

rabble

Issue #6 Summer 2013
Published Quarterly.

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repeal the eighth



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Ah g'wan...



WE TAKE
A LOOK AT
DERELICT
DUBLIN.

INSIDE.

Sex Workers Speak

rabble gets some
views on Turn Off
The Red Light...

Inside Google

High tech heaven or short
term contracts hell?

Meet Macronite

Limerick's underground
clubbing dons...

Kevin Barry

Find out what they're
all skanking to down in
Bohane City...



Turkey

Reflections on Taksim Square
and some street fashion tips...

Pro-Lifers

Are the reactionary bigots on the
losing end of history?

Flash Fiction

Meet someone with a direct line
to James Connolly...

{THE RANT}

'You're all fucked off

THIS ISSUE OF RABBLE WAS BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE 260 PEOPLE WHO DONATED TO OUR FUND:IT CAMPAIGN. THEIR FAITH IN THIS PROJECT WILL HELP TO KEEP IT RUNNING FOR ANOTHER YEAR.

During which time RTE will continue to inanely forecast green shoots while letting the shower who got us into this mess, their good time buddies and drinking partners go unchallenged.

Just as the folks who supported our fundit gave us hope, rabble set out to give you hope in these challenging times. But it is difficult not to be bitter writing this editorial in another country, chasing the type of paid employment that couldn't be secured in three years of hunting in Ireland.

It's hard not to feel like you've been thrown away by the place that you call home because those who could change things lacked the courage to fight your corner. Or worse see forced emigration as a stop valve on otherwise staggering rates of unemployment and social dissent. It's tough not to get angry when your last act of desperation, moving away from everyone you love and know, is met with judgement because you didn't 'stay and fight'.

Just as the nonsensical gibbering of our mainstream media won't create gainful employment, cash donations alone won't print rabble. Neither will folks telling us how great the project is but offering sweet FA in terms of actual supports. Skinny lattes, ironic

jumpers and lomographic cameras didn't save Detroit. Pop-up art galleries and shabby chic interiors won't help us create a society copped on enough to not be sold the same dodgy mortgages again. Remember that, the next time you marvel at the independent, vibrant cultural expression of cities like Berlin, Bristol or London. They didn't emerge because a local 'entrepreneur' tried to co-opt DIY culture. They're there because communities questioned the 'facts' and the solutions being offered by those with their sticky fingers in the pies.

The only thing that will keep rabble printing is if you start getting your hands dirty. And that goes just the same for independent spaces such as The Exchange and Seomra Spraoi. These projects are run by a small group of volunteers who give time and energy that can't be monetized because they believe that what they are doing is bigger than a balance sheet. Turning up and using the venue will help justify its existence but helping out will make it grow.

Building spaces and communities with your neighbours and friends that aren't about what you get out of it might just create the type of structures that could shout NO next time the banks screw it up. 'Cos folks this cycle is gonna keep happening if you don't start taking the power back.

In the time it took you to read this another person left Ireland to find work, purpose, or maybe just some hope. That is truly fucking terrible and a deadly testament of how the old order, the political parties, media, banks, universities and corporations are failing us as much now as they did in 2008. And they will continue to fail us for as long as we buy into their self-serving economic stories of gold gilded futures just one more budget away.



{EYE}

Irene Siragusa Captures The Messy Side Of The Night Time Economy

I don't like the fact that the Temple Bar area is sold as the Cultural Quarter of Dublin by Temple Bar Cultural Trust. Its economical value is extremely obvious at night when I went out to take these photos, that's between 2am and 4am. This generates a sort of 'threshold of tolerance' for social behaviours that usually would not be accepted or tolerated for the sake of a profitable economy. People were beaten up, passed out on the road or picked up by ambulances. Bins were set on fire and everyone was still drinking and chatting away like nothing out of the ordinary was happening, sometimes looking at these events as though it was just a fictional show.

For more visit www.comeandseemywebsite.com

HIGHLIGHTS

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Gombeen #6

THE HIGHWAY RAT, BY GRUFFALO AUTHOR JULIA DONALDSON, IS THE STORY OF A THIEVING RAT WHO STALKS THE LAND ATOP HIS HORSE. IT'S A HELPFUL PARABLE FOR UNDERSTANDING MARK FIELDING, BOSS OF ISME, THE LOBBYING ORGANISATION FOR IRELAND'S SMALL AND MEDIUM BUSINESSES.

In the Highway Rat, the rat's kleptomaniac means "he even stole his own horse's hay". Similarly, ISME's Rat has given full-blooded support to austerity, stridently opposing minimum wage increases and calling for the abolition of all Employment Regulation Orders and Registered Employment Agreements. These measures hammer the living standards of the 777,000 SME sector employees, destroy their purchasing power, and send more small businesses to the wall (businesses are closing at almost twice the rate that new ones are formed).

ISME's Rat speaks on behalf of a stratum of male stuffed shirts who spunked away their firms' revenue on failed property deals during the boom. For all their breying in golf clubs and hotel lobbies about entrepreneurship, they rely on State supports and subsidies at every turn to prop up their revenues. Their solution to the crisis, like the Highway Rat, is to "grow horribly fat by eating up everyone's dinner."



ABOUT US.

rabble is a non-profit, newspaper from the city's underground. It's collectively and independently run by volunteers. rabble aims to create a space for the passionate telling of truth, muck-raking journalism and well aimed pot-shots at illegitimate authority.

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rabble

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Distro Fairies: Loadsa ya! You know who ya are.



{LOOK UP 5}

Bedlam in North Dublin

IN THESE DAYS OF ENDLESS CHURCH SCANDALS, THE ROLE OF THE STATE IN THE ABUSE OF THE CITIZENRY IS OFTEN OVERLOOKED. PAUL REYNOLDS OPENS THE PANDORA'S BOX THAT IS THE HISTORY OF IRISH PSYCHIATRIC HEALTHCARE.

Grangegorman, in Dublin's North inner city is perhaps the most striking example of Ireland's journey through psychiatric healthcare. Built 200 years ago to the plans of London's Bethlehem ('Bedlam') Hospital, it was at the time a progressive leap and signified a willingness to deal with 'idiots and lunatics' rather than leave them to families, death or the church.

In October 1968, The Irish Times published an influential series of articles by Michael Viney highlighting a range of problems related to mental healthcare and, in particular, the large numbers in psychiatric hospitals. The following decades saw determined efforts by Government and health services to move psychiatric care away from institutions into the community. By 2003, there were fewer than 3,700 psychiatric inpatients – an 80 per cent decrease in four decades. Eighty Per Cent.

In 1960 there were 500 people in Irish prisons. In Irish 'Lunatic Asylums' the number exceeded 20,000. In many towns, the asylum single-handedly dominated the local economy: in 1951, Ballinasloe had a population of 5,596, of whom 2,078 were patients in the asylum. By 1961, one in every 70 Irish people above the age of 24 was in a psychiatric hospital.

It is something that we have cleansed from our conscience but, like the other skeletons in our closet, it will come back to shame us.

The mentally ill were seen as different from the poor and indigent; while we built poor houses for them, until the 1821 Lunatic Asylum for the Poor Act we had no concerted approach to dealing with the mentally ill.

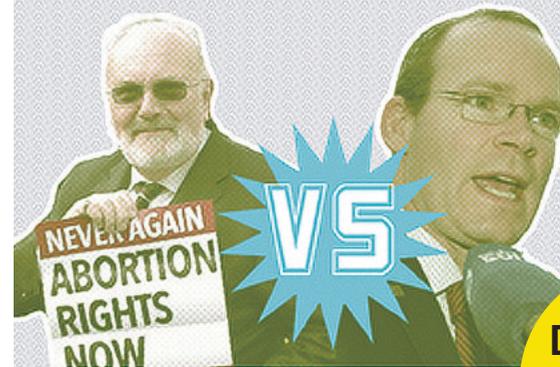
Of course our definition of mental illness and that of our ancestors varies greatly. It must be noted that involuntary commitment could occur for a plethora of 'ailments' such as masturbation, atheism, homosexuality and even laziness. So wide-ranging were the ailments that by the 1940s all that was needed to lock someone away was a family member to claim they were insane. By the post-war years we had more people in asylums or mental hospitals per capita than anyplace on earth.

Naturally the conditions were appalling. Even in the early years Grangegorman accommodated 2,000 in-patients. While the local poorhouse was afflicted with filth, disease and relied on wheelbarrows of leftovers to feed the poor the state of Grangegorman was not very different. Tales from around the country, in the 20th century, explain that the number of in-patients exceeded the number of beds sometimes by as many as 3 or 4 to one so patients either slept in groups or on floors. A 1958 report on St Luke's Hospital in Clonmel, described the patients all stripped at 6pm, then herded up to bed, naked, at half past six. Women with no sanitary towels, faeces all over the place, food ladled out with garden forks.

Grangegorman's in-patient facilities began closing in the 1980's and by this year the old premises had all closed with patients having been situated elsewhere in modern small care facilities. One small newer facility still operates in the grounds. The grounds will see the demolition of almost all the buildings this year as the new DIT campus rises from the rubble.

Photo by Paul Reynolds.

YOU DECIDE



Describing Enda Kenny



1

In racing parlance one of these men is a supercharged Ferrari, the other has the power to weight ratio of a small bungalow.

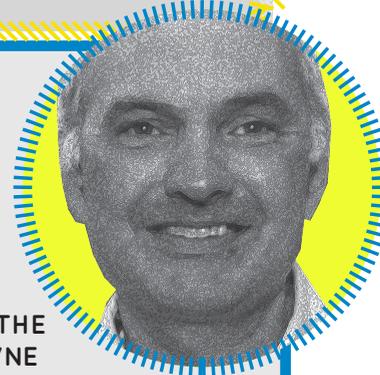
DAVID NORRIS

"THIS ABSOLUTE DEMOCRAT WHO WOULD NOT RECOGNISE DEMOCRACY IF IT CAME UP AND PUKED IN HIS FACE."

SIMON COVENY

"LIKE A LOT OF PEOPLE, I UNDERESTIMATED ENDA KENNY, HE'S BEEN NOTHING SHORT OF A PHENOMENA."

A QUICKIE WITH...



IN 'THE FRONTMAN - BONO (IN THE NAME OF POWER)' HARRY BROWNE TAKES A CRITICAL LOOK AT IRELAND'S FAVOURITE POX BOTTLE, EXPLORING HIS ROLE AS "AN AMBASSADOR FOR IMPERIAL EXPLOITATION" WHO MAKES GLOBAL INEQUALITY EVEN WORSE. GOSH. RABBLE CAUGHT UP WITH HARRY FOR AN AUL' CHINWAG.

What exactly is a Poxbottle, and why is Bono one?

You'd have to ask the graffiti-writer what s/he meant by "Bono is a poxbottle": I've never heard the word convincingly, historically defined even by Dubs who use it. I imagine nasty medicine for a nasty disease, which is pretty perfect. But in fairness I don't say Bono is one.

Before the book was published, figures like Bill Clinton came rushing to Bono's defence. Were you surprised by the PR campaign waged on his behalf?

'Campaign' sounds a little more coordinated and impressive than it was, but in any case it didn't surprise me that other rich and powerful people have a stake in the philanthropic model that Bono represents. That's kind of the point of The Frontman.

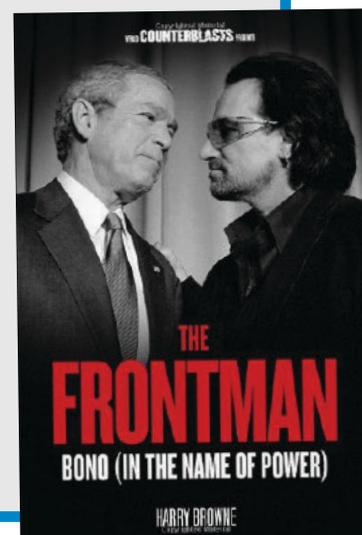
Is Bono aware of his role as an enabler of 'Empire and Capital'?

Only Bono knows what Bono knows, and even then maybe dimly. I'm sure he is aware of the critique, which long predates The Frontman, and I'm sure he would defend the role -- which he would describe with different words -- as a sort of transaction in which he gives a little to get a lot for Africa's poor.

If you were stuck on a desert island and had to choose one U2 track to take with you, what would it be?

Is it totally cheating if I name Woody Guthrie's great 'Jesus Christ', of which they recorded a nicely noisy and hot version back in the 1980s? Cheating or not, it's all you're getting.

The Front Man is in all good book shops & probably some shit ones too.



'Last year, women and children could not be accommodated on more than 3,000 occasions because refuges were full. What happened to them? Does

anyone know? Does anyone care?'- Colette Browne does. Follow her on twitter @colettebrowne



{UNDERGROUND CULTURE}

POP ON YOUR 3D SPECS NOW



Illustration by Paddy Lynch

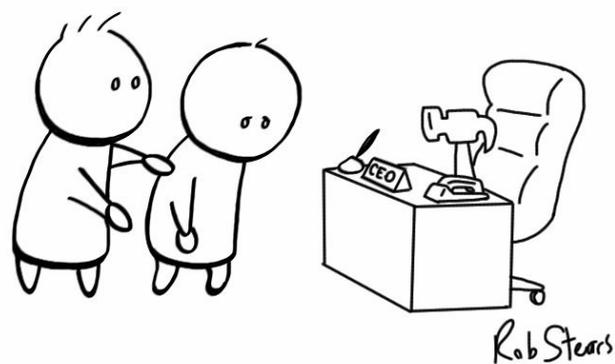
WE'RE NOT JUST A PRINTED RAG YOU KNOW? THERE ARE SWATHES OF YOU LAYABOUTS OUT THERE WITH YOUR FINGERS HOVERING OVER THE LIKE BUTTONS ON OUR CAT PICKSHURS. IT WASN'T JUST OUR PHOTO OF NICK GRIFFIN'S ADDRESS THAT KICKED UP SOME COMMENT ONLINE - HAVE A GOO AT WHAT YOU LOT WERE TELLING US ON FACEBUKE AND THE TWEET MACHINE SINCE OUR LAST ISSUE.

MARMALADE/JAM

© ROBSTEAR'S



HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?!



On Pro-Life March

Where were all these chatolics carrying crosses, and pictures of their pope, when children were being abused by priests and nuns of their church, and their pope was a collaborator in the covering up of the heinous crimes? Is it caring about the unborn, but once born they don't care? [Stephen Lewis](#)

On a question about day-to-day racism

The luas is a magnet for racism. [Alan Kinsella](#)

On news of the Anglo-tapes

Can we hang them yet? [Jimmy Reynolds](#).

On Nick Griffin hate tweet

Ooo rabbie no picture just a retarded comment don't leave the der der der village der they need you don't worry your periods will start soon keyboard brainless warrior [Steven Wagstaffe\(defending Nick Griffin\)](#)

On a home video of Sheriff St. flats in 1991

On a visit to a friend yonks ago, I was coming outta them flats & the garda handcuffed me an put into the back of a van, just cause I went to visit a lad i knew who lived there. they where shabby an rough looking flats with alot of trouble. [Cris Erin](#)

On violent arrest at peaceful pro-choice counter-rally

I was there the guy did absolutely nothing the Gardai were hassling people including myself. Just before this happened the tall Gard with the sunglasses and another one searched the guy who was standing beside me's bag. When asked why they were searching him they replied that it was under the public order act then said he was acting suspicious. When asked suspicious of what? they wouldn't give an answer. They then gave the bloke a choice to either give his name, leave the vicinity or be arrested. I was then ushered away by another Gard, the bald guy with the sun glasses, he shoved me away and told me to "Go away silly boy and get a life", very mature I thought, they then jumped the guy in the footage and brought him off. [David Fleming](#)

On Fianna Fáil attempt to participate in protest over special needs carers cuts

ha ha the charlie and bertie days of coddin the mugs are over. [Rory O'Brien](#)

On survey finding same-sex parents have children who are happier than average

Of course this is true! These same sex couples really wanted to have children and went out of their way to get one! If every child was brought into a home where the parents decided to have a child, planned it and fought to get one, every child would be happy! But most children are unplanned. The same results would be found if they did a study on the happiness of the children of heterosexual couples who planned to have them...all those children would be happy too! [Tea Leaf](#)

On Legalise Cannabis Protest photo

WHAT DO WE WANT? Chocolate biscuits and a sit down WHEN DO WE WANT IT? Whenever [Tony Le Blanc](#)

On news a woman faced imprisonment for non-payment of dog licence although she doesn't own a dog

How are you supposed to prove there is no Dog? This God/Dog thing is getting very samey. [Feargal Bryson](#)

On Creche exposé on RTE

Raking in the profits, government grants, charging big fees and they won't even provide training and employ careworkers on proper conditions. Better for the bottomline if the cheapskates can force someone to do it unwillingly to keep their welfare. Fuck for-profit care. [Shane Fitzgerald](#)



Bulger Ball The modern football was nearly invented by James Bulger, an Eastwall native in 1908. Inspired by the rotund belly of his pet Jack Russell after drinking too much butter milk, the new triple stitched 'Bulger

Ball' nearly dominated the sport. However the fact it had the aerodynamics of a wet face cloth thrown by a tired child prevented it being accepted officially by the FA.



