empower consumers to spot dark patterns themselves, and to help regulators intervene. For the freedom to create and delete accounts for a service is a fundamental step in navigating the online world. And it should not be drastically more straightforward to set up a social media account than it is to delete it. There is no good reason for detours, roundabouts and shortcuts to get in the way. We believe it should be as easy – if not easier – to delete an account as it is to create one. Most of the services we examined failed this standard.

Without consumer push back and regulatory muscle, the online world is likely to become even harder for ordinary people to navigate. On the plus side, regulators seem to be stepping up, and new tools for protecting consumers from dark patterns are emerging. There may yet be light at the end of this manipulative tunnel.

Authors: Richard Whittle University Fellow in AI and Human Decision Making, University of Salford

Stuart Mills Assistant Professor of Economics, University of Leeds

First published on The Conversation

Orson Welles - The Time Wasting Genius

This issue Shaun Anthony takes a look at one of the directors who personified Hollywood's Golden Age - Orson Welles.



Orson Welles is one of the most recognisable names amongst the great directors of Hollywood. Starting as a child prodigy, he became a magician, a radio and stage actor, a TV personality, a film actor and above all, a superb movie producer and director. He was in many ways ahead of his time and he got little regard from his contemporaries. He has often been hailed as a genius but he seemed to spend a great part of his life frittering away his talents on projects which were incomplete, ill-prepared or simply underfunded.

Detested By Studio Bosses

Welles had a chillingly strong personality and often went his own obstinate way, which did not endear him to Tinsel Town studio bosses, who, after initially granting his every wish, eventually turned against him, deciding he was not worth the hassle. His influence on film makers and film making has been immense however he only became really appreciated as a true cinematic visionary from the mid 1950's onwards. Of all his major works, his first, 'Citizen Kane', made when he was just 25, has had most resonance, and it is still regarded to this day, as a masterwork.

So, who was Orson Welles?

Born George Orson Welles on 6th May 1915, young Orson was born into a wealthy family in Wisconsin. His dad, Richard, was an inventor who had made a fortune inventing a carbide bicycle lamp, and his mum, Beatrice, was a concert pianist. Orson had a natural gift himself for music and art and was recognised as a prodigy as a small child.

Familial Tragedies Strikes Young Orson

Welles' parents divorced when he was just 4 and he was raised initially by his mum who taught him the violin and piano, however, when she passed away from hepatitis in 1924, Orson aged 9, was returned to the care of his dad.

Still only 16 he made a much praised professional acting debut at the Gate Theatre, Dublin...

Welles' young life became more difficult over the next few years - his father's business hit huge financial difficulties resulting in him becoming an alcoholic and eventually taking his own life in 1928 when Orson was 15.

The teenager, now an orphan, was placed in the care of Dr. Maurice Bernstein a physician in Chicago, who recognised that he was remarkably talented. Bernstein placed the boy in the Todd School in Woodstock, Illinois, a forward-thinking establishment which gave Welles the freedom to identify, nurture and extend his artistic gifts. It was here that Welles first developed a love for acting and the theatre, and where he both staged and performed in school productions.

Acting Debut in Dublin

In 1931, after graduation, Welles used a modest inheritance from his dad to travel through Europe. Still just 16 he made a much lauded professional acting debut at the Gate Theatre, Dublin in Jew Suss. After residing in Ireland for a year, Welles went on a tour of Spain and Morocco, returning to Chicago in 1933. Still committed to a stage career he joined Katharine Cornell's touring company in 1933, playing many roles including Mercutio in Romeo and Juliet.

Welles had a keen, analytical mind and in 1934 started working in the fast-growing world of radio, which his intense, gritty voice proved to be perfectly suited. He started in an adaptation of the verse play *Panic* and in 1934 he narrated the news series, *The March of Time*.

Welles made his Big Apple debut at the age of 19 as Tybalt in *Romeo and Juliet*. His performance garnered the attention of actor and producer, John Houseman, who immediately asked him to join his Federal Theatre project; this would be the beginning of a significant partnership, not to mention learning experience for the self-assured and driven teenager.

Lauded a Theatrical Prodigy

In 1936, at the age of just 21, Welles directed a voodoo version of *Macbeth*, which featured all-black talent that was widely celebrated by critics, who hailed him a theatrical prodigy. The show would go on tour right across the United States. At the end of the tour, Welles formed the Mercury Theatre Group with John Houseman and they started making a name for themselves with avant-garde productions like a modern-dress version of *Julius Caesar*, set in 20th Century fascist Italy.



The Houseman-Welles partnership moved Mercury into radio broadcasting with the weekly *Mercury Theatre of the Air* which broadcast plays based on classic literary works. One of the works was by H.G. Wells and it would catapult Orson to national fame. Their fame dramatically increased in October, 1938 with their broadcast in documentary-style of HG Wells' *The War of the Worlds* which was so convincing that many listeners panicked, thinking they were listening to the description of an actual invasion from Mars! Welles was the narrator who gave a realistically comprehensive report of the alien attack on New Jersey. When the truth came out, the public were fuming and Welles became notorious throughout America!

Hollywood Calls

Orson Welles was now incredibly well known and movie studios, keen to capitalise on this offered him an incredible contract to direct and act in two movies and to have complete artistic control over the output. This would have been considered generous for an established director but for a 25-year-old newcomer it was amazing and a sign of the reputation he had built up for himself. Welles set up home in Hollywood, bringing many of the Mercury actors with him and *Citizen Kane* (which was directed by him and co-written by him and Herman J. Mankiewicz) was released in 1941. For those who haven't seen it, it tells its story from several different perspectives, depicting the rise and eventual fall of newspaper magnate Charles Foster Kane, quite clearly based on real-life publishing mogul William Randolph Hearst.

When the truth came out, the public were outraged and Welles became notorious throughout America.

Critical Acclaim

Welles received Academy Award nominations as producer, director, actor and writer but won only for Best Original Screenplay, which he shared with Mankiewicz. Although it was largely disregarded by the Academy, the film was an exceptional effort and it is now regarded as one of the best movies ever made and unquestionably the best debut movie by far. However, on release it was not a commercial success, mainly because of the opposition from the William Randolph Hearst organisation who didn't like the way that Hearst and Marion Davies were depicted. RKO withdrew the film and did not re-release it until 1956 when it assumed its rightful place as a creative triumph.

Creative Differences

Welles' second film, *The Magnificent Ambersons* was not received well by cinemagoers but did go on to receive four Academy nominations including Best Picture. RKO defaulted on its contract, and to Orson's vexation, started interfering, shooting new footage and re-editing scenes Welles' was happy with. The ongoing dispute between Orson and studio heads was an indicator of things to come. As with *Citizen Kane*, the film has, with the passage of time, come to be regarded as a tour-de-force.

RKO washed their hands of Welles, they believed he was impossible to work with. In early 1942, before the *Magnificent Ambersons*, he'd been asked by the US government to create a propaganda documentary film about South America. The film's budget and overall scope were inflated by Welles who, once in South America, was impossible to contact. Studio heads had given him another chance with *The Magnificent Ambersons* but felt they could offer no more excuses for his behaviour as he had blown \$1m on the

propaganda film that was never completed.



A Pariah

Welles was now avoided in Hollywood and had to take work on the radio, but again, Orson, on a whim completely abandoned projects back to back leaving them incomplete. Mobil Oil invested in one of his radio series in 1944, but less than a year into the project he walked away with no explanation.

Despite this, Welles continued to be in demand as an actor and he received good reviews for his appearances in films like Jane Eyre (1944). The success of these films gave him the opportunity to direct again which resulted in his 1946 offering The Stranger and The Lady from Shanghai (1948) with his second wife, Rita Hayworth.

.... the film
is now regarded as one of
the best movies ever made and
unquestionably the best debut
movie by far.

In 1948, capitulating to the inevitable, Orson moved into exile in Europe where he began acting in other directors' films to finance his own. To keep money coming in he appeared on chat shows and TV shows like I Love Lucy, however, it would be during a trip to the U.S. that the IRS would step in and demand their back taxes.

In later years Welles started endless projects but again, did not complete them - this included a spoof that he spent 6 years on and an adaptation of Don Quixote that he just lost interest in.

Sadly, for a man so talented, Welles would fritter away the rest of his life appearing on TV chat shows. It's quite sad; he was a fiercely intelligent man who could have achieved so much more. When researching him I wondered if he had undiagnosed ADHD as he shifted from project to project, romance to romance (he was married 3 times and had 2 common-law wives) and seemingly found it impossible to maintain single-mindedness for any considerable chunk of time.