5

BOOTBOYS, CASUALS AND THE BEAUTIFUL GAME

THE STERILITY OF MODERN BRITISH FOOTBALL STADIA - PACKAGE TRIPS, PLASTIC SEATS, PLASTIC FANS - IS A DYSTOPIAN THACHERITE VISION OF A BROKEN SOCIETY. THE FAN IS AN INDIVIDUAL, PAYING TOP DOLLAR TO BE ENTERTAINED BY LOWLY TAXED HIGH NET WORTH ATHLETES WHO ARE THE PLAYTHINGS OF FOREIGN BILLIONAIRE OLIGARCHS. DONAL FALLON SAYS IT'S LITTLE WONDER THERE HAS BEEN A WAVE OF NOSTALGIA FOR THE VISCERAL TERRACE CULTURE OF THE FOOTBALL 'CASUALS'.

The reactionary craze for casual culture in Britain has seen endless books (most of them totally forgettable) and even the odd blockbuster film dealing with the subject. Who could forget Elijah Wood of The Hobbit fame decked head to toe in Stone Island clothing running with West Ham casuals in Green Street? Yet despite all of this happening on the island next door, the history of football casuals and football violence in Ireland remains largely unwritten.

In his book *Casuals*, Phil Thornton places the explosion in casual fashion and football violence in the context of other British youth subcultures, noting that "first came the Teds, then the Mods, Rockers, Hippies, Skinheads, Suedeheads and Punks." Football casuals in Britain were defined not only by the violence of the terraces, but also the style, with working class British youths taking to expensive brands and a uniform of Adidas, Pringle and the like. The clothing was a mix of golf course chic and three-stripe runners. The violence wasn't necessarily anything new of course, as Gary Armstrong has noted, it has its roots in "the age-old masculine pursuit of revelry." So great was the fear of football violence in Britain that Labour ministers contemplated the idea of detention centres for known hooligans in the 1970s, believing that well-known troublemakers should be locked away on match days.

Of course, in time, all youth trends would leap across the Irish sea, and casuals were no different. Violence in Irish football stadiums was nothing particularly new. The *Munster Express* complained in November 1968 of the "Half-witted gutty element" at Richmond Park, a "minority lunatic fringe" who had attached themselves to Saint Patrick's Athletic, clearly provoking the wrath of one journalist who had followed Waterford United to Dublin.

In the 1970s groups like the Bootboys at Sligo Rovers appeared, with organised clashes between fans away from stadiums as well as totally unpredictable hooliganism inside grounds. The Sligo Rovers fans were particularly notorious in their day, with the club warned in 1976 by the emergency committee of the League of Ireland that there was a "strong possibility" of their ground being closed and the club heavily fined if they could not improve security arrangements there.

The nature of competitive European football ensured that not only could young football fans here read about their

equivalent in Britain, they could even come toe-to-toe on occasion. A considerable amount of the trouble witnessed in Irish stadiums in the 1970s and 80s involved the visits of sides from Britain or the north to the Republic, giving things a political dimension. In 1979 an infamous clash in Louth between supporters of Dundalk and Linfield saw well over 100 people injured, and the return leg played in Holland, banished to the continent by football authorities terrified of any repeat of the scenes in Louth. Dermot Keely remembered that "it was like playing a football match in the middle of a street riot".

Similarly, Glasgow Rangers' visit to Dublin in 1984 is remembered as much for the action off the pitch as on it, with thousands of visiting Scottish fans backed up by a huge contingent of travelling Loyalists from the north. The clashes were not confined to Phibsboro, with local youths in Dundalk taking the chance to attack the coaches heading back north after the game. The result, 3-2 to Bohemians, remains the stuff of legend among the Dalymount faithful, even if the newspapers were more interested in clashing youths the day after.

Of course, Ireland knows more than one sport by the name of 'football', and the native games were not devoid of violence either. Dublin GAA fans were more than capable of matching their League of Ireland equivalent. In September 1984, following an All-Ireland final defeat, it was reported that 250 youths were involved in fighting running battles with Gardaí along Dorset Street and on O'Connell Street. Rather incredibly, it was the GAA scene which produced a far-right threat, in the form of the 'Dublin City Firm' of the early 1990s. The use of the word 'firm' gave some indication of the influence of British hooligan culture. Anti-fascists clashed with this group on occasion, and fascism was not allowed to grow on the terraces of the GAA.

Today, there is a marked decrease in violence around sports events in Ireland. One contributing factor is the peace process of course, removing some of the hostility from the occasion, with cross-border competitions like the Setanta Cup in recent times bringing northern teams to Dublin quite often. The casual scene does still exist in Ireland and across the Irish Sea, though increased security precautions and the like have moved the action out of the stadiums.

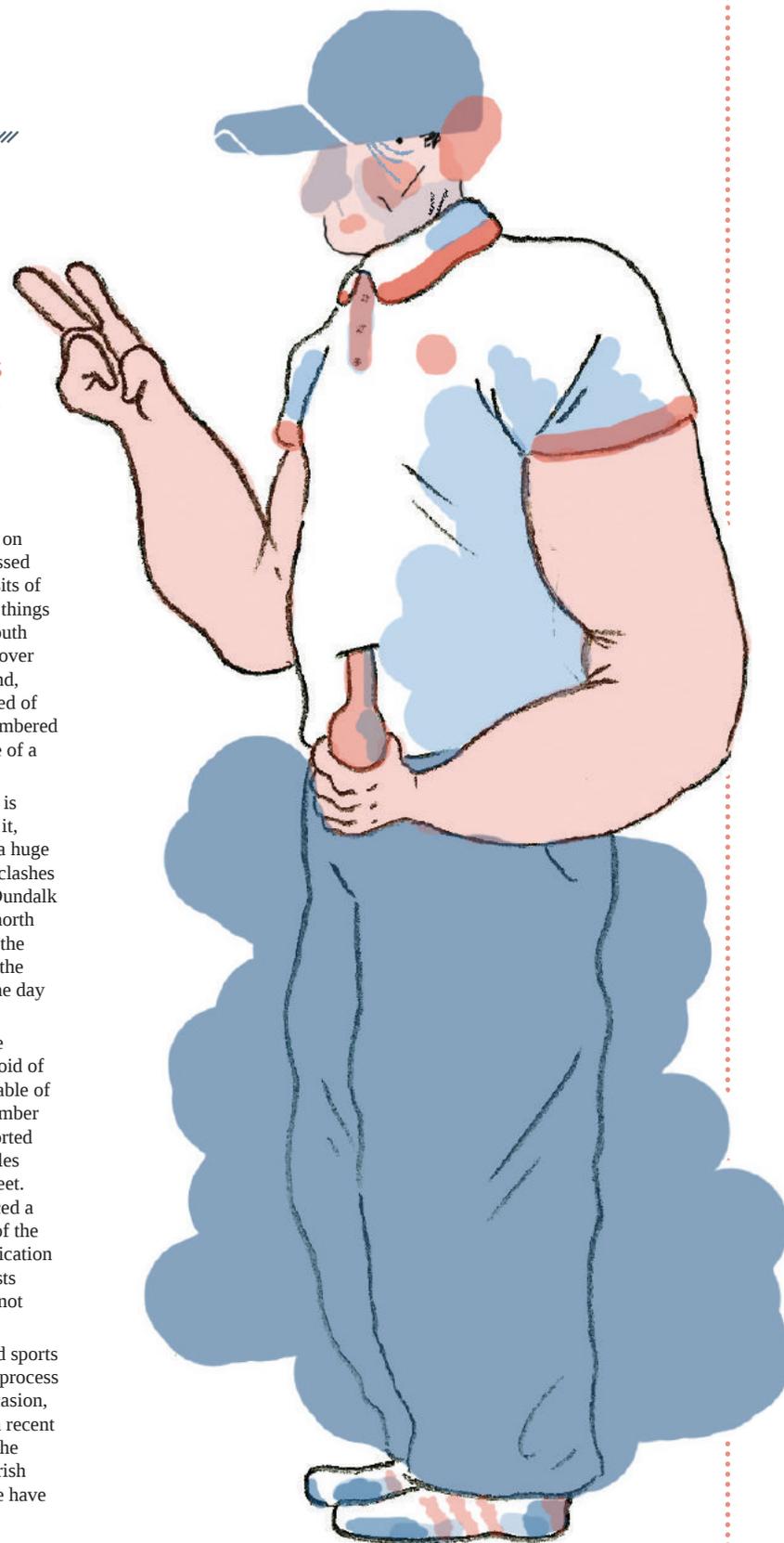


Illustration by Luke Fallon

Stephen Murney, an Éirígi activist, has been held in Maghaberry prison without trial since November 2012 on spurious charges - possessing a

marching band uniform, a kid's BB gun and historical photos of political policing - or 'items that could be used for terrorist purposes'.



{STREET ART}



SECOND LIFE

SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION, URBAN REGENERATION AND SKULLS. THERE'S FAR MORE TO STREET ART THAN MEETS THE EYE, AS MEXICAN ARTIST KATHRINA RUPIT, BETTER KNOWN AS KIN MX, TELLS SHARON JACKSON.

Street art: what's it all about?

Street art interrupts the daily routine. I have taken part in some regeneration projects such as the Cabra Park Urban Gallery and around Thomas Street during the Liberties Festival. The idea is to create a new impression of the street. Everyone has their own view of themselves, that they express through their art. With street art, it doesn't matter who you are. People feel free, no pressure to be like others or be a particular way. Everyone gives something a little bit different, something happy, funny, interesting, colourful, romantic, all different styles together. You don't have to go into a gallery to see it. It's completely accessible to everyone without any conditions, everybody has the right to enjoy street art.

How do you find the attitude to street art in Ireland?

I've been surprised by how society accepts street art here. When we are out painting, people try to help, cheering us up. Local people offer water and tea, or let me use the toilet in their house. When I was doing Fegan's [a shopfront near Smithfield where KIN painted two large pieces], two Gardai came up one night. I was worried as I was alone and without any letter to say I was allowed to paint there. Instead they said, "Nice, it makes the city look better," and then they left! Street art is very different in Mexico than here, in Mexico it's seen as vandalism and it's a negative thing.

The Cabra Park Urban Gallery started in 2012 and you took part in an update of the walls in June 2013. Do you think street art can be a positive social force?

Three of us arrived a few days later, after most of the walls had been done. My first impression was that the streets nearby looked a little bit dirty and a little bit dangerous. There were needles in the corners. But local people said it was much better than it had been before. You might think someone is a junkie, some guy came up who looked dirty and dodgy, but he put €5 into the collection cap as a donation. People were coming with cookies and saying thank you to me and the other artists.

What about some projects where street art is used for social good?

In July 2012, I co-organised the Graff House live street art show. All donations went to Temple Street Children's Hospital. Also they have a crafts room there, so we did a day of mask-making and painting with the children. [The artists] didn't get anything but a lot of positive energy.

Any differences between doing 'legal' and 'illegal' street art?

This summer is so different. Street art was still taboo until this year. Even up to last year, even if you were doing a legal piece, people would come and ask if you had permission. Now people are much more open, they don't question it, they accept it. If you go to do something [illegal], someone will call and offer you a wall, so you don't even do it.

Can you say more about your use of recycled materials?

I care about the environment and I find the connection really strong with Dia de Muertos, the Mexican Day of the Dead. It is not the end but the beginning of something new, a transition, connecting to history. It gives a second life. I make all my art with recycled materials and the spraycan didn't match those ideas.

The RGB crew in Italy had done research for two years to make an ecological spraycan, and produced this Scribo can. It is completely made of aluminium, with acrylic paint inside which is less toxic, and the whole thing is recyclable. I use old books that were in the rubbish as background in paintings. I took this picture from Da Vinci and gave it a second life by putting a skull on it. In Mexico we have candy and sugar skulls and play with them, we have chocolates around little graves. We are taught about Day of the Dead in school. Skulls are not bad, it's up to your interpretation. Because we are all skulls covered with skin and muscle.

Photo by Sharon Jackson.

ON THE HORIZON

RISTEARD Ó DOMHNAILL IS THE DIRECTOR OF THE AWARD-WINNING DOCUMENTARY 'THE PIPE', WHICH MEMORABLY CAPTURED THE NATURE OF THE LOCAL RESISTANCE TO THE CORRIB GAS PROJECT IN NORTH MAYO. AFTER A SUCCESSFUL FUND IT CAMPAIGN THAT RAISED ALMOST 13,000€, HIS LATEST VENTURE, 'ON THE HORIZON', LOOKS AT THE UNUSUAL LEGISLATIVE TWISTS AND TURNS THAT CREATED THE CONDITIONS FOR BOTH THE CORRIB GAS CONTROVERSY AND THE (TO PUT IT MILDLY) GENEROUS TERMS ENJOYED BY THE OIL INDUSTRY IN IRELAND. FINBAR CAFFERKEY CAUGHT UP WITH HIM TO FIND OUT MORE.

What was the inspiration for 'On the Horizon'?

While filming 'The Pipe' I became interested in the reasons why the oil companies had been given such good terms on their licences and why the Irish government was willing to go so far in the support of oil companies even when their activities appeared to directly threaten the reasonable interests

of their citizens. I also began to delve into the history of oil and gas in Ireland and found, to my great surprise, that it was not always the case that Irish politicians acceded so easily to the demands of the oil companies. I managed to track down and interview former Minister for Energy Justin Keating, who in 1975, along with his Department Secretary Joe Holloway, managed to outmaneuver the oil companies and put in place a responsible oil and gas licensing regime that followed the spirit of the much-admired Norwegian system. I was struck by the logic of Keating's arguments on the need for state participation and for responsible use of the resource, even if it meant leaving it in the ground until the next or following generations could benefit adequately from it.

What really had a lasting effect on me, and I interviewed him in 2006 while the Celtic Tiger was in full swing and it was not fashionable to be critical of business-friendly politics, was how the complete dismantling by Ray Burke and Bertie Ahern of his 1975 terms affected him personally. Coming away from that interview, which proved to be his last interview before his death, I resolved to make myself understand why he felt so deeply about something which, it appeared to me, was of little significance to the country. Over the next few years I came to realise that Keating's judgement was incredibly far-sighted. I dedicated 'The Pipe' to his memory but always knew that there was a bigger story to be told. As we stand on the verge of massive oil and gas development off our coasts

MEET MACRONITE



HORIZON

and underneath our land, it is vitally important that the Irish people know the facts surrounding how a potentially massive resource is being managed and the consequences of mismanagement for us as citizens.

Would it be fair to say that Ireland has gone from having one of the most progressive and far-seeing licensing regime to one of the most backward and focused on the short-term?

Definitely. Keating saw how far-sighted Norwegian politicians in the late 60s had put in place proper independent systems to manage the resource properly while guaranteeing a long and prosperous future for the Norwegian people. He had also seen how Norway's neighbours on the other side of the North Sea - Britain - had squandered theirs by allowing 'the market', i.e. private interests, control the resource, and he was acutely aware of the devastating effects that the supposed 'blessing' of oil had on many oil-rich countries like Nigeria whose political systems were much weaker than in Scandinavia. Keating and Holloway were the only people in government, up to then or since, to take the time to understand the oil industry and see the 'long game'. However, their efforts proved to be in vain, as short-term politics and a desire to let the free market reign came to dominate the thinking behind Ireland's resource management, to the point where we

have one of the most pro-oil company licensing regimes in the world. History has proved Keating right.

It's obvious from 'The Pipe' that opposition from residents was strongly focused on defending their community and local environment, but do you believe it rankled that the people of Kilcommon were being asked to tolerate the project on the grounds of national interest when the evidence contradicts that so strongly?

The problems that arose from Corrib were a result of a lack of political foresight and courage, and complete submission to the demands of powerful private interests. These were the exact same reasons for the changing of the oil and gas terms under Ray Burke and Bertie Ahern. Putting vested private interests ahead of the public interest resulted not only in very low tax on oil companies, but also an arrogance by these same companies which resulted in them feeling that they could railroad through a flawed project on a vulnerable community and delicate environment. The current oil and gas terms and the Corrib gas controversy are both a result of our deeply flawed political system, and it is to the credit of a great many people in Kilcommon that they saw through the shiny tinsel of the Celtic Tiger and recognised deep flaws well before it became apparent to the rest of the country. I do hope that they recognise that through their local

struggle they succeeded in putting the national resources issue back on the agenda.

What groups helped you fund 'The Pipe' and how important was that help?

I filmed pretty much all of 'The Pipe' on my own without funding, and that is down to the way I approached the story. The funding, from TG4 and the Irish Film Board, did not kick in until the post-production process, and support during shooting was more of the form of my uncle tolerating me coming and going at all hours and people feeding me wherever I turned up to film! When Willie [Corduff] would see me coming across the yard with the camera he'd shout over to Mary "Quick, put the lock on the fridge, Richie's coming!" In retrospect, if I had the proper funding to afford a full film crew and not have to depend on people's goodwill so much, it would have been a far more different, and less intimate, portrayal of the story.

Why wasn't funding forthcoming this time around?

That would be more a question for RTE and the Irish Film Board. I am concentrating on the positives and the opportunity that the Fund it campaign is offering me as a film-maker, and while I am dismayed that 'On the Horizon' was not commissioned by the usual funding bodies, it may turn out to be a blessing in disguise!

What obstacles do you see to a return to the licensing regime we enjoyed under Keating?

Political will is the only obstacle I see. We have a flawed democracy, and this doesn't just apply to oil and gas but also the fisheries, same with the banks and any time a conflict emerges between business and public interest: most Irish politicians have neither the courage nor the foresight to stand up for ordinary people. A way has to be found around this and that's why I

reckon hoping for politicians to sort this out is putting the cart before the horse. They don't lead, they follow. The people will have to lead on this.

What advice would you give film-makers interested in the ground you've covered in 'The Pipe' and now in 'On the Horizon'?

As regards funding, I'd recommend not relying on traditional sources which are very vulnerable to pressure from PR companies. These companies have lots of lobbyists for making threats, especially regarding the loss of advertising revenue. It's important to look at alternatives.

Photos from Shell2Sea.

FOR ROB FLYNN, MACRONITE HAS BEEN THE ONLY REASON HE'S BEEN TO LIMERICK IN THE PAST FEW YEARS. HE CAUGHT UP WITH THE COLLECTIVE TO FIND OUT WHAT MAKES THEM AND THEIR HOMETOWN TICK.

How Did the whole Macronite thing come about?

It started a few years back with a group of different promotion units pooling efforts to be able to do bigger things. We were all mates so it was a fairly natural progression, and it's progressing still, there's new people on board, some people gone abroad, and a few new things in the pipeline... but that's all we're saying for now!

Is there a kind of ethos behind the

night that you see as being different to how other people go about promoting nights in Ireland?

Well, our collective taste in music is the main driver, there's so many people with taste in quality electronic music that there's no time for chaff or filler, especially with the wider scene being so vibrant these last few years. Without wanting to come across cheesy, there's a lot of love put in behind the scenes, we all love what we do. Then there's a core of people from across the country who'll travel to our events, and us to theirs, so there's a different vibe going on here, we think, and it's a good one. Oh, and the sound system. Quite something!

Musically, your bookings seem quite diverse. Is there a conscious effort to keep jumping styles, or is it more on the basis of who you think would be best suited for the night in any given month?

There's a lot of work goes into programming over the year, we plan months and months in advance, to try and make sure there's a balance and that

what we have works with what's going on at that time of year. We all listen to quality electronic music and that's what we provide, regardless of genre really. It only matters that it's class!

The perception of electronic music in Ireland has changed quite a bit recently as it's moved into the pseudo-mainstream popularity that Indie usually enjoys. Has this had impacts for your night? Can you feel the tug towards commerciality?

No, and if we ever did sell out, you'd never know it was us! Really though, we put on what we want to hear on a big system and program around that, and that's always going to be a reflection of the collective music pool. Everyone here is a serious nerd in one way or another, be it DJing, producing, tech, design, visuals, so there's a certain standard there that has to be met.

What positive developments can you see in the Irish electronic music scene, are there other nights that you have been looking at and going, "yeah, them boys are doing it right"?

There's been a wicked jump in quality bookings nationwide the last few years, no doubt, there's been great stuff in Galway, Cork, Dublin and here, of course. There's a few crews from 'round the country that we work and play with, it's possibly only in Ireland that you'd be able to get people from all over a country just travelling 'round to gigs and all the fun after. Of course there's a wealth of DJs and promoters that are making that happen, shout outs to Roots Factory, the newly formed Red Social Club, another collective just formed in Cork, Jungle Boogie, and it's great to see the likes of Sunil Sharpe and Fran Hartnett making global waves, well deserved!

Ye must be proud to have put Limerick on the map, even if only for a section of Irish counter-culture? Is there much else going on in the left-of-field in Limerick that people should know about?

Limerick has always had a particularly forward-thinking arts scene, since EV+A launched in the 70's at least, and I think that certainly is an influence. For example, there's a Hip

Hop festival, Make A Move, hosting a graffiti jam in the People's Park right now, which last year was an incredible cross-section of Limerick cultures and classes, everyone chilling out enjoying the tunes and the artwork. There's always been an interesting underground in Limerick, and there's a lot of crossover between crews, all the people interested in decent music will drink in a lot of the same places, everybody knows each other and gets on, really.

How do you see Macronite continuing in the next few years? Will there be an ever evolving cast of heads involved or can you see it perhaps winding down eventually?

Well we've already had some changes in our membership this year, and we're looking forward to seeing how some fresh perspective will push things on. It's going to evolve as it will, we suppose, and there's no real limit to how long or how far we'll take it. Music and art is all we really do and Macronite is a platform for that.

Photo: Lette Moloney





DELIBERATE DERELICTION

IF THE MARKET IS BASED ON SUPPLY AND DEMAND THEN WHY DO WE HAVE A HOUSING CRISIS, EXTORTIONATE RENTS AND SO MANY EMPTY HOMES WE'VE LOST COUNT? PAUL REYNOLDS AND LORNA MUDDIMAN EXAMINE THE CRISIS AND THE SOLUTIONS.

Cars speed by in twos and threes as we turn our backs on the Naas road and stroll up the narrow laneway. Colin McCabe is worried about what's happening to this little oasis while all around is levelled and tarmacked.

St. Brigid's Cottages represent another form of ghost estate, one that suffers a creeping death as the vampires of developers, investors and of course NAMA unite to detenant a community for their own purposes.

Colin points out the first cottage. "This was bought by SIAC (one of Ireland's oldest and largest construction companies), they outbid our neighbour who wanted to keep it for the family.' The cottage and it's semi-detached partner are obviously unoccupied. Facing them another two, in worse condition. The roof crests covered in heavy plastic, windows and doors blocked up, paint peeled and wild plants growing freely. Colin tells me they were bought by a developer who wanted the site as part of a planned Hotel complex (hotels being the great tax-wheeze of the Celtic Tiger). He went bust and the whole lot is administered by NAMA now.

We walk to the top of the lane and examine more cottages. Again SIAC has bought these, which coincidentally are adjacent to a huge SIAC site and their headquarters of operations. Again, these have been left unoccupied and the roof has fallen in on one. The others are rotting, with their windowpanes painted white and their gardens returned to the wild.

Over tea we discuss what has happened. A vibrant little cul de sac of Victorian bungalows

has been deliberately detenanted and now half the homes lie empty while a property company waits for the remaining neighbours to pass away. The local youths have discovered the unmonitored country walkway to Clodalkin village at the top of the empty row is an ideal spot for drinking and have made it a no-go area at night.

But the council insists these houses are not 'derelict'. Except for one brief period when one house (which has been burned out) was classed as derelict before it was delisted again, the SDCC engineers see fit to pass these as habitable.

The same is the case in Dublin city. The DCC's Derelict Site Register contains just 32 properties. Bear in mind Galway has 17 listed derelict sites and Galway City Council is actively pursuing 100 property owners to improve their sites on pain of fine or imprisonment.

Dubliners familiar with derelict buildings may be surprised to find that those houses along Ballybough or near the Iveagh Market, the buildings with trees growing from the windows along Thomas St. or the red brick shells on Usher St., the landmark derelict sites along Camden St. and the hundreds of other sites between the canals on almost every main street you pick – they don't appear on DCC's Derelict Register.

Returning these houses to habitable conditions and forcing their owners to make them available for rent is not as far-fetched as it may seem at first. In Andalusia just such a proposal is being considered. In the midst of an economic and housing crisis the

Andalusian local government may adopt a bill to force an estimated one million properties into the rental market. The Bill also proposes an embargo on evictions and fines of €9000 per household not rented. The majority of households are corporate/bank-owned.

While much of this comes from the Spanish housing campaigners there must also be recognition of the role that squatting has played in highlighting the deficiencies now apparent in Spain's housing crisis.

Squatting is not new here. We can look back to the squatting movements and direct action campaigns of the Dublin Housing Action Committee. In the late '60's and early '70's the DHAC were at the forefront of a country-wide protest movement demanding affordable housing at a time when many properties lay vacant. Similar protests sprang up in Limerick, Cork and most notably in Derry. The Derry committee organized the Civil Rights march of 5th Oct. '68 which marked the start of 'the Troubles'.

Following changes to the law, in the form of the Forcible Entry Act and multiple arrests the DHAC campaign ended. In recent times the practice of 'Adverse Possession' (squatting for 12 years) was upheld by the European Court of Human Rights and the Supreme Court as a means of gaining ownership rights. It is not unheard of and with the state of so many hundreds of 'ghost estates' in Ireland it is unlikely we won't hear of many more successful cases in the years ahead.

HOW UNJUST IS THE HOUSING SITUATION THAT THE SUPREME COURT IS ENCOURAGING SQUATTING?

Cllr Pat Dunne (Crumlin/Walkinstown) broke the figures down at a meeting looking at this housing crisis in a pan-European format (European

Action Coalition for the right to housing and the city). "There are 27,000 social housing units in Dublin. There are 98,000 people on the housing list in Ireland. In Dublin alone there are 14,500 on DCC's housing list with a further 8,000 in rented accommodation looking for a place on the list. In answer to this overwhelming demand DCC planned to build just 226 new units between 2011-14 and no affordable housing as the govt. closed that scheme."

Not alone are the funds not being freed to build the necessary social housing but the units that are occupied are in dire need of repair. However that crisis is also being ignored. Of the 7,000 social housing units in central Dublin, the oldest housing which suffers from black mould amongst other problems "450 complaints about dampness were made in 2012 of which the Council accepted there was dampness in 7 of those cases. In every other case they said it was 'condensation'. I've been in rooms where the (Council) maintenance have put so many holes in the wall for 'condensation' that if you drilled another hole the wall would collapse", Cllr Dunne explained.

Yet in DCC area there are 27,000 unoccupied private households. If we include Fingal and Dun Laoghaire there are 39,000 vacant homes. Rents are still at Celtic Tiger levels despite house prices having tumbled as much as 80% in some cases.

A return to militant action like that of DHAC may be inevitable. We are now at the beginning of a major housing crisis.

This crisis is coming in waves. Social housing is not being built; while a handful of developers were handed the plans to detenant and rebuild Dublin's infamous council flats what happened was the tenancing and demolition but no rebuilding or rehousing took place. This is mirrored across Europe. At the same time hundreds of thousands

How unjust must the housing situation be for the Supreme Court to encourage squatting?



were pushed towards private-ownership and are now saddled with debt and the dreaded 'negative equity'.

But the pressure is more immediate for two other groups. The burgeoning homeless situation is unlike any that has visited Ireland in living memory. A walk to the Capuchin centre on Bow Street any midday serves as a rude wake-up call as hundreds line the street waiting for meals and care packages. And to add to this situation we are about to embark on a policy where the banks and lenders, which helped cause and continue to serve this crisis, are being encouraged to begin evictions.

WHAT ARE THE SOLUTIONS?

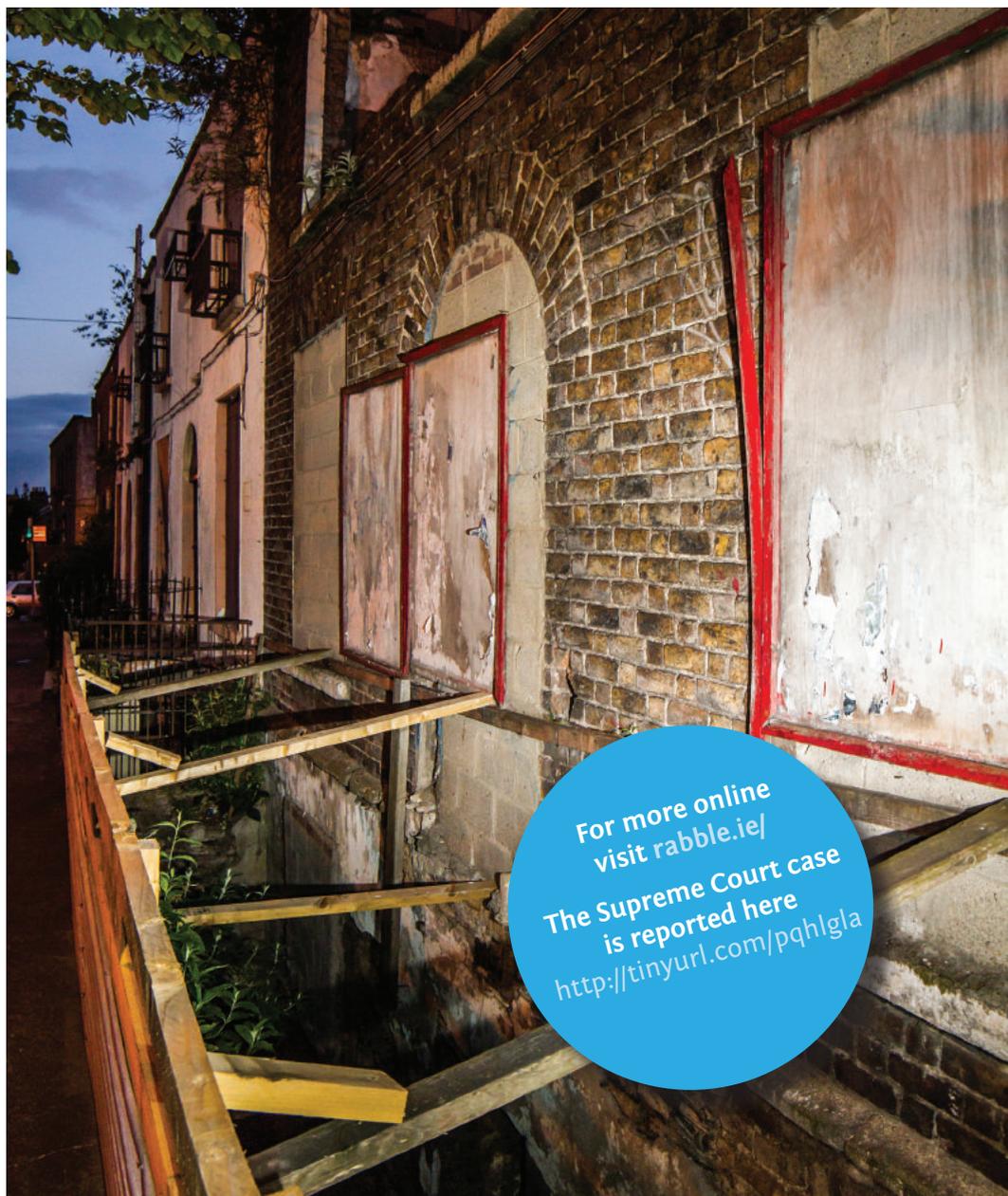
A pilot scheme in Liverpool, in severely deprived areas like Toxteth and Granby has seen the Council sell houses for £1. Many of these houses have been abandoned for up to 30 years and were purchased by the council in the past with notions of regeneration. Similar to our own experience the Public-Private-Partnership fiasco was employed time and again throughout the decades with the same devastating results. This time community groups, so-called Urban Community Land Trusts, have influenced the decision making. Houses are being sold to families for £1, they must undertake to improve the homes themselves and then live there for a minimum of 5 years. There is also a government 'Empty Homes Fund' of £100m which those involved hope to tap in order to access low-interest loans of £30k per property for refurbishment. This 'Homesteading' isn't entirely anathema to those who believe in Public Housing. But it does let the councils off the hook when it comes to providing a structured social housing plan, infrastructure and maintenance and while it encourages re-investment in community it is outside the budgets of most people if the

government fund doesn't come through.