A Remarkable Talent

Orson Welles may have made two of the greatest films of all time but seemed to struggle in bringing projects to completion - perhaps that was the perfectionist in him; if it isn't perfect, it isn't being created mindset. When we speak of his two masterpieces, it must be remembered that he directed three other outstanding examples of his talent, The brilliant Film Noir 'Touch of evil' (1958) and on a complete shoestring Chimes at Midnight (1965) and F for Fake (1974), therefore, viewing Welles through the lens of wasted years is failing to see him as a holistic person - a person whose off-centre personality adds to the legacy. Forget his masterpieces, perhaps the greatest showpiece was Welles himself who played up his own oddities and as such, marketed himself to the world as a wildly, uncontrollable creative force.



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nationwide.**

Clondalkin Man Paddy Maloney: *From Addict to Representing Scotland at the Homeless World Cup*

Sam McMurdock speaks to Paddy Maloney from Clondalkin who lives in Edinburgh and is part of Street Soccer Scotland. Paddy has battled homelessness, alcoholism and Cocaine addiction and today dedicates his life to football, helping others and raising his children.



There's no doubt that Paddy Maloney loves a chat. Possibly one of the most affable people I've ever encountered, we realise after over half-an-hour that we've talked about everything: from his daughter Molly's favourite TV programme to rebooting internet routers,

"I'm a natural talker. I start conversations with everybody... even people who have their earbuds in, I'll start chatting [laughs]. If somebody sits down beside me on the bus or the tram, by the time we get off, we are friends.... We have learned something new about each other's lives. I've always liked meeting people and having a conversation, I think it's a really important part of life and I ensure I never sit in silence when there's an opportunity to share something with someone or learn something from them."

**You're
treated as if you are no
longer a human being with
feelings.**

Paddy Maloney (45) was born in Ballymun and at the age of five the family moved to Clondalkin where his parents still reside. The eldest of four children (he has two brothers and a sister) he attended St. Bernadette's Primary School near Neilstown followed by Moyle Park College in Clondalkin village.

"From as young as I can remember, I was happiest when kicking a Football, I always dreamed that one day I'd be a professional player.... It was all I wanted in life."

At the age of seven neighbours started to notice that Paddy had real skill with a ball, but,

"We never had anywhere proper to play, we were out first thing, playing on the local streets and those matches went on into the night. Kids would be called in for their tea, we'd eat it quick and get back out.... They're lovely days to look back on, no phones, being with your friends, doing what you loved, coming in when the street lights came on, adults watching and cheering you on."

Paddy "endured" school as he felt it was "a waste of their time and mine" as "there was stuff I would have been interested in learning but you were taught things that had no bearing on your life.... And all I wanted was to play football so I had no interest."

I think even footballers need basic Maths and English to get by.

"I get that but kids have always been taught, not what they need to know, but what the government wants them to know.... I think we need to focus on children's individual talents and dreams, and I think learning social skills is key right now as kids don't know how to communicate face-to-face as they live in virtual worlds: on their phones, on their gaming consoles Very little communication is done in real life ... I think that will have big implications down the line.

"When I was young I remember leaving school and wondering how I was supposed to figure all this stuff out I mean teaching us French and German did nothing to prepare us for life."

When Paddy left high school he took part in a scholarship program in Finglas to become a football coach, all the time working towards that dream career as a football player but “the breaks just didn’t come ... it was very disappointing. Football was my everything.”

Incredibly erudite and high-spirited, it would be easy to forget that life has not always been easy for Paddy; at the age of 30 for instance, he lost his four best mates within a 18 months, three of them within a year and,

“I just cracked. I couldn’t deal with it.... These were guys I’d never have considered capable of taking their own lives..... it was too much to process. I found myself really dwelling on it... did they drink too much, did they really know what they were doing.... What pushed them to this? I couldn’t escape the thought loop.... I knew I needed a change of scenery, I needed out of Clondalkin at any cost.... I’d have gone anywhere to be honest, anywhere I didn’t see reminders and triggers and so I ended up in Edinburgh, hopeful for a fresh mindset and a new start.”



In Scotland he would meet a local woman, fall in love and get married, however, the marriage didn’t last long due to Paddy battling the trauma of losing his best friends and his alcohol and drug abuse.

In 2019, just after the break-up, Paddy found himself homeless, alcohol dependent and fighting a losing battle with Cocaine and other substances. With no family in Scotland he ended up “couch surfing” and was offered B&Bs to stay in but, “I’d been homeless before in 2017 and I vowed never to stay in the B&Bs again as I was homeless with kids and it was horrific You would never believe how you’re treated.”

In what way ?

“You’re treated as if you are no longer a human being with feelings. You’re never settled. You’re shifted in and out of B&Bs, expected to leave first thing in the morning and it’s very unsettling... you’re left to the elements - and when you’ve children, you feel incredibly vulnerable.... You’re left in a situation where you’re just hanging around the city centre all day Add in the fact that many people are already struggling with recovery and it’s a recipe for disaster. There’s no kindness, no compassion... these people are being paid and they don’t care. I’d tell anyone, if you’re homeless, sleep on someone’s couch, sleep anywhere avoid B&Bs at all cost.... If I ever had to do another one I’d do something f**king stupid... I know I would ... that’s how awful it is.”

...he
lost his four best mates
within a 18 months...

People often say that no experience is wasted - you can pass your knowledge on to others.

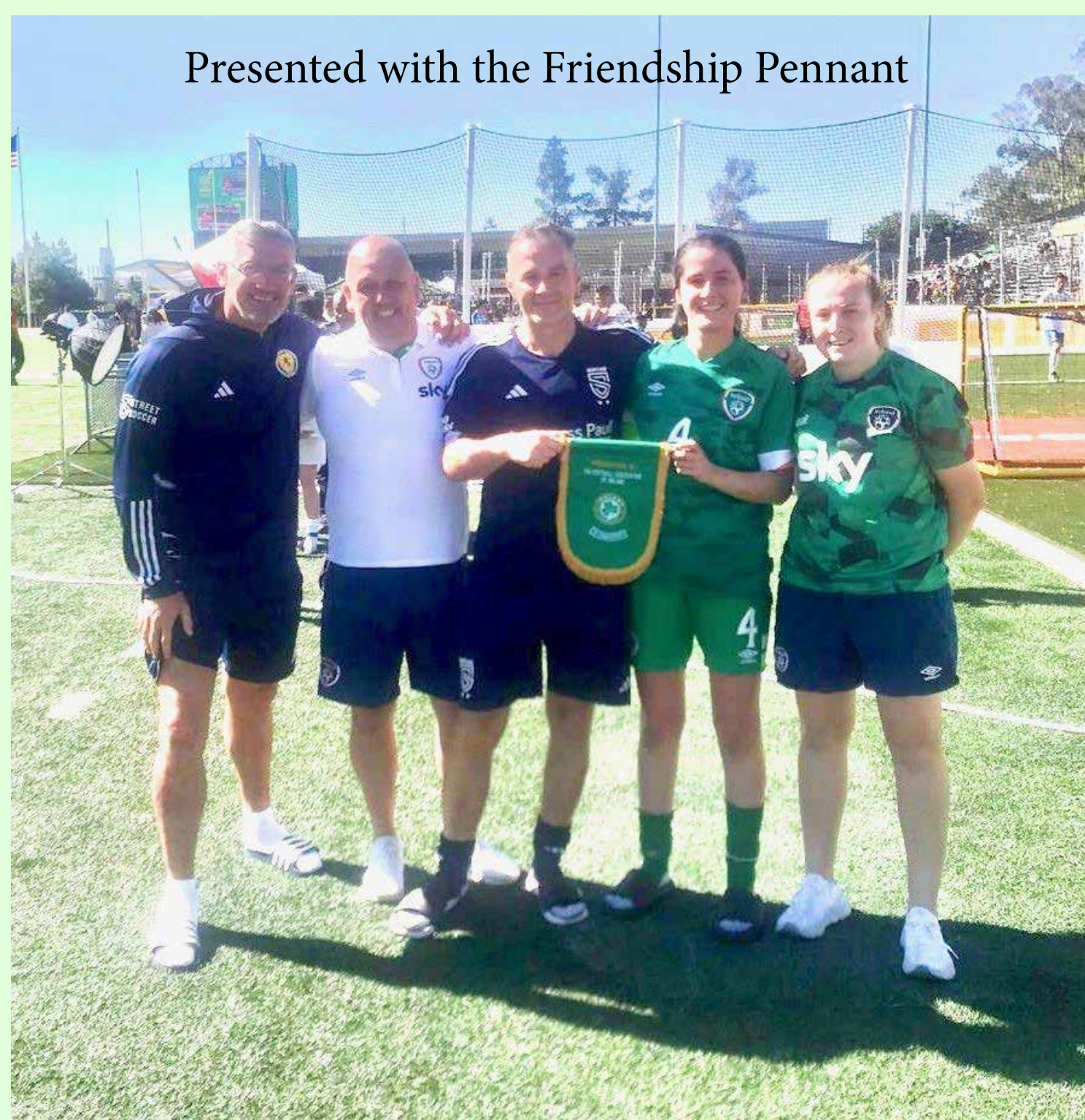
“Strange you should say that as my eldest, Patrick lives back in Dublin and he’s been in recovery from the drink and Cocaine for three-and-a-half years so I supposed we can both pass our experiences on to help others - and we will do. That’s the thing with being part of Street Soccer, there’s always someone you can help and someone who can help you.”