Speaking at a discussion on rent problems in Dublin, economist Michael Taft (Unite Trade Union) explains his hypothesis. "We always hear that we've got to get the private sector involved in the public housing sector through 'innovative means'...now 'innovative means' always means cash subsidy, it's hardly innovative. I think we should turn that on its head. I think we should try to find a way to get the public sector involved in the private rented sector."

He proposes a public enterprise company could be set up to invest in social housing and, in one move, alleviate more than one problem. Employment, housing, lower rents, reinvigorate communities and move people from a situation of over-priced inadequate housing and zero disposable income to one where they can play a part in society again. Taft notes that every time the state, even the most right-wing Cumann na nGaedheal government, faced up to problems in a sector where there was no investment, a need for competition, a need for supply and a need for standards they went to one model, Public Enterprise. It's time to do that again.

James Heartfield, the British journalist, at the same discussion replied 'If you have empty homes and you have people who can't afford to rent, you have the solution in your hands. Move the people into the empty homes. Make public housing a reality and let the Government catch up. Squat the houses, it's obvious.'



For more online
visit rabble.ie/
The Supreme Court case
is reported here
<http://tinyurl.com/pqhlgl1a>

The Archipelago

COWPRINT RUGS, BEANBAGS, SNOOKER TABLES, TAX MITIGATION. LIFE AT GOOGLE SURE IS SWEET. RONAN LYNCH SAYS OTHERWISE AS HE DIVES BEHIND THE DOODLES TO FIND OUT WHY NOT ALL GOOGLERS ARE FEELING LUCKY.



For all its oft-touted motto ‘Don’t be evil’, Google Inc is a world-striding multinational corporation, and few people expect the company to behave like a charity. Still, Google is probably unhappy about all the recent publicity about their expert tax avoidance and being caught up – however unwillingly – in the NSA’s worldwide spying programme. So it’s a bright point for Google that its reputation as a fantastic place to work has entered into popular culture and corporate lore.

Take the summer comedy *The Internship*, where two forty-something unemployed salesmen get taken on as interns by Google and go to work at offices that look like an amusement park. Or check out George Lee’s recent RTE news report from Google’s Irish headquarters on Barrow Street in Dublin, where George can’t help but marvel at his surroundings on the eleventh floor. There’s “pretty funky sleeping pods, cowprint rugs, beanbags and snooker tables and a whole lot more,” he says. “It really is some workplace.”

Writing in *The Irish Times* in February, Una Mullally’s otherwise glowing report about workers in Dublin’s high tech sector offers some major caveats: “Off the record, and in hushed tones, some Googlers talk about how unnerving they find Google’s company enthusiasm can be, about how entire professional and social lives revolve around the Google ecosystem, [and] about the long hours and stress associated with being part of a company that demands a lot from its employees.”

So is Google the glamorous employer of popular fiction? The company certainly knows how to market itself. A quick check on Street View on Google Maps shows hundreds of waving, balloon

carrying workers gathered on the streets outside the company’s Dublin headquarters on Barrow Street. On a recent visit to the actual location, even on a glorious summer day, the glamour was less palpable: Google-badged workers made brief appearance outdoors to drag on cigarettes before heading back into the offices.

Google has been in Ireland since 2003, and some former Google employees and contractors with significant experience at the company say that Google’s reputation as a great employer is undeserved. Permanent staff are well taken care of, they say, but even many permanent staff are overqualified, overworked, and perform relatively menial tasks. In addition, entire layers of hidden contractors and temporary workers do much of the work without the benefits or opportunities accorded to permanent staff.

THE SILICON DOCKLANDS

The area around Barrow Street is sometimes referred to as ‘Silicon Dock’, a nod to the importation of ‘Silicon Valley’ values to Ireland. Writing in the *London Review of Books*, Rebecca Solnit observed that ‘Silicon Valley has long been famous for its endless work hours, for sucking in the young for decades of sixty or seventy-hour weeks, and the much celebrated perks on many jobsites – nap rooms, chefs, gyms, laundry – are meant to make spending most of your life at work less hideous... The tech workers, many of them new to the region, are mostly white or Asian male nerds in their twenties and thirties.’ So how does Dublin measure up as a high tech wonderland?

In fact, the use of ‘high tech’ may be a misnomer. Much of the work in the Irish ‘high tech’ sector is actually customer service work requiring language

skills. Google’s Irish operation deals mainly with advertising sales and technical services, handling Google’s business in Europe, the Middle East, Africa. One former Google employee estimates that 20 to 30% of the permanent workforce is Irish. The remaining 70% to 80% are hired abroad and re-locate to Ireland. (Google did not respond to rabble’s inquiries about the make-up of its Irish workforce.)

For its permanent staff, Google generally hires people who are educated to Masters level, and for most of its employees, Google is their first job after graduation. “The people hired by Google are the best in their classes, alpha personalities, highly competitive and highly driven. Most people would come from an arts background, or business background. In Ireland, they probably hire mostly from Trinity and UCD. There’s class politics at the heart of this all. It’s very difficult for someone who doesn’t come from a middle class background to end up working for a tech giant as they select from the top universities. Even with a great degree from one of the ITs, most multinationals won’t look at you, as they are looking for graduates of the ‘best schools’ in the country.”

THE BEST MINDS OF MY GENERATION

A classic quote about high tech companies came from Cloudera founder Jeff Hammerbacher when he left Facebook. Channeling Allen Ginsberg, Hammerbacher observed that ‘The best minds of my generation are thinking about how to make people click ads’. At the Dublin headquarters, Google’s employees learn how to use internal software systems, and then start working on dealing with incoming emails and checking ads to see if

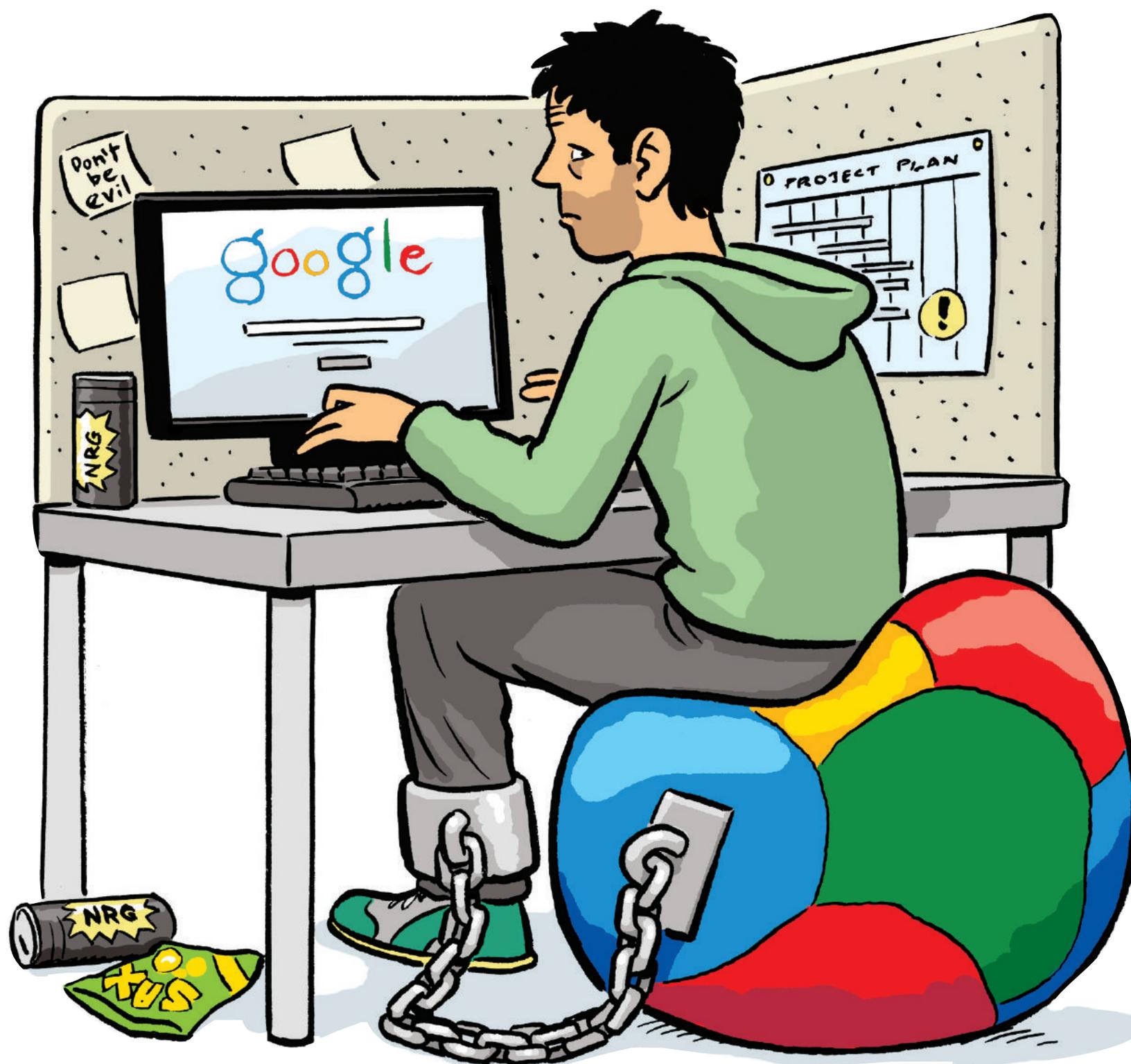
they meet internal guidelines. They also work on copywriting and editing. It’s one of the reasons that employees eventually move on if they can’t move up. “The reality is that you are bringing in people who are highly educated to Masters level and giving them entry level customer service jobs,” says the former employee.

There’s a reason for all the free food and benefits beyond sheer magnanimity, “There’s a psychology behind it. In principle, the working hours are from nine to six, with an unpaid lunch hour, but I was regularly going home at nine or ten at night. It’s what’s expected. If you go home at six and everyone else goes home at nine, it’s noticed.” The on-site restaurants and free food encourage workers to stay in the building. “At first it sounds great. Free food! But it minimises the time away from work. On paper, you have an hour’s lunch break, but you end up grabbing something to eat and going straight back to work without leaving the building. We call it the Google stone. A lot of people put on a stone in their first three months because they spend so much time at their desks and eat so much!”

A decent balance of working time and outside life suffers as a result, he says. “So, you have 70% of the people coming from abroad, they don’t know anybody else here in Dublin. There is a collegial atmosphere and people share houses and flats and their whole social life revolves around Google. People work till late, and then go back to someone’s flat to drink a couple of beers. If you are in your mid-twenties and straight out of college, it’s the best job you will ever have in your life – while you are there. If you’re a bit older or have family commitments, it’s not so great. The culture is such that you work till late, go home, switch on your computer and check your email to talk to your colleagues in America. It consumes your life without you realising it.”

Google has made some Californian employees very rich, but not all of Google’s employees or contractors workers share in this largesse. Two years ago, a young video worker called Andrew Norman Wilson was sub-contracted to work for Transvideo Studios in California, on Google’s Mountain View campus. Perhaps naively, Wilson used a work camera to film other contract workers leaving a building on the campus. These contractors (or ‘Scanops’ workers) were scanning books for Googlebooks. As they emerged from work, he noticed that they were not entitled to the free shuttle

There’s class politics at the heart of this all. It’s very difficult for someone who doesn’t come from a middle class background to end up working for a tech giant as they select from the top universities. Even with a great degree from one of the ITs, most multinationals won’t look at you, as they are looking for graduates of the ‘best schools’ in the country.



bus, free food or other Google perks. Wilson was fired but the video went viral and raised issues about the employment hierarchies in Google. Not all Googlers, it appears, are equally valued.

Likewise, not all of Google's Irish projects are lavished with cowprint rugs. According to the LinkedIn profiles of Google Maps managers, the Google Maps project is based in East Point Business Park. Look for the Google Maps building at East Point in 'Street View' though and you won't find balloon waving employees. Google's camera car only goes as far as the security gates up the road.

One former Google contractor explained that projects such as Youtube and Google Maps are outsourced to contract workers, with recruitment agencies CPL and Manpower doing the hiring and firing for Google. The contractor, fluent in a number of European languages, was hired by CPL on an 11-month contract, and found out that he would be working for Google. Initially, he hoped that the temporary contract would lead to a full-time position at Google, but he was let go after a second 11-month contract. He reported directly to managers who worked for Google, though he was technically working for CPL. "I never worked in

the main Google office where they have the sleep cocoons and all that fancy stuff," he says. "I don't know anyone from my office who then moved into a full time position with Google. The workers were unhappy because you can't put on your CV that you worked for Google. When you finish your job, your references are going to come from CPL or Manpower." Many of these temporary contracts are offered for 11- or 23-month periods.

The contractor says that the temporary work required skilled workers and was well paid. "The targets were set quite high so it was difficult to exceed them, but if you didn't hit these targets, you pay would drop by 30 per cent. Most of the people where I worked had language skills so there were very skilled people working there, doing very menial work." During the course of his job, he came to realise that there was no need for Google to hire permanent workers. The jobs, he said, involved checking data and making edits. "The workers had to make edits in a certain way so the algorithms running in the background could pick up on the changes. Down the line, the algorithms will be able to do this work so they won't need people to do it!"

START ME UP

Whatever about Google, the hours at start-ups can be punishing, although people starting their own business traditionally put in long hours to get it up and running. Ger Kelly from Galway is a developer who has worked in several start-ups in Dublin since graduating from UCG in 2007. "I ran myself down working a huge amount of hours," he says, and has learned from the experience. "I believe you do your work and then you're out. I've a few friends in Google and they love it, but it's hard work from what I can tell. They do put on your dinner but they expect you to have your dinner and go back to work. I don't believe in that any more."

Despite the opportunities available at the big tech companies, Kelly maintains that it's hard to get good development experience there. "My issue with Google, Facebook and Twitter is that they don't do any development in Ireland. People hear about all these tech companies coming in – and they do come with tech jobs, but they don't facilitate or encourage development in Ireland. I think it's a tax haven here and that's why they're really here."

There's no question that the likes of Google, Facebook, Twitter, Amazon and Paypal provide thousands of badly-needed jobs in Ireland. "There are a large number of employees in the multinationals here but they are not being taught to innovate" argues the former Google employee. "They are working on internal processes and administration rather than the creation and development of new ideas in the same way that employees in California are doing. So it is not a breeding ground for innovators or entrepreneurs. Our education system is set up to produce call centre workers rather than hotshot developers."

He argues that it's not just the case that Ireland does not produce enough software developers, but a matter of teaching innovation and creative thinking.

"In our current austerity process, where education is being cut, class sizes are being increased, and university funding is being withdrawn, that is not going to happen. It's a disincentive and it will hurt us in the long run. If we can't educate people that can think for themselves and have the skills to be able to innovate, we're just going to continue to be a nation of call centre workers, and service industry supporters. We will continue to be just another tax haven for the multinationals."



REPEAL THE EIGHTH

IT'S BEEN LESS THAN A YEAR SINCE CLARE DALY'S MEDICAL TREATMENT BILL WAS DEFEATED WHILE OUTSIDE THE DAIL WOMEN HELD IMAGES OF SAVITA HALAPPANAVAR. OIREACHTAS RETORT EXAMINES THE FLAILING REACTION FROM THE ANTI-CHOICE SIDE AND ASKS HAVE WE FINALLY LEFT BEHIND 'VANITY IRELAND'?

On the 18th February 1992. An Taoiseach Albert Reynolds stood in Dáil Éireann to outline details on Ireland's injunction of a fourteen year old girl. He was followed by a brief statement from each opposition leader and as the Chair called time, two deputies from the backbenches rose to their feet. Two of the thirteen women who made up a parliament of one hundred and sixty-six.

Before both were ruled out, Monica Barnes remarked "May I comment on behalf of the women of Ireland and the women in this forum who have been excluded from making statements on this issue, that this is a reflection of the exclusion of women in all structures of our society".

This isn't a point of order responded the Cheann Comhairle.

"No. This is a protest" replied Madeleine Taylor-Quinn

The House moved on.

An afternoon last February and photos were beginning to zip across Twitter. One saw five women, each wearing the mask of a Taoiseach. Four Xs and one question mark. It was striking in a way, to see the detached heads of these five men on the body of women. Anonymous on a cold Kildare Street.