Desperate to “feel normal again” he wanted “the one thing that had always made sense to me” - a game of football and was delighted to discover Street Soccer Scotland,

“I’d drifted away from football, the one thing that had always brought me so much joy and fulfilment and walking in to the Street Soccer, I felt a bit of me return... I wanted change I was determined I’d accept any and all help offered to me and I decided to get sober....I wasn’t sure how but I’d had enough.... I’d battled alcohol and substances on and off my whole life and I just felt I wanted change, and playing football and being part of a supportive team made me feel that was possible.”

Did you use alcohol as a crutch during difficult times?

“That’s exactly what I did Anytime I felt a difficult emotion or things hurt and I couldn’t process or make sense of it, I’d drink..... it became a habit.”



Craig McManus (Scotland Manager) Chris O’Brien CEO (Irish Street League) Paddy, Chloe Kenna, Captain Irish Ladies World cup team and Irish coach Mary Byrne

It hasn’t been easy to quit the booze.

“It hasn’t but I’m proud to say that I’ve been sober for 22 monthsStreet Soccer Scotland have been brilliant. They organised counselling for me and I still check in every Thursday for a session...I can’t recommend counselling enough because it’s done wonders for me... coming off the drink, coming off the Coke [Cocaine]. Sadly, it’s very important to distance yourself from the social circles that lead you to drink and do drugs ... many times these are good friends but you have to make that decision and stick to it and I have four children and two step-children to think of so it’s not just me.”

Paddy believes that had he not turned to Street Soccer Scotland, life would be very different,

“I’m 45. I know what works for me and what doesn’t and Street Soccer Scotland and all the support I have received has made such a positive impact on my life. It has given me so many great opportunities and improved

my confidence. I remember getting the call asking if I wanted to play for Scotland in the Street Soccer World Cup and I was delighted to accept. What an honour. When I think back to the first time I set foot in Street Soccer, I was in bits, my mental health was awful, but do you know - the right people are there, people who genuinely care and that’s so important.”

Street Soccer Scotland and all the support I have received has made such a positive impact on my life.

Paddy believes that everyone battling addiction or mental health issues “needs to find that thing they love” and believes that “more people would get better if they get the courage to go along to somewhere like the Street Soccer or the Street Leagues in Ireland.

” I’ve found that being around positive people, people who are real people can make a huge difference in recovery. Many of these individuals are not being paid, they’re volunteers and they do it because they care. I respect that and I place great value on them because they wouldn’t give their time if they had no compassion for the people around them or their communities. It gave me faith in members of the public at large and changed me in many ways because seeing people do good things really impacts how you see yourself and the world and for that reason I will always, always recommend that people go along to their local Street Soccer or Street League as it will change your life. We have a saying at Street Soccer,

‘We Leave No One Behind’ and at my lowest, that meant an awful lot to me.

Football and the kindness of everyone I’ve met through Street Soccer has given me my life back - and in doing so, has given my children a father who wants to give his all to them. I can’t thank them enough.”

Proud Supporters of Ireland's Big Issue and Homeless Street Leagues



Jim
O'CALLAGHAN TD

FIANNA FÁIL
THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

Please contact me if I can assist you in any way.
jim.ocallaghan@oireachtas.ie
(01) 618 3134

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www.jimocallaghan.com

Mick Barry TD
Cork North Central

People before profit – Solidarity



Best Wishes to all involved in the Cork Soccer Street Leagues

Contact details:

(01) 618 3268
(021) 4399653
Email: mick.barry@oireachtas.ie
X: @mickbarryTD

Councillor
GUSS O'CONNELL



South Dublin County Council,
Independent Community Representative for
Palmerstown - Fonthill.

47 Palmerstown Green, Palmerstown, Dublin 20
Tel 626 8554 or 087 6838 254
email goconnell@cllrs.sdublincoco.ie
www.gussoconnell.com



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If you need any assistance
you can contact me at my constituency office at:
10A Old County Road.
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Because laughter is the best medicine!



When the waitress in a New York City restaurant brought him the soup du jour, the Englishman was a bit dismayed. “Good heavens,” he said, “what is this?”

“Why, it’s bean soup,” she replied.

“I don’t care what it has been,” he sputtered. “What is it now?”

Actual exchanges between pilots and control towers

Tower: ‘Delta 351, you have traffic at 10 o’clock, 6 miles!’

Delta 351: ‘Give us another hint! We have digital watches!’

Tower: ‘TWA 2341, for noise abatement turn right 45 Degrees.’

TWA 2341: ‘Center, we are at 35,000 feet. How much noise can we make up here?’

Tower: ‘Sir, have you ever heard the noise a 747 makes when it hits a 727?’

From an unknown aircraft waiting in a very long takeoff queue: ‘I’m f...ing bored!’

Ground Traffic Control: ‘Last aircraft transmitting, identify yourself immediately!’

Unknown aircraft: ‘I said I was f...ing bored, not f...ing stupid!’

An old farmer had owned a large farm for several years. He had a large pond in the back forty, had it fixed up nice; picnic tables, horseshoe courts, basketball court, etc. The pond was fixed for swimming when it was built. One evening the old farmer decided to go down to the pond, as he hadn’t been there for a while, and look it over. As he neared the pond, he heard voices shouting and laughing with glee. As he came closer he saw it was a bunch of young women skinny-dipping in his pond. He made the women aware of his presence and they all went to the deep end of the pond. One of the women shouted to him, “We’re not coming out until you leave!”

The old man replied, “I didn’t come down here to watch you ladies swim or make you get out of the pond, I only came to feed my alligators.” Old age and treachery will triumph over youth and skill every time!

A teacher gave her fifth grade class an assignment: Get their parents to tell them a story with a moral at the end of it. The next day the kids came back and one by one began to tell their stories. Kathy said, “My father’s a farmer and we have a lot of egg-laying hens. One time we were taking our eggs to market in a basket on the front seat of the pickup when we hit a bump in the road and all the eggs went flying and broke and made a mess.” “And what’s the moral of the story?” asked the teacher. “Don’t put all your eggs in one basket!” “Very good,” said the teacher.

Next little Lucy raised a hand and said, “Our family are farmers, too. But we raise chickens for the meat market. We had a dozen eggs one time, but when they hatched we only got ten live chicks and the moral to this story is, don’t count your chickens until they’re hatched.” “That was a fine story Lucy. Johnny, do you have a story to share?” “Yes, ma’am! My daddy told me this story about my Aunt Marge. She was a flight engineer during the war and her plane got hit. She had to bail out over enemy territory, and all she had was a bottle of whiskey, a machine gun and a Machete. So she drank the whiskey on the way down so it wouldn’t break. Then she landed right in the middle of 100 enemy troops. She killed 70 of them with the machine gun until it ran out of bullets! Then she killed 20 more with the machete till the blade broke; then she killed the last 10 with her bare hands.” “Good heavens,” said the horrified teacher, “what kind of moral did your daddy tell you from that horrible story?” “Stay away from Aunt Marge when she’s been drinking.”

A woman in labour suddenly shouted, “Shouldn’t! Wouldn’t! Couldn’t! Didn’t! Can’t!” The doctor told her, “Don’t worry. Those are just contractions.”

What kind of exercise do lazy people do?

Diddly-squats.



Top Award for Irish Homeless Street Leagues

It was a proud night for of Irish Homeless Street Leagues' founder Sean Kavanagh as he accepted the National Lottery Good Causes Sports Award 2023 on behalf of the Leagues.

Back in 2003, as Editor of Ireland's Big Issue magazine, it was Kavanagh's goal to help young people who had fallen into difficulty to find a pathway to a better life, to imbue in them a sense of belonging and purpose. He saw football, as a way to empower young people to move on in life rather than standing on the sidelines watching life pass them by. Everyone has potential, it's fulfilling that potential that can be difficult. Using football to build self-esteem, self-confidence and sense of self-worth provided that little spark to generate that belief and fulfil the potential that was always there.

In a passionate acceptance speech he paid tribute to his fellow board members, volunteers and supporters past and present whose contribution to the Leagues has been invaluable,

“Nothing is achieved in isolation without their help and support we would never have been able to do what we have.”

The Irish Homeless Street Leagues run programs throughout the country catering for men & women. Each year a team is selected from the Street Leagues to represent Ireland at the Homeless World Cup. An annual world tournament with over 50 countries participating.

The National Lottery Good Causes awards 2023 is a celebration of the incredible achievements of volunteers, organisations and individuals who have made a profound impact on communities. They exemplify the power of volunteer groups and the incredible feats that can be accomplished with just a little support.