There had been some online chatter leading up to the anniversary of X and her injunction. What made it to the papers had the feel of blowing away the cobwebs, a reminder of a past that was distant but still present, in the shadows.

Later the following night, Clare Daly moved the Medical Treatment Bill in an empty Dáil chamber. Always destined for defeat, but perhaps not failure. It did succeed in drawing the government out earlier than planned. While all the usual invective was on display, several senior figures expressed mutuality with the opposition. "While I note that no action has been taken by six successive Governments, I assure Members this will not be the seventh" was the line that sent shockwaves through Capel Street. The Minister for Health had some very alarming ideas about "citizens" and "obligations".

Within weeks the Pro Life Campaign were directly targeting Fine Gael with opinion polls claiming overwhelming support for a promise nobody had heard off. Not to be outdone, Youth Defence advertisements were appearing on buses, billboards and barns across the country. In one spectacularly backfiring show of strength,

Youth Defence managed to raise questions about their funding, our privacy and what way this debate should be conducted in a way no one could have expected.

Abortion. People were talking about it. Pro-choice. People knew what side they were on. When the Dáil, Councils, Advertising Standards and Liveline offered a collective shrug, people promptly corrected billboards at two in the morning. Online sleuthing drew out stock-photo copyright, foreign Facebook followers. Questions about funding were starting to appear in newspapers and Google trends for "Youth Defence" increased fourfold in a month.

"The billboard campaign last year was my entry point into politics and without it I may be an entirely different person today. I know that the same is true for a lot of people. It has been my experience that Youth Defence are the biggest recruiter for Ireland's pro-choice movement" one activist told rabble. If the early part of the year had blown away cobwebs, summer dealt with any remaining reluctance. The dominant mood of September's march was confidence. The anger was again turning into action. Solidarity into pride. Every part of it was soon needed.

There are books to be written about the death of Savita Halappanavar and the last few days of her life. We may never see an Irish paper break something of such global impact.

Outside the Dáil that night Kerry Guinan told TradeUnionTV "We've had X. We've had A, B, C. We've had D. And now we have a woman who has a name and face". That sentiment was wretchedly palpable across the country. One minister who passed through Kildare Street told how he was "amazed" not just at the size of demonstrations but that they were "ordinary people, not agitators with an axe to grind".

Gone were the masks of February. Two weeks later when Derek Keating took issue with a leaflet condemning "the hypocritical politicians that have failed to act", he asked if Clare Daly "is prepared to deny that she is in favour of what I consider to be walk-in, walk-out abortion". She wasn't and responded by putting pro-choice views on the Dáil record before calling for repeal of the Eighth. Not one heckle was raised. Unthinkable a few months earlier.

Looking back in 1994 Nuala O'Faolain observed that "often at meetings, I would see that a certain kind of educated, middle-aged man in particular was enraged at being forced to listen to plurality of voices when no one was listening to him. I'm not saying that their anti-abortion feelings weren't absolutely sincere but the rage was even bigger than the issue. They would still have been angry, even if travel and information and the whole lot had gone as they had wanted. It is Ireland they are disappointed in and their own place in it. It is the erosion of certainty that is threatening them. A lot of people in this country want to go back to the simplicities of an authoritarian era".

It is interesting to unpack why the choices of women are viewed as so central to an Ireland found only people's heads. You can

speaking with absolute certainty about other people's business when your fictional island is contingent on dubious ideas of purity. It certainly underlines the pervasiveness of domination when the body remains such a site of struggle. That, along with everything else, women are caught in some sort of proxy war for the soul of an Ireland which doesn't exist.

In the last issue of rabble we saw the great crusade against the dancehalls and jazz. We find identical rhetoric embedded in the abortion debate. The "tsunami of the culture of death" racing towards Erin's untainted Isle. England and California are talked of in the gravest of terms. The incalculable damage outside influence will have on the purity of Gaelic morality. It really is either Ireland or Satan still.

And in this difficulty separating the Trinity from the shamrock, is there something in the role organised religion has regarding issues of life and death? That development in the way we think about these matters may erode that position as both authority and gatekeeper. Tied up in this we also get closer to sex and concerns about the production and obedience of the next generation.

One interesting trend to be gleaned from the McAleese Report was the changing nature of incarceration. Even from incomplete data it appears the laundries were predominantly penal for the first few decades, but became something very different from around the mid-Sixties onward. There is an evident shift in attitudes and what was seen as the solution to certain problems needing to be swept out of sight. As an Irish woman's public visibility increased, ever so incrementally, so seemingly widened the grounds for ending up inside a laundry.

In the same way a nuns' labour camp supports an elaborate conceit, the notion of "keeping Ireland abortion free" erases the reality of women and couples seeking abortion abroad, daily. And of course those other procedures. The ones that happen in Irish hospitals. Those aren't abortions. Not a bit. No, ours is a pure health service, the envy of the world. Why wouldn't it be while surrounded on all sides by mills, floodgates, packs of marauding women and their demands.

On publication of the Heads of Bill in May, while Dr Rhona Mahony was on Newstalk talking about "a good day for Irish women", William Binchy on RTE lamented "a bad day for Ireland". It highlights the vanity that runs through the entire anti-choice campaign. Vanity, and the rivalry it spawns has proved to be both essential driver but greatest weakness.

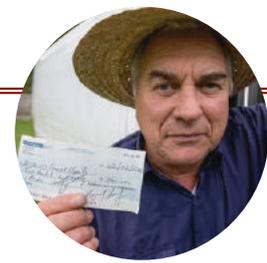
Speaking on Drivetime Sean O'Domhnaill proclaimed Dublin "looked like the pro-life capital of the world" during July's rally as if it held any significance to anyone beyond Life House backroom boasting. A mark of the kind of fantasy that has sustained these groups for years and crucially how important status is considered. Youth Defence define themselves somewhat definitely as "Ireland's pro-life organisation" while over at the Pro Life Campaign we find the not ambiguously pointed "positively protecting life".



Bad Boys, Bad Boys

Artist Ramie Leahy (62) was arrested and brought to Portlaoise prison by three Gardaí in a taxi. His crime? He overpaid a parking fine 3

years previously. Good work guys.



13

{BABBLE}

THE X-FILES

CAROLINE MCCAMLEY IS A WOMEN'S RIGHTS ACTIVIST WHO SERVED AS CHAIRPERSON OF THE DUBLIN WELL WOMAN CENTRE AND THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S COUNCIL OF IRELAND. SHE TALKS TO RÓNÁN BURTENSHAW ABOUT HER INVOLVEMENT IN THE ABORTION CAMPAIGNS OF THE 80'S AND 90'S.

What was your first exposure to the politics of abortion in Ireland?

I was a feminist in the early '80s but the 'choice' issue didn't really come up for me. I had grown up in a time where if you were a young woman or girl and got pregnant and weren't married, you probably went to one of the mother-and-child homes. It didn't occur to me that there were other options – and the issue of abortion was so far beneath the surface, incredibly hidden. The pro-life movement put it on the agenda with the campaign leading to the 1983 referendum. I'm not sure when it would have got there if they hadn't have done that. But they politicised a lot of us with the extreme nature of the 1983 campaign.

Was abortion a difficult subject to speak of at the time?

Abortion was a very difficult issue to talk about at that time, even for feminists. We had only just managed to get equal pay and opportunities legislation in '74 and '77. Even they had come through EU pressure. You were still domiciled with your husband. It was at a time when fundamental rights - to be seen as a human being, to be treated equally, to have your work valued, to do certain courses and jobs - were in question. I remember, and it's really not that long ago, when the first woman bus driver was a headline issue.

Then the 1983 campaign came around. It was quite overwhelming. There was no space for dissent. If you opposed the referendum you were baby murderers. The voice of the Catholic Church dominated and it wasn't allowed to suggest that this issue wasn't black and white.

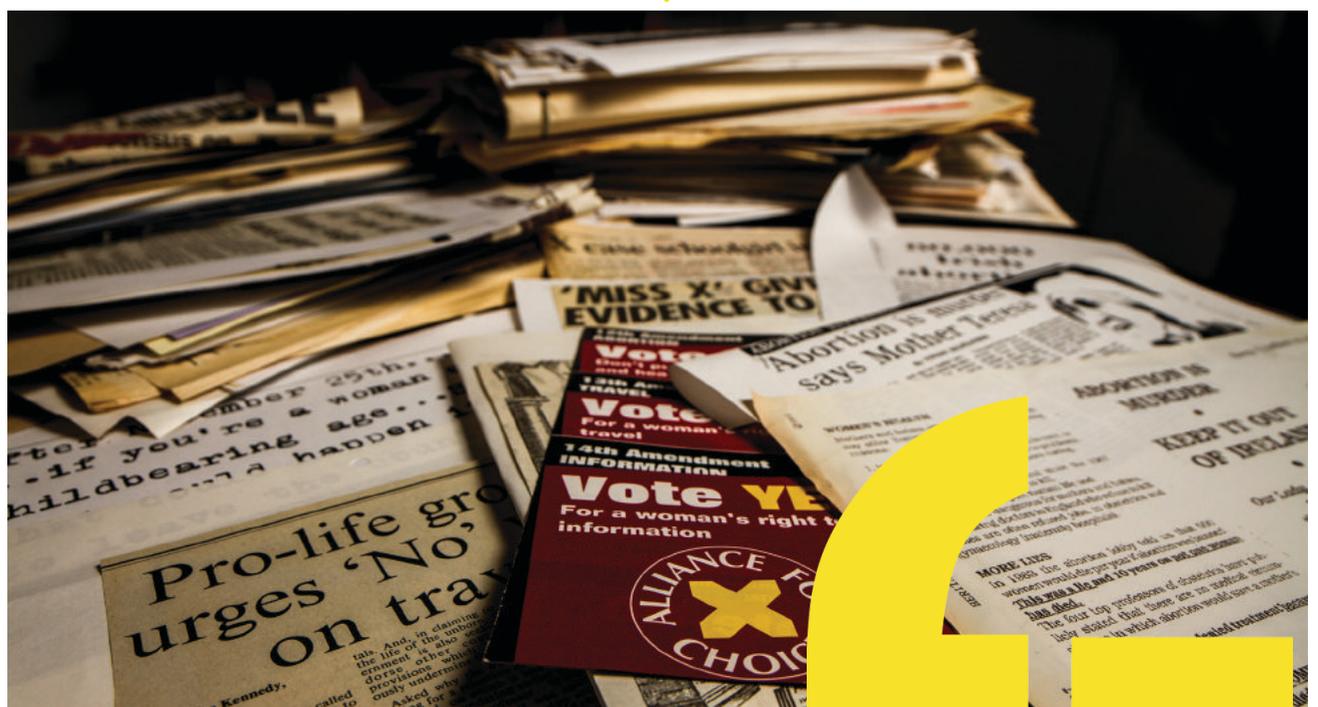
What happened after the 1983 referendum?

Of course, despite the constitutional prohibition on abortion women were still having crisis pregnancies. I think we always knew after '83 that since this issue was not black and white, that a case would arise which would reflect this. Probably exceptional cases arose all the time and weren't talked about. But whether it was one year or ten years, there was an inevitability that a case would come up that wouldn't be resolved quietly and couldn't be ignored. In this case it was Ms. X and her family trying to do what they judged to be the right thing for her in appallingly difficult circumstances.

Suddenly we had a situation where, in addition to the termination being blocked, the effect of the 8th Amendment could block parental choices for a child, and people's right to travel was also being questioned. I don't think people voting in 1983 had ever really thought these rights would be in question. In the previous ten years thousands of women had travelled to terminate a pregnancy. And while it was a decision taken quietly and very privately, other people did know about that - families, friends, partners. Irish society has an ability to think one thing in the abstract, such as opposing abortion, and never really expect it to apply in a specific personal context. The X-case and the 1992 campaign, rather than shifting people from a pro-life to pro-choice position, made the issue in all its complexities real for people.

'Do we think we can say to a real 14-year-old girl, with real parents, not only can you not exercise your choices here, you cannot leave this country and you will not have a termination?' Most people balked at that. I think we went through the '83 referendum dealing with something in abstract. From '92, even if people still didn't want to talk much about this issue, they were dealing with it as something real and weren't willing to say 'under no circumstances'. That was significant.

That was significant.



It was at a time when fundamental rights - to be seen as a human being, to be treated equally, to have your work valued, to do certain courses and jobs - were in question.

This battle to hegemonise anti-choice politics - and it's prestige - has produced a self-defeating quest for purity. In the effort to outdo each other both groups turn more and more fanatical while claims to represent any sort of critical mass slip further and further away. This 'who needs support when you possess the crown of truth' approach culminated in the 2002 split. Still casting a bitter shadow with both Youth Defence and Pro Life Campaign maintaining, or rather refusing to admit mistakes. Only briefly did the two sides meet for the 'Unite For Life' demos in December and January before returning to separate events and even clashing meetings within weeks. Much blame is laid at the door of Youth Defence and their tactics, rightly, but it is they who having been mopping up since John O'Reilly's legal hotshots landed the Attorney General in the Supreme Court. There will remain far too much ego in either camp for cooperation.

Everything was thrown at the campaign over the last year. More than will probably come to light but most politicians and their staff will enjoy the summer break. There is no doubt that anti-choice lobbying strengthened the resolve of previous sincere views. One rural Deputy says after her face and phone number were put on the poles around town she received nothing but calls of support, urging her not to be bullied. Another was on his second round of such representations having being threatened with kidnap and with having the house burned down when his father was a TD during the first divorce referendum.

Difficult to see how the public face of anti-choice politics will shake the excesses of what is effectively their core support as they continue the slide into the somewhere beyond the fringe. No amount of institute after your name will be enough distance from the Taoiseach receiving letters in blood. As early as January the Fine Gael leadership sought to highlight the more extreme contact. The Taoiseach's revealing of "Herod" and other remarks appeared part of a very deliberate strategy to put the Party on some sort of middle-ground while isolating the hardline element within.

Bertie, Haughey and rest had vocal critics but nothing approaching the nature of vilification directed at Enda Kenny over the last few months. Much of it borne from a sense of betrayal. There was a good solid lad from Mayo, a Fine Gael Taoiseach and he legislating for the X Case. How could this happen?

To see Boston based 'Students for Life' on Sixone declare him "the number one promoter of abortion in Ireland" showed the ludicrous level that talk had reached in some corners. There was anger, lots of anger, on the surface but behind it is betrayal and the sinking reality that if Enda Kenny can do it with nothing near the promised rebellion, what chance now. The final Dáil vote passed by a greater margin than most Bills and part of the opposition was TDs who know it won't go far enough. If those warnings of swift and permanent culture change are true, vanity Ireland really is in trouble.

Repeal the Eighth.

Photos by Paul Reynolds.

'Honor Bright' is a song by Peter Yeates about the murder of Lizzie O'Neil in 1925. Lizzie was a sex worker who died during the Monto clean ups. Local folklore believes she was killed by figures

in authority because she refused to stop working. Her murder remains unsolved.



Saving in the name of scrub

“TURN OFF THE RED LIGHT”, SAYS THE HAND-WRINGING BRIGADE, THE SAME GROUPS THAT BROUGHT US THE MAGDALENE LAUNDRIES. WHILE THE CAMPAIGN CLAIMS TO MEAN WELL, [KATIE GARRETT](#) ARGUES IT EXCLUDES THE MOST IMPORTANT VOICES FROM THE DISCUSSION, THE SEX WORKERS THEMSELVES.

The need to “clean” Ireland of sex workers and the sex industry isn't new. In the early 1920s the Legion of Mary, led by Frank Duff, decided to close down Dublin's infamous Monto. Reputed to be the biggest red light district in Europe it is estimated that up to 1,600 women and girls worked there at any one time. The Monto catered for all tastes and social backgrounds, even King Edward VII was said to have popped his cherry there. The area had to go. The moral guardians of Irish society had made a decision that you couldn't have all these wayward women having sex for money and, perhaps even worse, sex outside of marriage. To hell with the fact that many of the women who had worked the streets would end up in the Magdalene Laundries or destitute with no means to support themselves. The Monto was by no means some utopian paradise for sex workers, but it did give many women control over how they made an income. Not that women controlling their own lives was very en vogue at the time.

The other link in the chain, the Magdalene Laundries, were businesses run by the religious orders such as the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity. The Laundries might have had the goal of ensuring that the women who entered them were penitent and atoned for their sins, but they were also successful financial enterprises. They held lucrative laundry contracts from state bodies and local businesses. To the religious orders who controlled the Laundries, the prisoners who resided within them were not only “fallen women” but also financial assets. Those wanton sluts could work for their forgiveness and the good nuns would clean Ireland, and make more than a few quid while they were at it.