Minster Paschal Donohoe was guest of honour with Marty Whelan, Dáithí Ó Sé, Fergus Finlay, Éanna Ní Lamhna and Paralympian supreme Jason Smyth presenting the trophies and Gráinne Scoige hosting.



Graine Scoige with board members



Kevin, Frances, Chris, Gillian & Sean

S C R E E N

S C E N E

Flora and Son ****

Starring: Eve Hewson, Joseph Gordon-Levitt
Run Time: 97 mins
Streaming on: Apple TV+
Available: Currently

Flora and Son is Apple TV+'s new original movie led by Bad Sisters star Eve Hewson who plays a single mum living in Dublin who is having problems with her estranged teenage son Max, who just happens to be a petty thief. Encouraged by the Gardaí to find Max a hobby, Flora rescues an old guitar from a skip, and with the help of a Los Angeles-based online guitar teacher, discovers that one person's scrap can be another person's salvation.

Flora and Son is the latest movie from writer-director John Carney, who's previously charmed us all with the likes of Once and Sing Street, and he's on familiar ground here.

If you've seen a John Carney film before, you'll know what to expect from Apple TV+'s new offering but just because it delivers more of the same, i.e. music-based, familiar warmth, don't let that put you off as Carney has perfected this formula and it's never failed him yet.

Well worth a view and Eve Hewson and Joseph Gordon-Levitt are excellent as Flora and Jeff.



100 Bliain de Thithíocht - Géarchéim Gan Deireadh ***

Starring: N/A
Run Time: 80 mins
Streaming: TG4
Available: From 25th October

Ireland was born in a housing crisis. And it has never gone away!

Every government and generation, has had to contend with this same issue. Céad Bliain de Thithíocht draws a line from the birth of the state to the crisis we find ourselves in today. From the flats of the '30s to the high-rise of the '60s. From the bungalow to the bubble.

This film explores the ideas that worked and the ones that were disastrous, painting a picture of where we went so wrong and how we can fix it.



Camp Courage ***

Starring: N/A

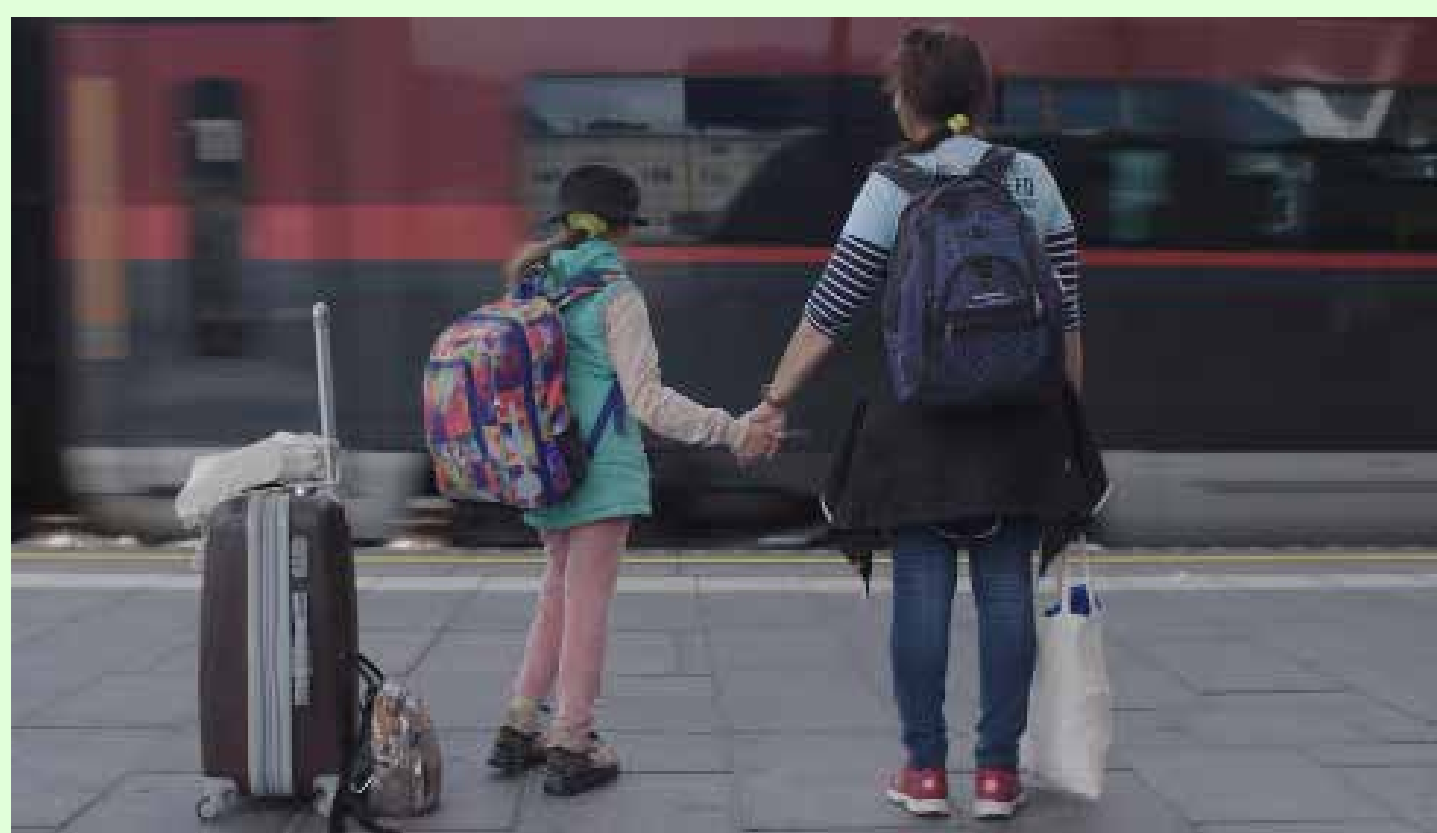
Streaming: Netflix

Run Time: 31 mins

Available to stream: From October 15th

In 2022, a young Ukrainian girl named Milana travelled with her grandmother, Olga, to a week-long summer camp in the Austrian Alps. It wasn't a typical camping trip, though — the pair were refugees of the Russia-Ukraine War, and the camp hosted other families affected by the long shadows of the conflict with Russia. Milana and Olga's journey is documented in *Camp Courage*, a new documentary short from director Max Lowe (Torn, Adventure Not War).

In its 31-minute run time, Milana and Olga push themselves to meet the camp's mountainous terrain with bravery and hope, and the film reaches an emotional peak when Milana is faced with the prospect of overcoming her fear and climbing the final summit. Though the conflict in Ukraine looms large over Milana and Olga's experience, *Camp Courage* isn't about the war itself — instead, it's about the quiet resilience of the families who have to figure out how to rebuild in its midst and in its wake.



Barbie: The Movie ****

Starring: Margot Robbie, Ryan Gosling

Streaming: Prime (Pay to view)

Run Time: 114 mins.

Available to watch: Currently

Stereotypical Barbie and fellow dolls reside in *Barbieland*, a matriarchal society populated by different versions of Barbies, Kens, and a group of discontinued models, who are treated like outcasts due to their unconventional traits. While the Kens spend their days playing at the beach, considering it their profession, the Barbies hold prestigious jobs such as doctor, lawyer, and politician. Beach Ken is only happy when he is with Barbie and seeks a closer relationship, but Barbie rebuffs him in favour of other activities and female friendships. One evening at a dance party, Barbie is suddenly stricken with worries about mortality. Overnight, she develops bad breath, cellulite, and flat feet, disrupting her usual routines the next day. Weird Barbie, an outcast due to her disfigurement, tells her she must find the child playing with her in the real world to cure her afflictions and so Barbie sets off to fix all her problems - but what will she discover in the real world and how will this affect *Barbieland* - and Ken?

Barbie fans will love it and if you've already watched it at the cinema, now's the change to catch it again.



Interview: Dr. Mary Ryan

Samantha McMurdock recently sat down with Endocrinologist, Senior Lecturer, **S**acclaimed International Speaker, Podcaster, RSVP Women's Health contributor and musician **Dr. Mary Ryan.**



Dr. Mary Ryan has many strings to her bow and one is immediately smitten by her incredibly optimistic outlook and altruistic personality. Even chatting before and after the interview, Mary has an unrivalled zeal for improving the lives of women, not only in Ireland but across the world; impressive when we think of the cruel hand of cards this Limerick lady was dealt in 2013 when her husband Eamon Prendiville died suddenly leaving her with 8-year-old twins (Seán and Michael) and a 5-year-old (Úna) to raise alone. Despite battling grief and “going through the motions” for the next two years, Mary worked full-time and researched health inequality, whilst lobbying to put menopause on the national agenda.

Many mistakenly believe that hormones are a female issue.