Ninety years later, it would appear that women are still needing saving and Ireland is still needing to be cleaned of sex work and, more importantly - sex workers. While some people may personally find the notion of paying, or being paid, for the ride a bit icky, that isn't really a legitimate reason to try and ban it. We can all agree that trafficking and pimping are horrible things but they don't happen in all aspects of Irish sex work. Yet this is how the argument is constantly framed by those who campaign for its abolition. Yes there are people trafficked into Ireland for sex, but a lot of those who work within the sector make a decision to offer their services for cash. Painting every sex worker as a trafficked and oppressed victim is helpful to no one. It's a lazy cliché in the same way that most print media features about the issue will inevitably be accompanied by a stock photo of a woman leaning in to a car window wearing fishnet tights, a mini skirt and heels. But it serves a purpose, and that's to characterise this already stigmatised group as something they're not. Which is homogenous. Not all sex workers in Ireland are either trafficked by pimps or desperate smackheads. What better way to eradicate a marginalised group's voice than to completely dehumanise them?

This may come as a shock to some, hell it might even disgust some, but there are sex workers in Ireland who are grown adults and consenting to what they're doing and having sex for money and pretty much just getting on with their lives.

It certainly disgusts Ruhama, an organisation with the dubious origins of having been founded as a “joint initiative of the Good Shepherd Sisters and Our Lady of Charity Sisters”, which according to its website has a “long history of involvement with marginalised women, including those involved in prostitution”. That'd be the Magdalene Laundries that were mentioned earlier. Ruhama, as part of the Turn Off the Red Light coalition, have been one of the driving forces behind the push to introduce a Swedish style anti-prostitution law in Ireland. The Swedish model basically criminalises the punters, the mostly male clients of mostly female sex workers. If you're of the view that sex work is...like totes evil, and must be eradicated whatever

the cost, then fine, but the cost is borne by those women who work in the industry itself, not those who pontificate on the morality of it.

For Laura Lee, a Dublin-born escort, “the Swedish model has several serious adverse effects. It pushes the trade further underground – the industry and street sex workers – further criminalisation means they need to pull further away from the authorities. This brings risks.” For Laura these risks are further exacerbated by the added threat of homelessness as landlords can be held accountable if their premises are being used to sell sex from. For an independent woman working out of her own home this could mean that nervous landlords evict them losing them both their homes and their incomes. The consequences of introducing this law are that it makes earning a living more dangerous for the women involved, not less.

Ultimately organisations like Ruhama are adding to the stigma that sex workers face everyday in Ireland. This stigma isolates and marginalises women who work within the sex industry here. For Laura working in Ireland meant that: “As soon as it was known what I was doing, I had people shouting abuse at me across the street. I went to Dunnes one day and I had a young lad behind me and he said ‘I didn't know that they sold hookers here. I wonder if they do two for one.’ I just noticed that in nightclubs people would avoid me. It's like, we'll tolerate her but not really.”

According to TORL sex work is bad. But they wouldn't even deign to call it sex work. As far as they're concerned, it's “prostituted women” and never “work.” And they're very concerned with trafficking. Less so when it's young Asian men who are trafficked into Ireland to sit in weed growhouses as prisoner botanists, but they're not having sex so it doesn't matter right? They believe all sex workers are abused and that Ruhama, and only Ruhama, can represent the legitimate voices of sex workers. It's a far cry from what many sex workers on the ground will tell you. They're mostly absent from any of the public debate. Their voices aren't worth hearing because at the end of the day, they're only prostitutes and sure what would they know?

For most groups involved with the TORL coalition their motivations are probably fine. If you've got an organisation like Ruhama in front of you and they're telling you that prostitution is a form of violence against women and the Swedish law has been great at reducing prostitution and trafficking - you'll probably buy it. Aside from the fact that the Swedish government admitted in its report to UNAIDS last year that they actually hadn't a clue how much prostitution there was in Sweden because it was so hidden. Oh, and the Swedish police have reported that trafficking has grown significantly since that particular law was brought in.

The Magdalene Laundries existed to control women's lives, and made money, but rescuing modern Ireland's fallen women is worth quite a bit too. You could never be certain of their motivations but you can certainly speculate as to why some organisations are involved in this. Laura Lee says of the motivations: “Their agenda seems to be nothing more than continued funding. Government funding and salaries. It suits them to portray the sex industry in a very bad light. The rescue industry is worth big money. They're all saying we're pimped and trafficked – even if we're jumping up and down saying no we're not.” When actual sex workers are telling a different story to TORL, you could be forgiven for asking the awkward question, ‘Who might know the most about being a sex worker?’

When it comes to how Ruhama actually conduct their campaigns, to be honest, many of the media friendly sound bytes that TORL deal in are simply made up. Like the one where they say “we have a coalition of one million people who support us”. It's a dodgy claim to

The Magdalene Laundries existed to control women's lives, and made money, but rescuing modern Ireland's fallen women is worth quite a bit too

make considering the “one million” figure is based on the membership numbers of the trade unions that have publicly supported TORL. Those same trade unions don't exactly make a habit of balloting their membership to see how many of their members actually support the initiative. And one could be forgiven for wondering how many of those million have paid for sex in Ireland?

TORL continually sight the figure that there are 800 women advertising sex for sale online in Ireland at any one time. Which is basically plucked from the sky or as they term it, “from searches of internet websites.” In some reports they have mentioned that there were up to 468 women advertising on Escort Ireland but they never mention where the 800 figure comes from. Are the same women advertising on multiple sites or the same women who have multiple ads on Escort Ireland. Elsewhere they have maintained that the Swedish legal framework results in lower levels of prostitution than in neighbouring countries when there is no credible evidence-based research that backs up these claims.

Rachel, a Romanian escort working in Dublin for the past number of years questioned these figures and the absence of sex workers own voices in the debate, “When you have a headache you go to the doctor, but the doctor will not claim that majority of people in Ireland suffer from headaches but what Ruhama say that the majority of escorts are working against their will because of the ones that they worked with... All the escorts advertise on Escorts Ireland so I don't know...They say they want to fight against human trafficking but all the escorts I know work of their own free will. I remember the raid last year, 200ish accommodations were searched by the police and they didn't find one single escort who was trafficked or working against her will.”

But despite the good intentions of those who are genuinely behind TORL it doesn't take away from the fact that criminalising buyers makes things more dangerous for sex workers. The fear of the potential consequences of criminalisation are pretty evident for Rachel, ‘if condoms will be used as a proof of sex with a client [if it is criminalised] then sex workers might stop using them. The repercussions of this type of fear for the health of the woman and their clients is obvious.

Criminalisation pushes the industry further underground and creates more pimps. It also gives the Gardai more control over these women's lives. And it means that two women who are both sex workers and share an apartment for safety and security might be convicted of brothel-keeping. For a law that would supposedly be about protecting women and making their lives better, it reeks more of the anti-deviance policies of those who cleared out the Monto ninety years ago. Sure just bring back the Good Shepherd Sisters, Ireland still needs to be saved. You can't be having filthy, dirty, sinful, sex for money. No, you should be out cleaning jaxes for minimum wage. If you can't pay your ESB bill or put food on the table for your kids? Well so be it. Better than being a whore and all that.

“As soon as it was known what I was doing, I had people shouting abuse at me and he said ‘I didn’t know that they sold hookers here. I wonder if they do two for one.’”

It’s like, we’ll tolerate her but not really.”

SAVE ME



me and he said ‘I didn’t know that they sold hookers here. I wonder if they do two for one.’”

I just noticed that in nightclubs people would avoid me. me across the street. I went to Dunnes one day and I had a young lad behind

Check out the full interview

rabble.ie

The New Evangelist

NOBODY COULD HAVE ANTICIPATED THE REMARKABLE TRANSFORMATION THAT RHONA BLACKWELL UNDERWENT AFTER HER EXPOSURE TO KARL MARX AND FRIEDRICH ENGELS. SHE HAD STARTED IN U.C.D. LIKE ANY OTHER RUN-OF-THE-MILL KILLINEY GIRL.

Her social circle had been preordained since secondary school; she had joined all the correct societies such as Fashion-Soc and Young Fine Gael (on the advice of her dad). Rhona Blackwell had it all; the looks, the friends, the future.

But things began to change in Rhona. It happened just after she read the Communist Manifesto for her Introduction to Sociology elective. She began to blaze. She immersed herself in every publication of Marxist theory that she could get her hands on. And consequently, she began to alienate herself from her peers. Her Uggs were discarded and were replaced with Doc Martens. She no longer wore the latest designers, but preferred black and brown non-salubrious styles instead. When her friends confronted her they were told, preached to rather, about their 'commodity fetishism' and their bourgeois tendencies. They became perturbed and afraid of her.

At home, Rhona's mother lamented the transformation. Where was her pretty little girl? Always cooped up in her bedroom poring over some dusty books with names on them like Grundisse or What Can Be Done? She had become secretive and reflective. And then there was the tone of voice with which she had begun to speak to her father. She constantly questioned him with acute hostility about his job on the board of the bank. But her father just chuckled:

-It's all just a phase poppet, he reassured, when I was in college some of the chaps got into that sort of thing, and they're now in the upper echelons of politics and business!

There was a cause for alarm when her mother heard voices with diverse accents emanating from the room, seemingly

in debate. Bursting through the door to investigate she found Rhona in a semi-trance in the middle of the room and yet completely alone, with just a hint of the essence of pipe-smoke hanging in the air. Rhona's father was informed.

-What play are you doing at college Ro? He queried at the dinner table.

-I'm not doing a play.

-It's just that your mother said she heard you reciting lines today.

-Oh that! No dad I was debating.

-Debating? Oh let me guess, you'd conjured the ghost of Karl Marx, her dad grinned.

-No. It was Leon Trotsky and Jesus.

-Oh for heaven's sake Rhona!! Her mother cried in exasperation.

Rhona looked squarely at both her mother and father. Her face was calm, yet earnest.

-I'm going to tell you something, parents, but I need you to promise not to freak.

The two nodded in reluctant acquiescence.

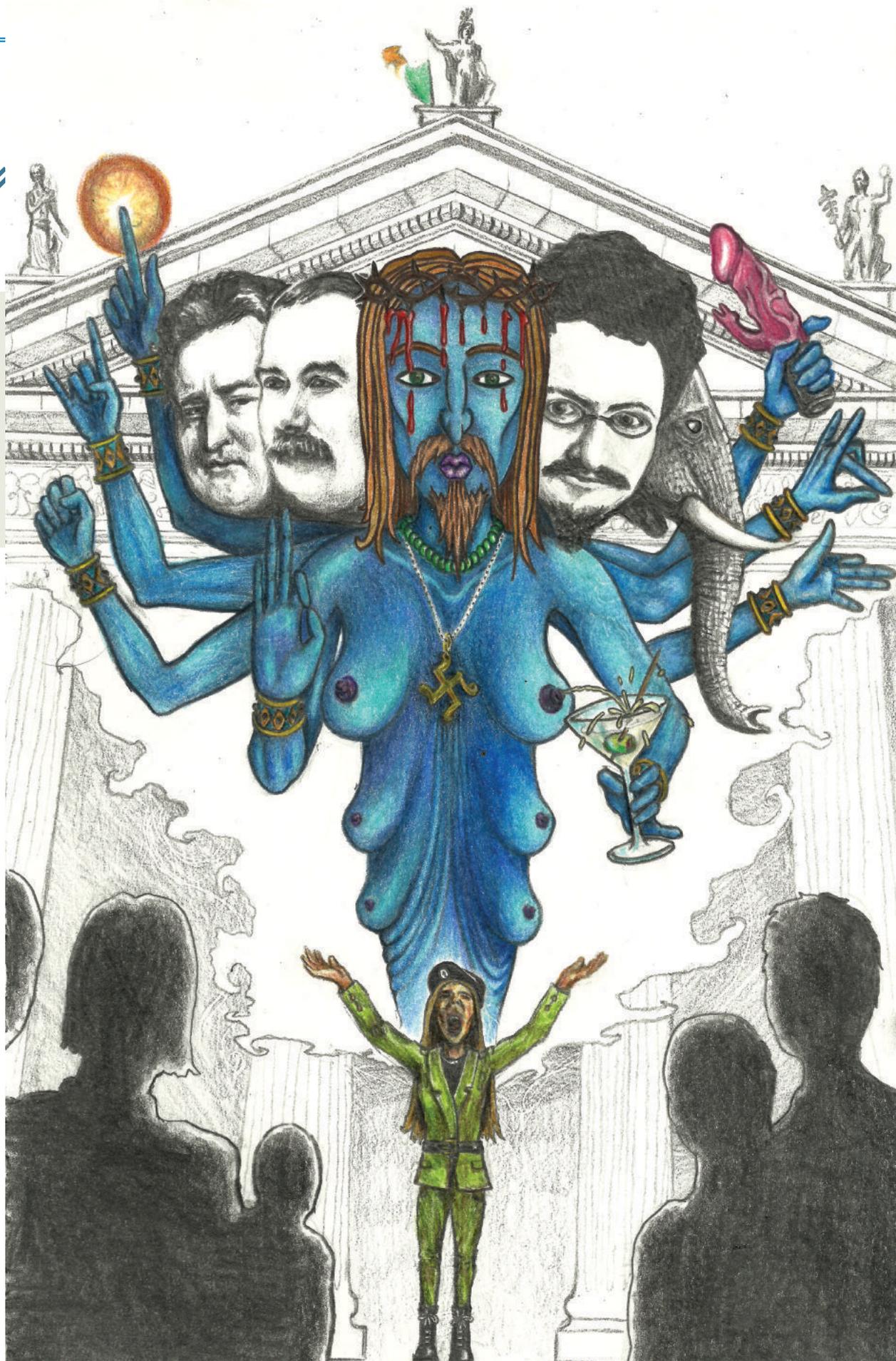
-There is no heaven, she went on, and it turns out that Christianity is incorrect. The afterlife is known as the C.R.C.C. or the Cosmo-Republic of Cosmic Comrades as was democratically decided of course. All the great revolutionaries are there. Spartacus, Francis of Assisi, Wat Tyler, I could go on.

-And you debate with them? Debate with Jesus? Her father spat incredulous and worried.

-Well only with Jesus occasionally, she mused, he likes to spend most of his time with Brendan Behan and Jim Larkin down in the Purgatory Inn drinking cheap pints of ambrosia and complaining about how his message has been misinterpreted and thus that misinterpretation has fucked up the world. But yes dad, I have a direct line to most.

After dinner Rhona's dad retired to his study and picked up the phone. And by the time the doctor and private ambulance had arrived she had disappeared from her bedroom taking just a few clothes and her copy of Das Kapital.

Months passed without a sign of Rhona Blackwell. Then, as Easter commenced, a crowd at the G.P.O. in Dublin gathered for the commemoration of 1916. Some



noticed a commotion around a strange looking girl, dressed in military attire complete with beret. She was standing on a milk-crate and was flanked by a group dressed in a similar fashion.

-Friends and comrades, I have a message from the venerable leader James Connolly on this day of commemoration. She cleared her throat, unfolded a piece of paper and began:

-Grandchildren. Take heart! All that has come to pass of recent times is just old wine in new bottles. The vulture classes that rule and rob the world have pooled their resources yet again. Those vultures, mad with hatred of the power that had wrested from them the improved conditions are successfully rescinding those conditions. For that is the way of governments. Flesh and blood are ever the cheapest things in their eyes. When we fought for an Irish Republic we

sought to reverse that process of valuing things!

How dare the inheritors of the party, that I proudly proposed and founded, become complicit in this thievery by brigands. They must see around them continually accumulating evidences of the unscrupulous methods by which the ruling classes strive to ensure a continuance of their ruling? Do we need to particularise, to bring evidence of the truth?

I call to you on this day of commemoration to...

A jet of pepper-spray painted Rhona's face as she was ferociously wrestled off the milk-crate by three undercover Guards and hustled off to a waiting Garda van. Her comrades were beaten with extendable batons and kicked until they dispersed. The crowd fell silent;

moved and amazed at the scene, the people began to gaze at one another with a mixture of confusion and resolute understanding. Then a voice piped up, clear and distinct:

-Yer wan is as mad as a box a bleedin'-frogs.

Words Alan O'Brien.

Illustration by Dara Lynch.

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flash fiction to
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It's All In The Game

WHEN MAEVE SPANNING'S HOUSEMATE SHARED THE DETAILS OF A DATE THAT LEFT HER CONFUSED AND DEPRESSED, THEY SMELLED A RAT. THIS PARTICULAR RAT IS A PROFESSIONAL PICK UP ARTIST WITH A LEGION OF PAYING FOLLOWERS...