“We all have a hormone control centre that controls all our muscles, organs and immune systems, testosterone being the main male hormone and estrogen being the main female one so they are a lot more important than any of us give them credit for, probably because we don't think about them. When I first started teaching I'd stress to my students that if there's a hormonal imbalance, everything in the body is out of synchrony - essentially the hormones and balancing them is the most important thing which is why we [GPs and medical professionals] always stress the importance of eating healthily, avoiding stress, exercising and getting eight hours sleep as that rebalances the hormones. I might add here that it is trickier for women as they have periods and I always say, if you're a woman and dealing with heavy periods, do not put up with it; women years ago just soldiered on with heavy periods, peri-menopause and menopause don't put up with it, there's lots of help available.”

You're heavily involved in educating females on what's happening in their bodies; do you think we need to incorporate more about hormone health into the school curriculum?

“Totally! Males and females need to be informed about hormonal health because once you have an understanding of hormones you will understand why you need to do each thing you're doing to stay fit and healthy. Rest, relaxation and meditation will mean nothing to you if you don't understand why they are needed.

“We need to educate young people on the circadian rhythm, why eight hours is essential for remaining healthy, we need to stress the importance of everything we must do to regulate our bodies. When I'm treating a diabetic for instance, they are aware of what insulin is doing for them and why excess sugar is bad so this informs and motivates them in making the correct decisions.

“In schools across Ireland there needs to be education around the thyroid, fertility, periods: what's normal, what's not and ensure that no girl is battling through each month when there is help available. I don't want any girl to suffer like they sadly did in the past. Teaching schoolgirls what's abnormal period-wise also helps avoid fertility issues down the road like endometriosis and fibroids. I might add that research shows that heavy periods have been linked to poor self esteem. Let's ensure every girl across Ireland gets the opportunity to perform at her best. In 2023 no girl should be struggling with period related issues each month. The help is there, it is levelling out the playing field so let's ensure all girls have access to it.”

You've spoken of the importance of not over-exercising in our forties, is that the same for men and women?

“Exercise is great for men and women so long as we don't overdo it, thirty minutes a day is recommended but the point I was making was, if you're overtired and exercising, that is never a good thing. Always listen to your body and make sure you are ten out of ten energy-wise before exercising. I regularly see men and women who are exhausted - probably operating at two out of ten and totally overdoing it, feeling guilty for even sitting in a chair. The most important thing is to recharge and not push the body when you are depleted of energy as you're doing more harm than good to your hormones.”

Female health throughout the ages has largely been neglected and even now in Ireland, north and south there's HRT shortages periodically. Would there be HRT shortages if men relied on it?

“[Laughs] No, not at all ... there be no shortage and that’s why I’ve spoken out, as have many others. All medications, if deemed necessary should be available. Not every woman wants HRT but if she needs it then it should be available. It’s the same with every medication, regardless of sex, if needed, they must be available. We live life once and its all about making the best life for each one of us, so let’s make things equal for all; men and woman have equality, we work together harmoniously, so let’s level the playing field and if a woman needs HRT and its safe for her to take it, ensure its available. We need to help each other and do our best to make life as special as possible.”



You were motivated to campaign for education around female hormonal health after many women visited your clinic, frightened and confused about the changes in their bodies and mental health around peri-menopause and menopause.

“Yes, I had women come in to me telling me their mothers were in asylums around the time of menopause, which is horrific to think of. One of the main symptoms many women face in menopause is extreme anxiety and when they come to me and I think, ‘Imagine going through this for the next five years without any help’. It’s very very sad that due to lack of education, many women were misdiagnosed years ago. I was so saddened by many stories I heard that I had to come forward and speak out. It’s lovely to see women coming forward, getting the help they need and feeling themselves again. I know I’ve said this a lot, but education is vital - the word is getting out there, but we need to keep the conversation going so that every single woman knows she does not have to go through peri-menopause or menopause alone, there’s HRT and thankfully so much more research into women’s health issues these days.”

**.... its
what we put in the trolley that
causes the issues - if
you don’t bring it in, you can’t eat
it.**

Type 2 diabetes is such a problem in Ireland right now. What are your feelings on this epidemic?

“I always tell my patients that is all begins with the shopping trolley. Most of us do a shop once a week and its what we put in the trolley that causes the issues - if you don’t bring it in, you can’t eat it. That’s not to say you can’t have a treat; I always tell my patients to go out of the house for their treat once or twice a week and some of my patients actually go out together to share the treat which is nice [laughs]. We are all human and we all get tired and crave the wrong things, but having those fatty, carb-laden, sugary items at hand in our homes is never a good idea. Eating more sugar than we need puts our pancreas gland under pressure and that’s how we get type 2 diabetes and no one wants that because then you have the problems with your eyes, kidneys, heart, feet and so on, whereas keeping your weight normal and not putting weight on around the abdomen really helps. We need to be doing so much more work around prevention: loving yourself, and loving yourself means not allowing those sugary items into your trolley and into your home.”

How do you relax?

“I listen to music on the wireless. I find that watching the television just sucks you in then you stay up later than planned, so I avoid it. I go to bed early as I need my sleep and really like to recharge, so I pretty much do what I tell others to do [laughs].”

**I’d
explain how in 2023
the world is there to take, girls are
equal so it’s wonderful seeing young women
going off and embracing this beautiful world.**

What piece of advice would you give your 16-year-old self?

“I would tell her that things are so much more equal now for girls and its great. I’d explain how in 2023 the world is there to take, girls are equal so it’s wonderful seeing young women going off and embracing this beautiful world. I’d tell her that girls empower girls and we all have one life to live so help each other along the way and enjoy it. I love seeing the opportunities that girls have today, it’s amazing and a delight to watch.”

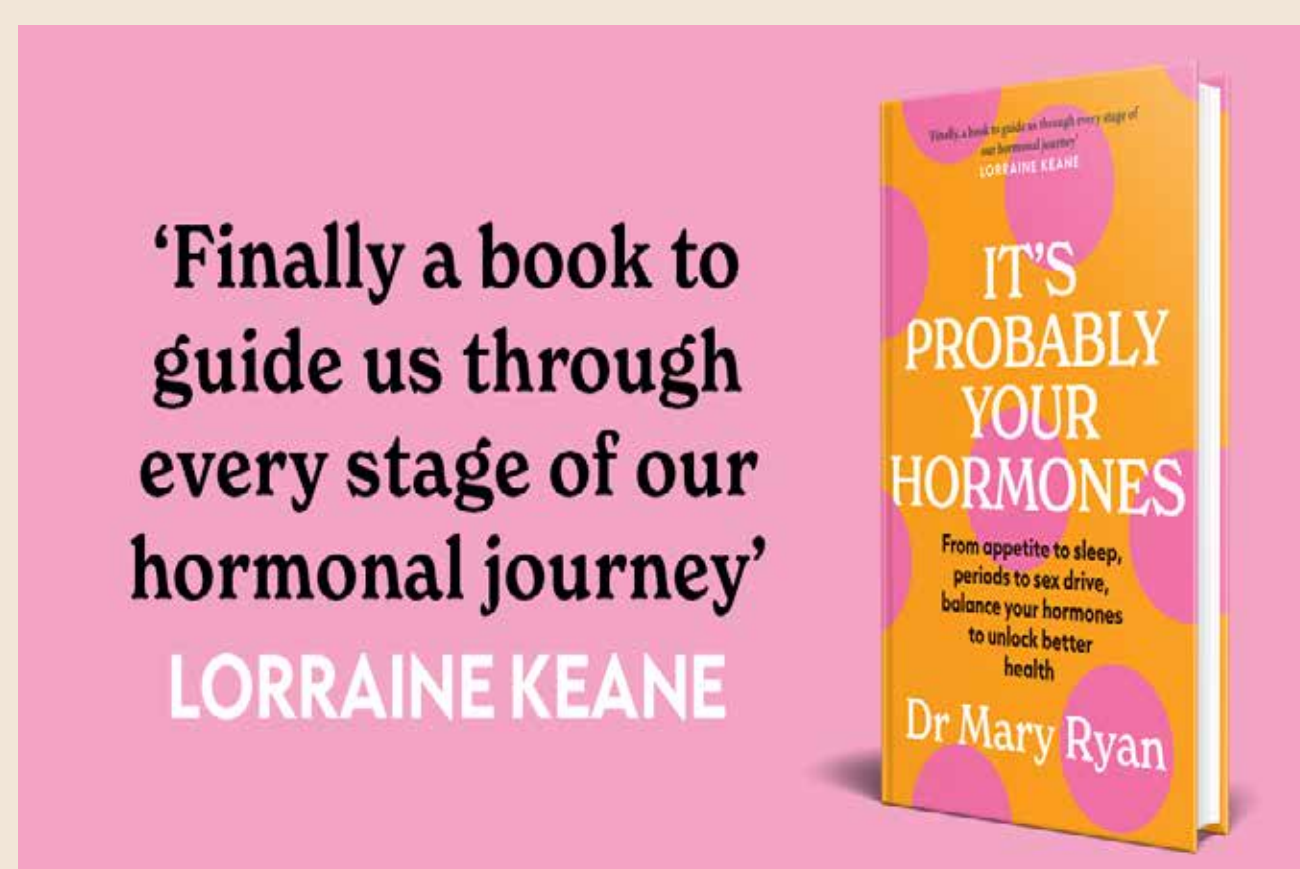
As we finish up the interview Mary speaks of her three children, two of whom are at university, her love of

singing (she's a soprano) and how it might be nice to share her life with someone special again. For a person who has dedicated their life to helping others, even raising much needed funds for charities like the Irish Heart Foundation along the way, she deserves all the happiness life can offer.