If you have read Neil Strauss's *The Game*, then you will already know quite a bit about the Pick Up Artist (PUA) lifestyle. If you haven't, then you'll just have to Google it because I don't have the word count to do it justice here. And Google you should. Not only because it's creepy as shit, but because YOU NEED TO BE INFORMED. That way, if some day you end up in the same situation as my flatmate did, then maybe you will be able to spot the warning signs. Before it's too late.

Poor Helen didn't suspect a thing. A brief chat on a Prague side-street with a laid-back and friendly passerby turned into a date with one of the world's foremost professional pickup artists, Shane McLame.

Ignorant of his true identity, she got home afterwards, depressed and pissed off, and told us the details. And the more she described, the more the Pick Up Artist alarm bells began to ring in my head. He'd chosen the place and time, saying he had to be back at work by 11pm. Setting a time constraint is a key PUA strategy, as it helps cut to the chase fast. They had a quick drink, then a short walk, then went to his boss's apartment to see its 'stunning view'. Changing venue apparently gives the subconscious impression of having been on multiple dates, so it means sex is on the table more quickly. Girls, eh? We are so easily confused.

He kept himself busy, staring deep into her eyes and finding flimsy excuses for touching - "Are your hands cold?" - or just freely groping her. He used "negs" periodically (subtle insults designed to lower her self esteem and defences: 'Do you always ask this many questions?') and crowbarred sexual topics into the conversation at every turn. Then finally, the piece de resistance: After she rejected his increasingly insistent advances and flat-out told him that she wasn't going to sleep with him, he suggested she find someone who would: "Give your friends my number; I'm here for a few more days." Who else but a man with the massive, unmanageable, quivering ego of a PUA would say such a thing?

All she knew was his first name, so we googled that, Prague and PUA. At once, there he was. Not just a devotee, he is a full-time, professional pick-up artist, earning thousands of euro a pop to train others in the sacred skills, working in-field with the beautiful women of Central and Eastern Europe.

We spent the next few minutes browsing. Shane McLame

has a well-maintained online presence. On YouTube you can enjoy instructional videos where he approaches and scores with unsuspecting members of the public in a matter of minutes. What a legend, right? Well, unless you're the girl who doesn't know that you are being secretly filmed at the time. Or that you're embarrassing judgement-lapse will end up on YouTube, for the edification of 170,000 of his sticky-palmed fans. Or that you should probably pop into the nearest STI clinic for a thorough swabbing on your way home.

There's also a blog that details his sexy conquests, peppered with sage insights from the man himself. Here are just a few creepy highlights:

On mutual respect and understanding:

"This was a pattern throughout the night. She would mumble something that sounded like resistance but then as soon as I would escalate, she wouldn't resist."

On that warm post-coital glow:

"Feels pretty good to deal with her calling me a jerk while sobbing with mascara streaming down her face [...] and turning it around to the point where she is now open to the potential reality of us having casual sex."

On 'no means no':

"I was able to discern her token fantasy resistance from real resistance."

What a champ. Anyway, long story short, I asked for his number. I know what you're thinking, and I was a little concerned that I too might

succumb to his powerful brand of sexual warfare, but I just had to see for myself. I texted. Three minutes later we had a date.

We met the next evening, and it was fun - initially. The conversation flowed, he was full of little compliments and jokes, making physical contact at every opportunity and inching inexorably closer and closer in his chair. There were even fleeting moments where, despite already knowing and disliking everything at the core of him, the thought "wow, he really is a great guy," flickered through my feeble human brain.

After about half an hour of small talk about his vague career I couldn't wait any longer, and I finally asked outright about *The Game*. This soured the mood immediately but he admitted to it. He helps men to develop self-confidence, in his own words. And what about the women whose self-confidence he devastates along the way, collecting them like high-fives to boost his ego and stats? This is why he doesn't like to talk about it; 'women judge him for it'.

No shit.

The conversation began to falter then, but ever the trooper, he suggested we go for a walk. "A change of venue?" I said. He didn't like that. We paid for our beers (separately of course) and left the bar. The entrance to his hotel was less than a minute away. "So do you want to come up or not?" He asked, a tinge of last-resort in his voice.

"No thanks."

We walked on in deepening silence, back towards the centre of town. At last he blurted out, accusingly and without a hint of irony: "Don't you think you were a bit dishonest? Like, your text message really gave me the impression that you were going to sleep with me." I suppose we all give people the wrong idea at one time or another.

On reaching the tram stop, he departed, sullenly, without words. It reminded me of a little boy in a bad temper. Oh, and he didn't call the next day. But I suppose I should have expected that, from a pick-up artist

Names changed to protect the innocent & not so innocent.

Illustration by Mice Hell.



Don't you think you were a bit dishonest? Like, your text message really gave me the impression that you were going to sleep with me.



IRMA's website (pathetic)

IRMA's website (pathetic). Is it run from an upstairs room in a Finglas semi-d, circa 1998? Check out the 404 from the 'legal downloads' link.



INFORMATION WANTS TO BE FREE, OR AT LEAST AVAILABLE RIGHT NOW FOR A REASONABLE PRICE. ED ZILLION EXPLORES A DIGITAL WAR THE CORPORATIONS MAY HAVE ALREADY LOST.

So you may recently have heard (again) that Irish ISPs will have to start blocking The Pirate Bay - the infamous torrent-sharing website which spawned the Pirate Party movement and maintains, in the face of some pressure, a rather hilariously disdainful attitude to its enemies. At one stage they printed all the legal threats they received, along with responses with such deliciously judicious use of language as "It is the opinion of us and our lawyers that you are ... morons, and that you should please go sodomize yourself with retractable batons" and signing off with a casual "Go fuck yourself." This was never going to end in a nice compromise and, true to their word, the big content holders have been trying to shut them down or block them ever since.

This gargantuan legal campaign has been fought across the globe in nearly every developed economy and legal jurisdiction and dates back to the origin of the web itself. It is a key strategy of the US government as revealed by Wikileaks leaked cables outlining how the US State Department bought and paid for a legal campaign to introduce a 'three strikes law' in New Zealand - eerily similar to the one being implemented here.

This phase of the campaign kicked off around 2008 and the players and issues have not changed significantly since then. The current Irish skirmish is part of a broader campaign led by the Irish Recorded Music Association (IRMA), which is representing the interests of major label record companies such as EMI, Sony, Universal and Warner. It is interesting to note that copyright enforcement in Ireland is mainly focused on music

piracy and not on film or television piracy. Ireland's television license scheme is basically a mandatory content tax since roughly 2/3rds of RTE's annual budget goes to pay for US TV shows and movies, though whether this has held Hollywood from pressing charges remains uncertain.

This latest case is the first legal test of the controversial change in Irish copyright law brought forward last year by Minister of State for Research and Innovation Seán Sherlock. The amendments were quickly dubbed Irish SOPA due to the similarity in tone and content to their US equivalent, The Stop Online Piracy Act, a hugely controversial bill that proposes a system of content filtering that would make websites responsible for any and all copyright infringements on their site, even if that infringement was simply a link to pirated content on a different website. Huge online protests followed, culminating in last year's 'internet blackout', which seemed to have the desired effect as lawmakers decided to send it 'back to committee', usually a sign that a bill has been dropped. Irish lawmakers had no such qualms and the amendments were signed into law after the usual dance of pretend public consultation and conciliatory statements such as "There is no intention by the government to introduce legislation to block access to the internet or sites. I have state [sic] that unambiguously [sic]". It is not entirely clear whether under the 'Sherblock', content holders must get a court to pass an injunction for every website/URL/IP blocked or whether IRMA would be able to add further websites to the blocklist without any oversight as is the case in the UK,

where many of the proxy websites for The Pirate Bay that popped up in the wake of its blocking have recently been added to the UK blocklist without any judicial oversight. IRMA has already stated that it has a list of 260 websites that it wants blocked, so in either case this list is sure to grow.

Sherlock had stated that his primary motivation for introducing the legislation was to get Ireland in line with European law (coincidentally one of the common talking points used by IRMA) and yet even at a European level these conflicts have not been conclusively resolved; the European Court of Justice ruling the year before last that ISPs could not install filtering software that could detect and block certain traffic such as torrent downloads, and last year the Data Commissioner ruled invalid parts of the very 'Three Strikes law' that Eircom imposed all the way back in 2008. There is also a campaign underway in the EU to make access to the internet a fundamental human right, which would make blocking itself redundant.

This all leads to one conclusion: As this is going to be decided in the ECJ anyway, why should the Government bother pushing this now? The only people profiting from this are Sean Sherlock, for all his 'innovating in the IP space', and inevitably, the lawyers. Call it the Legal-Industrial Complex. All the public concerns can be boiled down to this: Why should corporations dictate the digital rights of consumers? All consumers want is content. And now. Not in six months and on Sky Atlantic, which you have to buy the Extended Family Package to get. Streaming Now. And it has been proven countless times by the irrefutable evidence of the

It is the opinion of us and our lawyers that you are morons, and that you should please go sodomize yourself with retractable batons

market that when a usable, viable legal alternative to piracy is provided (Spotify, Netflix etc) that most consumers will opt for it. These services are slow to come though, because the content holders are in a position of power using the outdated, state-based legal framework for copyright. Copyright reform is coming, not quickly, but it will come and it will make all this stupid legal wrangling seem pointless and irrelevant.



My Own Private Pirate Bay

NEW

ART

TERRITORY

PAUL TARPEY EXAMINES HOW ARTISTS AND ACTIVISTS ARE DEALING WITH THE IDEA OF THE NON-PLACE - A SPACE WITH WHICH WE HAVE ALL BECOME UNCONSCIOUSLY FAMILIAR.

Pound shops, petrol stations and piss-stinking out-of-town shopping centres. This is the sprawl of the post-apocalypse we call 'after the Tiger'. The unplanned, the undesigned is our new state. We no longer blink as we pass ghost estates and cow-shit stained forecourts. These non-places have fused Ireland's rural and urban edges.

It is tolerated space, mostly ignored by its residents, yet functional enough to host identity-trawling events such as The Gathering which lean on anything suggesting visions of the old sod.

The unregulated desires of the previous decade left us and our environment bruised. There is a weary acceptance of the visual pollution that masks newly-built shop space. Tack.

The Irish carvery lunch banners clog buildings and motorway roundabouts every bit as much as their cholesterol clogs our unemployed builders' arteries.

Details are everywhere.

As visitors passed through Enniskillen on the way to the G8 conference, they were presented with a Potemkin Village of bustling shops. Large photographs in the shop windows gave the impression of thriving businesses. These visuals come from a UK government-funded scheme called 'flat packing' in which disused space is filled with bright images for imaginary commercial potential.

But the people are filling these spaces too, with politicised art.

In a bog in Achill stands a Stonehenge of grotesque slabs of concrete. This pre-fabbed monument to Bertie Ahern's unreal terraforming is one of a series of protest acts undertaken by Joe McNamara. The property developer constructed Achill-henge as the ultimate metaphor for his own

failed dealings in Ahern's property bonanza and the irony of his gift to the nation was duly received as intended. The tale of Achill-henge featured prominently in Michael Lewis's seminal 2011 Vanity Fair article on the factors that created the Irish collapse.

Achill-henge is of course, unique. More common to us all are the combinations of failed retail sites and those non-spaces that survived the crash. Factor in the increasingly ramshackle appearance of SALE-driven bargain units that surround towns such as Galway, Castlebar and Sligo and we see the mismanaged prefab future we have settled into.

Showing their age, in towns beyond the Pale, are developer-led examples intended to support imagined retail traditionalism. The fake small shop fronts bolted on to the super pubs and carwashes are now unmaintained shrines, curious frontages surrounded by German discount stores.

Not all town centres should be written off. They have weathered more than one recession and show resistance in a variety of ways.

Limerick City council has followed the lead taken by Dublin City Council's encouraging urban artists to work on street furniture and ESB boxes. This is the yin to the yang of graffiti, representing a generation left to deal with the landscape. In the middle of this ongoing conversation are other instances such as the Temple Bar installation maintained by Mannix Flynn who used the site to construct a large bulletin board for his ongoing work, a history of institutional abuse.

Since 2008 our centres have become forums for exceptional citizen commentary. We see this in one level on Exchange St (Flynn's piece) and another in the confrontational design and activity of Joe McNamara's painted concrete mixer jammed outside Leinster House. The Interventionist

contributors operating in these centres and unfinished sites include both the unofficial and grant-aided artist. They have a desire to conceptually reclaim the nation's hijacked territory from a post-crash culture of speculation.

Some artist-activists concentrate on specifics. The group Uncommonland has questioned the legitimacy of a failed property developer's vague ownership of what is now the NAMA-fied space of Tallaght Cross. The Tallaght Cross intervention involved a photo flash mob to confront an absurd rule of forbidden photography imposed by caretakers. Connor McGarrigle's NAMALand project seeks to illustrate the physicality of abstract finance by creating an app to visualize data generated by the collapse. Citizens can map their own routes or join McGarrigle's own NAMALand walks. He has publicised this project as a political critique.

The conventional appears in physical reaction to some of the sixteen hundred ghost estates as art sites. Last year Jochen Gersz took on an unsold holiday-home development in Sneem Co Kerry as a project. He directed 57 school children to place painted images in the windows. Explanation text on site reads "Where Has The Tiger gone?" and the range of imagery includes the uncomfortable, icon of the crane in the landscape. In Leitrim, in 2010, Elaine Reynolds on an Artist-in-Residence scheme

modified an unfinished Nama-house to flash the signal SOS into the sky.

These and dozens more intensive projects show the territory is now active enough for groups such as Anglo Not Our Debt to insist on delivering their message through various 'art' designed projects and events. This multi-platforming taps into a range of socially-engaged seminars such as the recent 'Arts & Activism in Times of Austerity' in Dublin's Project Arts Centre.

For the foreseeable future a combination of both unauthorized and officially sanctioned artists will continue to patrol this particular landscape as political geographers offering creative commentary and potential new narratives salvaged from these post-Tiger non-spaces.

The Irish carvery lunch banners clog buildings and motorway roundabouts every bit as much as their cholesterol clogs our unemployed builders' arteries

22 My Summer Holidays:



MAGALUF. IBIZA. A DOUBLE-DECKER BUS TO ATHENS WITH CLIFF RICHARD. RÓNÁN BURTENSHAW REJECTED ALL OF THESE AND SPENT HIS SUMMER HOLS IN ISTANBUL. OOPS.

Tear gas. Sirens. Stinging, streaming eyes see paramilitary police with automatic weapons chase gas-masked protesters on wet streets. Burning skin. Makeshift medical centres, injured and bloodied bodies.

I hadn't intended it to be like that. I travelled to Istanbul on May 29th for a holiday. The first day panned out as expected - kebabs, sun in Gulhane Park, a visit to Dolmabahçe Palace. But on the morning of the second day that changed. Sitting in the lobby of my hostel I came across a two paragraph article on the English-language site of Hürriyet about the eviction of a small protest in Gezi Park by police. My travel partner, Tommy Gavin, and I were both journalists. We delayed our plans to visit the Blue Mosque and headed towards Taksim to take a look. It was a decision that plunged us into the middle of an historic revolt in a country we barely knew.

Covering events as a journalist was challenging. From the first day we wrote under pseudonyms, a decision prompted both by Turkey's status as the world's leading jailer of journalists and our intentions to travel onwards to Iran at a later point. Pseudonyms kept our real names from an embassy Google search. Later a contact warned us the Turkish police were looking for Irish people at marches.

That first morning in Taksim Square we were so security conscious that we took interviewees to a local cafe rather than take out our recorders in public. But with time the spirit of the movement emboldened everyone and, gradually, we went from hanging around its fringes to live-tweeting yards away from police lines.

One night this probably went a step too far - we travelled to Gazi Mahalleesi, a Kurdish-Alevi ghetto on the outskirts of Istanbul, without the contacts or experience we should have had. Clashes there were the most intense we had seen and we came quite close to being trapped as police broke through barricades.

Writing about Islam was also tricky. When I left Ireland the Woolwich murder and the carnival of reaction which followed was dominating the news cycle. As an anti-racist that put me on guard against Islamophobia. Yet, when the protests kicked off in Turkey, people were voicing their dissatisfaction with Islamism. One slogan I saw graffitied on the wall read "Tayyip - I hope the minarets you love impale you". This forced a difficult adjustment, bringing me out of some of the simplistic paradigms into which leftists and anti-racists sometimes attempt to hammer questions of Islam.