Highly recommended:

It's Probably Your Hormones by Dr. Mary Ryan (Gill Books) is available now in all good bookshops, online and on Kindle.





THE BIG LAND STEAL: THE ULSTER PLANTATION

The Plantation of Ulster is widely seen as the origin of mutually antagonistic Catholic/Irish and Protestant/British identities in Ulster. Liz Scales reports.



The best land was given over to the Plantation

The Plantation of Ulster was the structured colonisation of Ulster by British officials. Private plantation by rich landowners started in 1606, while official plantation, overseen by King James I of England and VI of Scotland began three years later. This was arable land in Fermanagh, Cavan, Tyrone, Coleraine and Armagh (most of Antrim and Down were privately colonised).

Newcomers Attempt to Civilise Barbarous Ulster Folk

These new British tenants were from Scotland and England and the main stipulation was - they must be English-speaking and Protestant. The Plantation of Ulster was the largest and most successful of the Plantations of Ireland and was deemed “essential” by the Brits in power as the people of Ulster were “rude and barbarous” and needed to be “civilised.” Sir John Davies, who was one of the leading organisers echoed the general consensus amongst his peers,

“The Irish in the province of Ulster live in the most primitive part of Ireland, the very seat and nest of the last rebellion.”

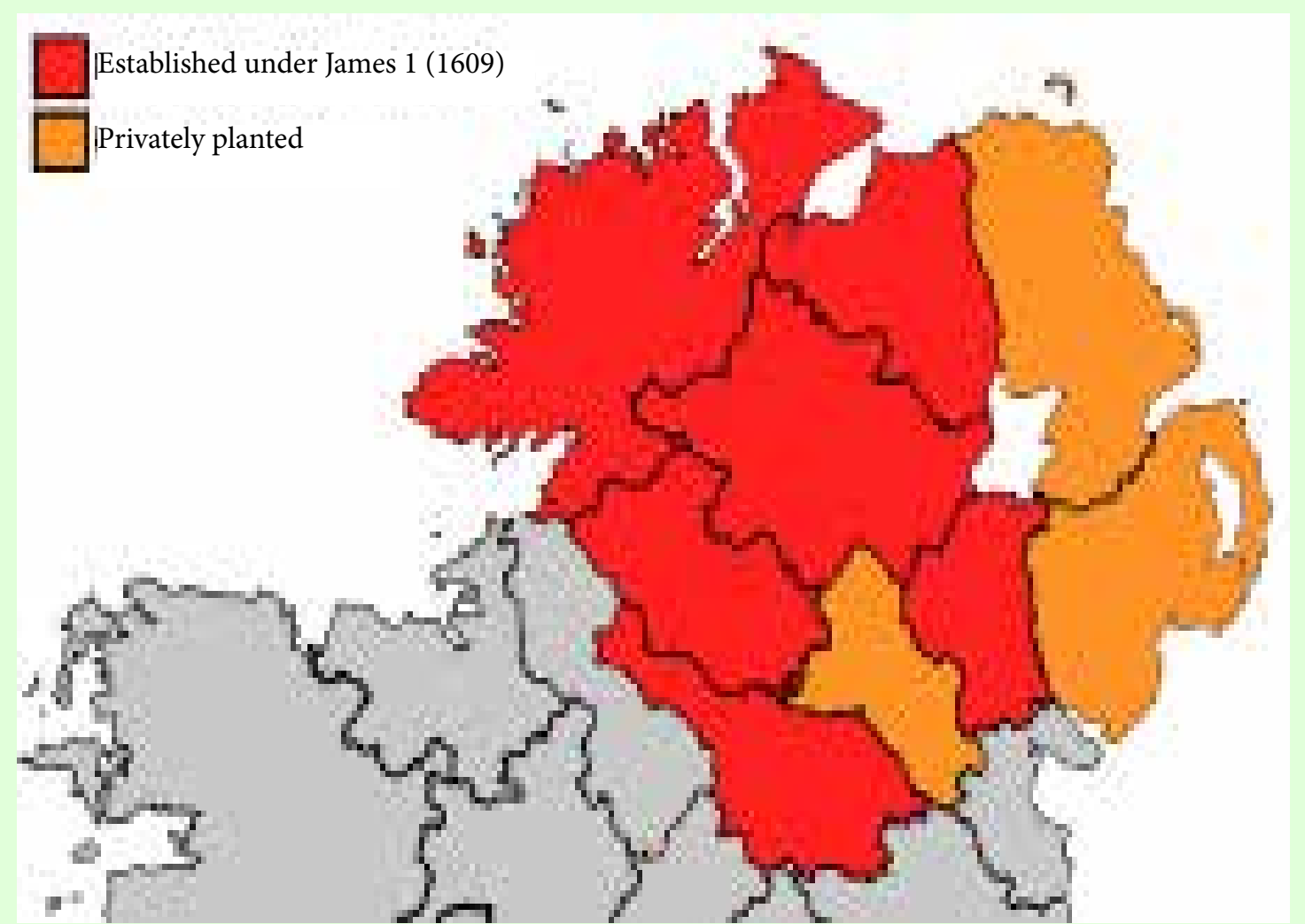
Ulster was feared as during the previous century they’d proved to be the most resistant to English control - so King James I believed taking charge of the province’s land would prevent further insurrection, not to mention converting them to Protestantism.

**These
new landowners were prohibited from
taking Irish tenants and had to import staff from
England and Scotland.**

Big Land Steal

The plan of action for the plantation was shaped by two components - one was the desire to ensure the colonisation could not be shattered by revolt. This meant that, rather than settling the British in remote patches of land impounded from Irish rebels, all of the land would be seized and then redistributed to create clusters of colonists around new towns and garrisons. These new landowners were prohibited from taking Irish tenants and had to import staff from England and Scotland. The residual Irish landowners were to be given a mere 25% of the land! The settlers were prohibited from selling their lands to any Irish-born person. The second major influence on the Plantation was the negotiation among various interest groups on the British side. The chief landowners were to be Undertakers, wealthy men who were responsible for importing tenants from their own estates. They were given 3000 acres each, on the condition that they settle a minimum of 48 adult males (including at least 20 families).

Since these former officers didn't have enough private funds to finance the colonisation, their collaboration was subsidised by the twelve great guilds. Livery companies from the City of London were coerced into providing capital for the project, as were The City of London guilds which were also given land on the west bank of the River Foyle, to build their own city - Londonderry near the older Derry as well as acreage in Co. Coleraine. The final major beneficiary of lands was the Protestant Church of Ireland, which was granted all the churches and lands previously owned by the Roman Catholic Church. The British government intended that clerics from England would wipe out Catholicism.



By 1622, a survey found there were 6,800 British adult males on Plantation lands - 3,100 were English and 3,700 Scottish – indicating an adult planter population of around 12,000 (when wives and adult children were counted) however another 4,000 Scottish adult males had settled in unplanted Antrim and Down, giving a total settler population of about 19,000 (when wives and adult children were added). Despite the fact that the Plantation had ordered that the Irish population be relocated, this didn't generally happen. Firstly, around 300 native landowners who had taken the English side in the Nine Years War were rewarded with land grants. Secondly, the majority of the Gaelic Irish remained in their native areas, but often on much worse land than before! They usually lived in the same area as the Protestant settlers. The main reason for this was that Undertakers couldn't import enough English or Scottish tenants to fill their agricultural workforce and had to fall back on Irish tenants.

From the viewpoint of the settlers, the plantation was a mixed success. About the time the Plantation of Ulster was planned, the Virginia Plantation at Jamestown in 1607 started. The London guilds planning to fund the Plantation of Ulster switched and backed the London Virginia Company instead. Many British Protestant settlers went to Virginia or New England in America rather than to Ulster.

By the 1630s, there were 20,000 adult male British settlers in Ulster, which meant that the total settler population could have been as high as 80,000. They formed local majorities of the population in the Finn and Foyle valleys (around Derry and east Donegal), in north Armagh and in east Tyrone. What's more, the unofficial settlements in Antrim and Down were thriving. The settler population grew rapidly, as just under half of the planters were women.

**To
this day a large percentage of Ulster's
most successful farmers and landowners tend to be
Protestant Presbyterians**

The endeavour to convert the Irish to Protestantism was a failure. The main problem was the language difference. Protestant religion leaders imported were English speakers, whereas the natives spoke Irish, so conversions were rare. After 1621, Irish natives could be officially classed as British if they converted to Protestantism. Of those Catholics who did convert to Protestantism, many made their choice for social and political reasons - for instance, remaining Catholic meant you stayed in poor quality land areas that had little agricultural value whereas those who did convert to Protestantism had much better land and this created great hostility between the two communities.

The Long Term Consequences of the Ulster Plantation

To this day a large percentage of Ulster's most successful farmers and landowners tend to be Protestant Presbyterians which many Catholics find unfair as they believe their forefathers forfeited their religion and culture for monetary gain and social standing.

**One
of the biggest consequences of the
Plantation was how it altered the political and religious
landscape of the province.**

These settlers also left a legacy in terms of language, as the strong Ulster Scots dialect, which originated through the speech of Lowland Scots settlers (which evolved and was influenced by both Hiberno-English and the Irish language) is still spoken in countless Ulster-Scots communities today like Portavogie and Donaghadee in Co. Down and in the likes of Glenoe and Ballymena in Co. Antrim.

One of the biggest consequences of the Plantation was how it altered the political and religious landscape of the province. Prior to the plantation, Ulster was almost completely Catholic, however, the plantation changed this completely. By the time 1659 rolled around, around 30% of the entire population of Ulster were British. This percentage continued to grow as the years went on, and by the middle of the eighteenth century, Protestants were the majority in the province. It could be said that the seeds of civil unrest and the troubles of the latter part of the 20th century had their origins in the Plantation of Ulster.

Wishing you a Safe and Warm
Christmas



John Lahart TD

Dublin South West



(01)4662026

(01)6183712

john.lahart@oireachtas.ie

**Paul
Murphy TD**

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A voice for
workers'
rights and
eco-socialism



A LITTLE BIT OF IRISH

Phrase:	Translations:	Pronunciation:
Slainte agus tainte!	Health and wealth	slawn-che oggus tinn-che
Ceoil agus Craic	Singing and fun	ceo/ill ogg/iss crack
Ta me are meisce	I am very drunk	taw//air/mesh-keh
Ta me ar buille	I am very angry	taw//air/bool-yeh
Ta me tuirseach	I am tired	taw//tier-shock
Tuigim Gaeilge shimpli	I understand simple irish	thug/imm gale/geh him/plee
Na dean sin!	Don't do that!	Naw dane shin

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. Viola	vee-oh-luh	1. A four-stringed musical instrument of the violin family.
2. Liquefy	lik-wuh-fahy	2. To make or become liquid.
3. Logorrhea	law-guh-ree-uh	3. Pathologically incoherent, repetitious speech.
4. Homophones	hom-uh-fohnz	4. Two words that sound alike (deer and dear).
5. Bobbejaan	bob-e-jin	5. A baboon.
6. Fallacious	fuh-ley-shuhs	6. Deceptive; misleading.
7. Gist	jist	7. The main or essential part of a matter
8. Legerdemain	lej-er-duh-meyn	8. Sleight of hand.
9. Redoubtable	ri-dou-tuh-buhl	9. That is to be feared; formidable.
10. Pulchritude	puhl-kri-tood	10. Physical beauty.
11. Portent	pohr-tent	11. An indication or omen of something about to happen, especially something momentous.
12. Malodorous	mal-oh-der-uhs	12. Having an unpleasant or offensive odor; smelling bad.

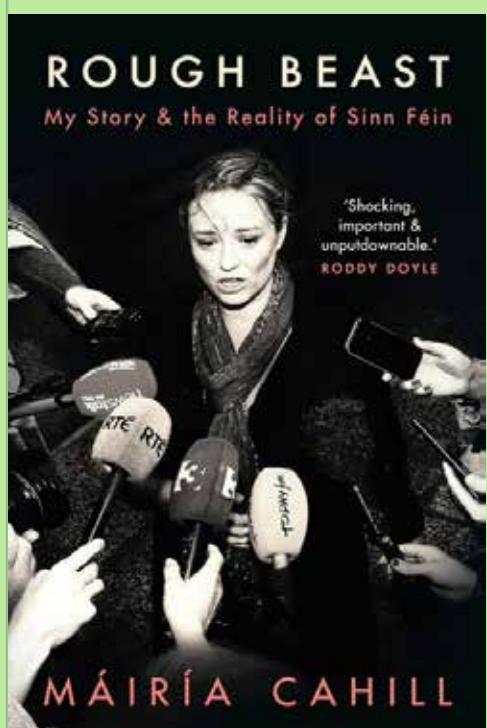
How did YOU score?
10 or more - Perfection!
6-9 Brilliant.
3-5 Well done.
0-2 Must do better.

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.

Rough Beast: My Story and the Reality of Sinn Féin – Máiría Cahill – Apollo

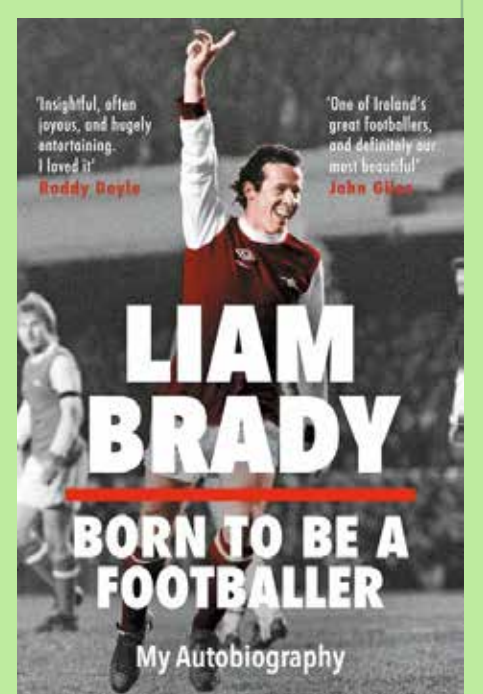


Rough Beast is Máiría Cahill's harrowing story of her life and of what she went through at the hands of what is now Ireland's largest and richest party. That story is told here for the first time in full detail and with unsparing honesty. It is a story of unimaginable trauma and political corruption. It brings to life a world of paramilitary secrecy and parallel laws, but above all it is the story of one young woman's defiance of the power wielded by ex-gunmen inspiring fear and silence, and their influence over elected politicians. Máiría Cahill grew up steeped in the traditions of Irish republicanism and the shadowy world of the IRA: her great-uncle Joe was one of the main founders of the Provisional IRA and her grandfather was Gerry Adams's mentor in the republican movement. From an early age she seemed destined for a glittering career within the increasingly successful political machine of Sinn Féin, which was then enjoying the aftermath of the Good Friday Agreement. She worked in a radio station alongside leading republicans; the Sinn Féin offices were her second home. She knew Gerry Adams and other senior republicans as family friends. But at the age of 16, she was sexually abused by a prominent Belfast IRA man. When she confided in some friends she trusted about the abuse, one of them told the IRA without Máiría's knowledge. A year later the organisation came calling, and forced her to take part in an inept and grotesquely insensitive internal investigation. She was subjected to round after round of interrogations by senior IRA men and women, usually in a network of safe houses around Belfast. Doubt was cast on her account of what had been done to her. Her assailant was allowed to confront and denounce her. Eventually her rapist was permitted to vanish from Belfast while Sinn Féin and the IRA professed bafflement about his whereabouts.

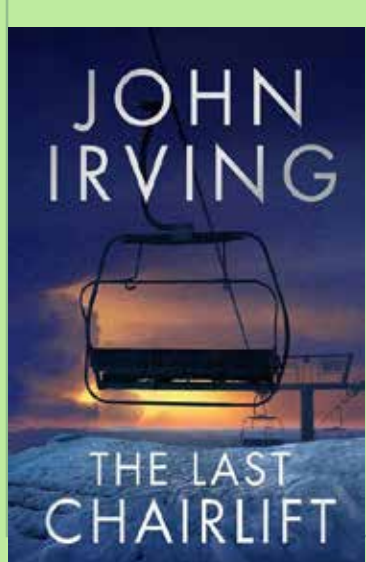
"Rough Beast is shocking, important and unputdownable." Roddy Doyle

Born to be a Footballer –Born to be a Footballer –Liam Brady – Eriu

"Being a footballer was my destiny." After being expelled from school for playing football for his country, fifteen-year-old Liam Brady travelled to London to join Arsenal, and soon became an indispensable part of their glorious 1970s team. Rightly considered one of the Republic of Ireland's best-ever footballers, he went on to enjoy successes with Juventus, Sampdoria and West Ham, as well as managing Celtic and Brighton and Hove, and becoming assistant manager of his national team. Today he is best known for his much-respected TV punditry and searingly intelligent insights into the game he adores. Full of honest insights, amusing anecdotes and recollections of extraordinary times, with Born to be a Footballer Brady delivers a compelling story of a fifty-year career that is unparalleled in Irish sport.



The Last Chairlift – John Irving –Scribner

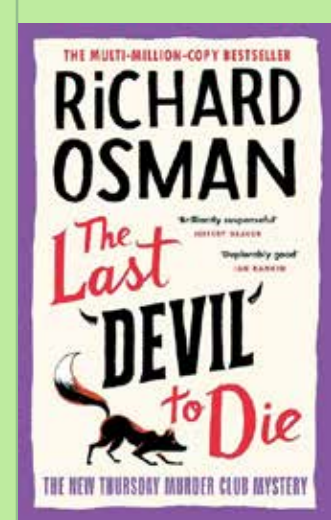
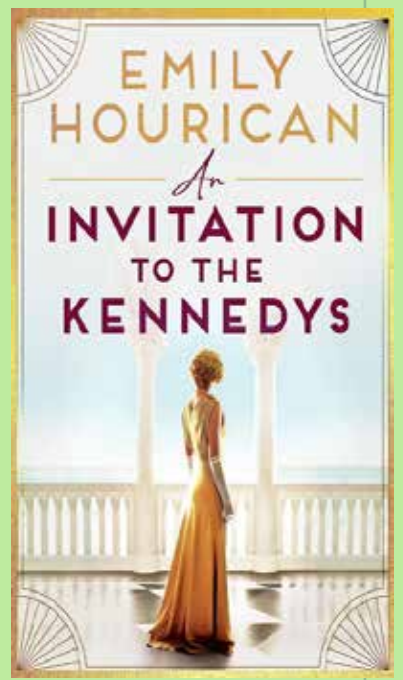


In Aspen, Colorado, in 1941, Rachel Brewster is a slalom skier at the National Downhill and Slalom Championships. Little Ray, as she is called, finishes nowhere near the podium, but she manages to get pregnant. Back home, in New

England, Little Ray becomes a ski instructor. Her son, Adam, grows up in a family that defies conventions and evades questions concerning the eventful past. Years later, looking for answers, Adam will go to Aspen. In the Hotel Jerome, where he was conceived, Adam will meet some ghosts; in The Last Chairlift, they aren't the first or the last ghosts he sees. John Irving has written some of the most acclaimed books of our time — among them, The World According to Garp and The Cider House Rules.

An Invitation to the Kennedys – Emily Hourican – Hachette Books Ireland

A captivating story of high society, forbidden love and a world on the cusp of change. Kathleen 'Kick' Kennedy, recently arrived from Boston, is already a huge hit in 1930s London society. As the daughter of the US ambassador, she is at the centre of the most elite social circles. But when she falls for a duke-in-waiting, she realises there are plenty of people who think she doesn't belong. Lady Brigid Guinness has no interest in love, marriage or society connections. But her brother-in-law Chips Channon has other ideas - and seems intent on pushing her towards a match with a dull German prince. When Chips invites the Kennedys and a select group of friends and family to Kelvedon Hall, his country estate, Brigid and Kick discover that beneath the brittle facade of politeness, marriages are on the rocks, political intrigue abounds and nothing is really as it seems - all while the war in Europe grows closer by the day. By the time their week in Essex has ended, both Kick and Brigid realise that their world is changing rapidly, and their hopes and plans for the future may have to change too . . . Inspired by true-life events, An Invitation to the Kennedys is a spellbinding page-turner from the bestselling author of the Guinness Girls series.



The Last Devil To Die: The Thursday Murder Club – Richard Osman – Viking

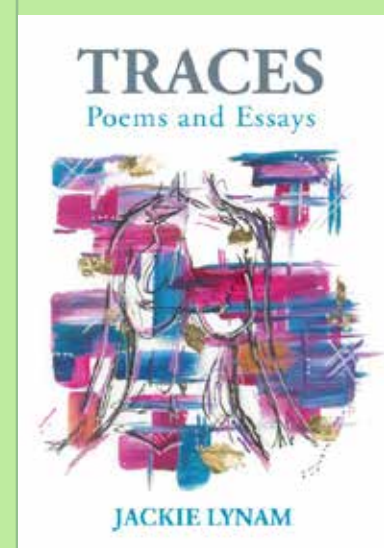
Shocking news reaches the Thursday Murder Club. An old friend in the antiques business has been killed, and a dangerous package he was protecting has gone missing. As the gang springs into action they encounter art forgers, online fraudsters and drug dealers, as well as heartache close to home. With the body count rising, the package still missing and trouble firmly on their tail, has their luck finally run out? And who will be the last devil to die?

Black and Irish: Legends, Trailblazers and Everyday Heroes: Legends, Trailblazers & Everyday Heroes – Little Island Books. By Leon Diop (Author), Brianna Fitzsimons (Author), Jessica Louis (Illustrator)

Covering historic and current figures from the worlds of the arts, sport, business, politics and social activism, Black and Irish will also find space to celebrate everyday heroes - lesser known figures making a difference in Irish communities today.



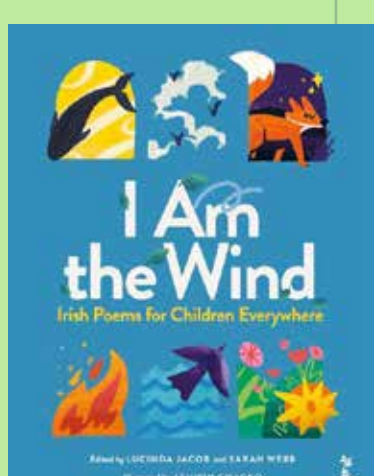
TRACES – Jackie Lynam



A collection of poems and essays on themes including the body, illness, motherhood, music, family and friendship. Jackie Lynam is a librarian from Dublin. Her work has been published in several anthologies and journals, and has been shortlisted for the Anthony Cronin International Short Poem Award, The Bangor Poetry Competition and Write by the Sea Poetry Competition. Her non-fiction essays have been published in the Irish Independent and broadcast on Sunday Miscellany on RTÉ Radio 1. TRACES is her first collection.

I am the Wind: Irish Poems for Children: Irish Poems for Children Everywhere By Ed. Sarah Webb (Author), Lucinda Jacob (Author), Ashwin Chacko (Illustrator) Little Island Books

A fully illustrated collection of Irish poems, ranging from medieval to modern poems in English and Irish, edited by Lucinda Jacob and Sarah Webb and illustrated by Ashwin Chacko. This includes old favourites and new voices.



The Podcast Review

We source the best selection of podcasts each issue. This time we bring you, Do We Get To Win This Time?, Drifting Off with Joe Pera, The Making of Messi and The Retrievals.

Do We Get To Win This Time? (Film)



‘Nam is the subject of The Ringer’s endlessly fascinating ‘Do We Get To Win This Time? How Hollywood Made the Vietnam War’ podcast – and specifically ‘Nam movies: the great, the totally out-there, and the ones with John Wayne in them. Hear Oliver Stone talking Platoon, revisit the controversy of The Deer Hunter, and have a toke on whatever the cast and crew of ‘Apocalypse Now’ was smoking back in the Philippines’ jungle in 1976. There’s real IQ in the storytelling, too, as host Brian Raftery explores what the war’s ever-evolving filmography says about America.

Drifting Off with Joe Pera (Sleep)

Had a bit of trouble sleeping recently? You’re in for a treat. Joe Pera made a triumphant return to podcasting in March 2023 with his brand new podcast ‘Drifting Off with Joe Pera’ – his first actual sleep podcast (the rest were just unintentionally relaxing). Listen to the sweet sounds of Pera’s soothing voice, the twinkling music, and the pretty random subject matters, and find yourself waking up after a peaceful eight hours



The Making of Messi... (Football)



Hosted by the Athletic’s Mike Zimmermann, this three-part series explores the life of football legend Lionel Messi, in the wake of his move to Inter Miami in the US, the club co-owned by David Beckham. The podcast details Messi’s story so far and why he is often deemed the GOAT (“Great of All Time”) in men’s football. The first episode covers Messi’s upbringing in Rosario, Argentina, and his two-decade spell at Barcelona followed by his move to PSG; the subsequent episodes delve into what Messi’s move to the Major Soccer League (MLS) means for football in America. Among the interviews are perspectives from former MLS footballers Bradley Wright-Phillips and Nedum Onuoha, alongside the Athletic’s own journalists.

The Retrievals (Human Interest)

This harrowing five-part series investigates what happened at a Yale fertility clinic, where many patients underwent excruciatingly painful procedures thanks to an unscrupulous nurse. It’s eye-opening and absolutely engrossing.



How to:

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