Some more discerning protesters were conscious of the position I found myself in. Aware of the rise of Islamophobic sentiment in the West since 9-11, which would discriminate against pro and anti-Erdogan demonstrators alike, they emphasised the universality of what they opposed. Using religion as a subterfuge to advance capitalism, attempting to restrict the rights of women, demonising and stigmatising the LGBT community - these weren't specific to Islam but were practices of the religious Right the world over. As one feminist in Gezi Park put it to me, "Here they are trying to take away our right to abortion, to make us cover our heads, to make us be quiet in society. But they do these things everywhere. they just have more power here now than other places. We are not anti-religion but we are against this control over our lives."

My lasting memories of the experience will be its positives. Wading through tents and seated circles of people in Gezi Park on the first day, tentatively enquiring if anyone spoke English. Waking on the second morning to the sound of chanting - emerging from the hostel to see enormous crowds, an ocean of people on Istiklal Avenue. The atmosphere of celebration upon re-entering Gezi Park on the first Saturday - people hugging, dancing and bands playing Bella Ciao. The education I got about a society I knew nothing about.

I also learned about resilience. I met so many seemingly ordinary people who were acting with extraordinary bravery. Seeing adaptation in these conflict situations was instructive - people who would never have considered confronting the

police for most of their lives were thrust into the front line of a movement that they owned. In response they fashioned anti-tear gas solution from Gaviscon, built barricades, developed novel new methods of protest like 'standing man' and built solidarity across barriers like ethnicity that had seemed impregnable in Turkey.

As the crowds grew in Istanbul and across Turkey, that first week, the boundaries to possibility seemed to just disappear. People began to really dream. Not dreams of commodities and personal advancement, but a real unencumbered imagination about how society might look and the way we might relate to each other. Being witness to that encouraged me to be less pessimistic about the chances of radical change.

My emotional journey in Turkey was elation, inspiration and excitement on the one hand, fear and exhaustion on the other. I've found talking about my time in Turkey in positive terms hardly seems appropriate when so many people have been imprisoned, injured and killed. But discussing only those aspects wouldn't do justice to the wonderful moments I witnessed. Seen in its totality it was a complicated and contradictory experience. But a remarkable one that I won't soon forget.

To read Rónán's reports from Turkey visit [rabble.ie/](#) and search for 'Reuben'.



Photography by Rónán Burtenshaw



Tayyip - I hope the minarets you love impale you



KAOS on the Streets

DURING HER RECENT VISIT TO IRELAND TO MARK PRIDE CELEBRATIONS WE MANAGED TO CATCH UP OVER A BEER WITH NEVIN ÖZTOP. SHE'S THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF KAOS GL, THE MAGAZINE FOR TURKEY'S LGBT REPRESENTATIVE ORGANISATION AND WE THOUGHT WE'D CORNER HER FOR A FEW INSIGHTS INTO LIFE AS AN ACTIVIST DURING THE RECENT AND ONGOING STREET PROTESTS IN HER HOMELAND.

FIRSTLY PERHAPS YOU COULD TELL US HOW QUICKLY YOU ADAPTED TO LIFE AS A STREET PROTESTOR?

Adapting to a life as a protestor started in the head first and long ago. As a lesbian activist involved in the feminist and LGBT movement, nothing really was new to me. What was new was the involvement of other people whom I would never imagine to see on the street protesting with me and the unity of different political and social groups.

When the riots started, I was in Antalya having a nice vacation. I ended up spending a lot of time in front of TV watching and reading about all that was happening. Two days after the riots started, I flew to Ankara and right after I put my luggage at home, I went outside and called a colleague of mine to ask where we could meet to join the protest. I felt like I could not wait another minute without contributing to what has been started by the youth.

YOU TOLD A STORY ABOUT GOING TO THE PROTEST IN YOUR LOCAL STREETS DRESSED IN NICE CLOTHES AND HOW INAPPROPRIATE THEY WERE. WHAT HAPPENED TO MAKE YOU CHANGE YOUR WARDROBE AND OVER THE COURSE OF THE FIRST WEEK OR SO HOW EXACTLY DID YOU CHANGE?

The first time I went on the street, I knew I would be within my own friends' group, as it is safer to hang out as communities to block direct police attacks. A lot of protestors who were caught on their own were subject to much more police brutality and arbitrary detentions. We have people who went missing for a few days and showed up eventually.

So yes! I put on a grey dress and nice purple converse shoes. I had a little bag, which I now know is not able to hold any of the crucial things I need! But I was very good with picking the best scarf to cover my face, and I need credit for it. By the end of the night (for some it is around midnight, for some others it goes 'till the sunrise), you are soaked with water, your face is covered with various stuff, your eyes do not see anymore and your voice does not sound the same. Then you know, next day you need to put on pants, better shoes, a thick scarf, and carry at least a lemon and a bottle of water.

The first day I was on the street, I was feeling strong but a part of me was also scared as the time went. There was a helicopter on top of us, projecting light into our eyes. At one point, I was afraid they would throw gas bombs on our heads, as they did in another part of Ankara. With the light above us, it felt as if we were already in detention!

AS WELL AS CLOTHING DID YOU NOTICE OTHER THINGS ABOUT YOUR ROUTINE CHANGING? FOR INSTANCE YOUR SLEEP PATTERNS, DAILY LIFE AND

SCHEDULES. DID YOU SUDDENLY HAVE MANY MORE DAILY CONTACTS WITH PEOPLE OUTSIDE YOUR NORMAL SPHERE?

Everything about our lives has changed, to be honest. We lived a life like in fiction movies: a wolf at moonlight, and a human during the day! People went on the streets after 8 pm, and for some, it continued till the morning. We were students, workers... There were a lot of elder women and men who were retired. I personally was on the street after I got off from work. I would go home, eat dinner, and then go out. Then I would come back home around 1am or so, and sleep, take a shower in the morning, put on my "work" clothes and walk on the street with the rest of public. It was such a bizarre feeling to see the whole capital city being fully destroyed and covered with graffiti against fascism. To know that you are now going to work but were a part of what you see only a few hours ago is just indescribable.

You work, you protest, you sleep, and in the meantime you keep up with news. I had irregular sleeping hours, due to gas bombs on the streets, a lot of evenings passed with no sleep. A few friends of mine had to go and get their blood checked as they were having irregular heart beats. And I was feeling anxious all the time. These became a part of our lives unfortunately.

TELL US HOW THE STREET MOVEMENT ACCEPTED LGBT ACTIVISTS IN PARTICULAR. WAS THERE A FEAR OF EXCESSIVE POLICE REPRESSION AND DID OTHER NON-ALIGNED ACTIVISTS EVER REACT BADLY OR WAS THERE A POSITIVE ELEMENT TO THE EXPRESSIONS ON THE STREET?

I think it was different between Istanbul and other cities such as Ankara and İzmir. Istanbul's air sometimes can give you the feeling of a small heaven. In some venues and neighborhoods, you have fake heavens which give you the feeling you are welcomed there. But this is only a fake heaven, which was broken and carried to the city center, Taksim, for the first time with Gezi protests.

In Ankara, the profile of the protestors varied from working class and elder to students and youth movement. That brought both challenges and advantages. I remember wanting to give a message to my lesbian allies in neighboring countries, so once I held a sign that said "Lesbian power against killer police." The sign was in English, so that gave me a layer of feeling protected but a lot of people could still understand what it says. In the end, with no united rainbow/poster presence around me, it still felt warm inside to be doing that for myself. Of course, the presence of LGBT activism and feminism was visible in every city very shortly after the Gezi protests... Parks, boulevards, streets spoke our language everyday.

The Essential Protester's Survival Kit



1 Anti-acid, milk & lemon are useful for burns on skin.

2 Baby shampoo is also good for washing out your eyes (by the way, contrary to how they advertise it, baby shampoo does burn your eyes but not as bad as teargas!)

3 Clothes that cover every inch of your body should be worn.

4 Good shoes to run from fascist police!

5 Facebook & Twitter were two main ways of uniting and protecting one another. Phone numbers of lawyers and doctors and addresses of portable "hospitals" were shared. You had to write the exact minute for when you post an address because as all these places and people are moving for their own security - you want to keep the information as valid as possible.

Also we tell everyone to **never protest alone** and have at least a friend with them. People who get arrested with no witness or friend can be subject to more brutality or longer detentions. Also turkey has one of the worst records for killings in detention. So we would tell everyone to scream out their first and last names when they are being detained. That way it was relatively easier to track people. But more importantly above all, keep your sense of humour it will take you far...

A disgruntled Russian bank customer amended a credit card contract to contain a 0pc interest rate, no fees and no credit limit. Every time the bank failed to comply with the rules, he would fine

them 3m rubles (£58,716). Tinkoff Bank failed to read the contract from Mr. Argarkov and signed it. They since tried to cancel the contract but are now being sued for 24m rubles.



{PITCH INVASION}

World in motion

FROM ITALIA 90 TO ONE MAN AND HIS DOG. MARK HOSKINS EXPLORES WHAT TOOK US FROM A NATION OBSESSED WITH THE BEAUTIFUL GAME TO ONE THAT HAS TURNED ITS BACK ON THE TERRACES AND FINDS THERE ARE DEDICATED FANS DETERMINED TO WREST CONTROL BACK FROM THE MONEY MEN.

In England, love got the World in Motion and the greatest football song of all time had bucket hats, bingo wings and barmen dancing arm in arm. In Ireland, a nation held its breath while mediocre football from lion-hearted Irish, and not-so-Irish, men brought a humble team to the edge of greatness and a rapturous, innocent homecoming unequalled for its outpouring of love before or since. That summer everyone became a football fan. The future of 'the beautiful game' on these islands looked rosy. Football became respectable. Money started pouring in. Somewhere along the line, though, the fans became disconnected.

Today, football is big business. Manchester United FC, winners of six league titles in the last decade, is valued at \$3.3 billion dollars by Forbes magazine. Wayne Rooney has an annual income of €20million. With this success, you'd imagine United's hardcore support would be very happy; Yet in 2005, a group of supporters opposed to the stewardship of American tycoon, Malcolm Glazer formed a breakaway club, FC United of Manchester, and entered the bottom tier of English football. They're standing against modern football.

The spoils of big sponsorship, TV deals and billionaire buy-outs have only benefited those at the top. Historically big clubs like Leeds United have failed. In 2001, the club took out massive loans, believing that a windfall from UEFA champions league sponsorship was on the way. The gamble, however, didn't pay off. They failed to qualify for the champions league on two successive occasions and financial implosion followed. They were subsequently relegated.

Prior to the crisis, the Leeds United Supporters Trust (LUST) was established by fans to campaign for inclusion in the running of the club. According to Gary Hooper, chairman of LUST, "the largest group of stakeholders in football have been

marginalised by the cash influx and involvement of soulless money-orientated owners who seek to push the emotional investment supporters make in their clubs into being a cash cow. That has to stop and its up to us as supporters to influence those who can bring about change." The trust now has almost ten thousand members and in the long term it aims to secure power for fans at the club.

Hooper believes fan-owned clubs can succeed. "The German model has shown they can, look at Swansea and what they have achieved if only up to us as supporters to influence those who can bring about change." The trust now has almost ten thousand members and in the long term it aims to secure power for fans at the club. Hooper believes fan-owned clubs can succeed. "The German model has shown they can, look at Swansea and what they have achieved if only with a 20% fan ownership; its time to look at these models seriously with eyes wide open and challenge the profiteers." But he believes a root and branch reform is necessary from local to global levels of the game, "for me at present only UEFA genuinely listens to supporters and I applaud the work done under Michel Platini. FIFA is globally unrepresentative of any stakeholder in the game any more and with corruption rife, policy self protecting and questionable at best and the reputations of those who lead the organisation in tatters its time to start again"

Irish football is in a sorry state. Despite some impressive results in European competitions over the last decade, domestic clubs have failed to capture the imagination of a supposedly sports obsessed nation. During the noughties, clubs like Bohemians, Shelbourne and Drogheda United, spent relatively vast sums of money chasing the dream of dominating the league here and champions league group stage qualification. What transpired bore remarkable similarities with the wider economy and almost on cue, around 2008, league of Ireland football spiralled into crisis.

Dublin City, Sporting Fingal, Galway United and Monaghan United have all gone out of business. Bohs, Cork City and Shels could have joined them but for the efforts of their fans to keep them afloat. The Save Our Bohs initiative raised thousands of

euro, while Cork City's FORAS co-op, effectively reformed the club under fan ownership to ensure top flight football stayed in the rebel city.

At Shelbourne FC, the 1895 Trust has been established to ensure that Dublin's second oldest club has a future. Niall Farrell, PRO for the 1895 Trust explains its goals are "to ensure responsible stewardship of the history and traditions of Shelbourne FC", while some are specific, like finding a permanent home for the club, and promoting volunteering within the club. "They all add up to ensuring that Shelbourne has a stable future. Eventually, we want to work towards a mutually fan owned Shelbourne FC."

Like Leeds, Shelbourne gambled on European success. Money was poured into the squad. They came close to the Champions League group stages, reaching the third round of the qualifiers in 2005, but it wasn't enough. Financial implosion and relegation followed. Fan ownership could prevent this situation from recurring. It saved Cork City and has brought Shamrock Rovers back to the top of Irish football after decades without a home.

Farrell recognises the battle Irish football faces, "Kids can grow up now without ever seeing a live football match, and still be 'hardcore fans' of a club. The connection between clubs and fans is gone, in a lot of cases. In Ireland, we still see quite close relations between clubs and fans - but the vast majority of Irish fans support British clubs. That means that the direct link between a club and its community, which was a major driver in most clubs' histories, can no longer exist. People say football is the global game, but the spread of televised, hyped-up football is killing the sport in many countries. The alternative, for me at least, is clear. Fan ownership makes sure that there will always be a link between fans and the club."

It should be noted though, that fan ownership alone is not a panacea. Bohemian FC in

Phibsborough, has been a fan owned club since its foundation in 1890. Like Shelbourne, Bohs had a financial meltdown at the end of the last decade, the two clubs having won eight out of ten league titles between them in the noughties. The future for football may lie in seeing it not as an investment opportunity, but as a resource for fans and communities alike, a labour of love that has the power to get the world in motion.

Hooper's words ring true for many Irish football fans - "I believe the FA can be improved and should be encouraged to look again carefully and closely at its grass roots...the game belongs to those who invest most and you cannot put a price on the emotional investment made by fans."

Photo by Paul Reynolds.

Kids can grow up now without ever seeing a live football match, and still be 'hardcore fans' of a club

take five

A round up of bits and bobs tickling our fancies..



01

Pho real?

If you have ever been driven hungover and bleary-eyed onto the mean streets of Dublin you will know how difficult it is to fill that gnawing vacuum inside with something that isn't prescribed, deep fried or requiring the type of knife-and-fork-coordination that your broken nerves just don't have. Happily Vietnamese Pho has made an appearance on the capitals culinary scene. Pho is a soothing concoction of broth and noodles that you season to taste with fresh mint, chillies and lemon wedges. It is the ultimate in fast food, arriving in steamy bowls of goodness as it is high in fresh veg and low in fat. Aobaba, Capel St offers take-away and bubble tea at wallet friendly prices while Pho Viet, Parnell St, is a touch more expensive and edging towards a restaurant experience.



02

Stitcher

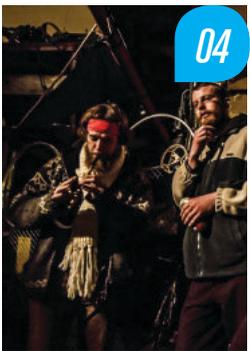
Is it too much to say listening to Marian Finucane is a push factor in emigration? Maybe a tad. Listening to the radio is one of those relaxing morning things that can lengthen the day and enrich a cuppa. Yet some of the fare offered up in this provincial backwater makes you want to smash your head against the fridge door, hit rewind and do it all over again. Introducing Stitcher, one of them app yokes that lets you pick and choose playlists of your favourite podcasts from around the globe. It's intuitive and learns your likes, meaning rather than stopping after a show's done it loads up one of a similar vibe. All in all, it creates a radio-like listening experience tailored to suit you.



03

Caffè Normale

We've come a long way from the land of black or white coffee. This little north Atlantic island now boasts an array of skinny, syrup flavour, soya frothed concoctions in most towns and villages. With every second service station housing an automated coffee machine you're spoilt for choice but still frustratingly poor on quality. A good coffee - quality beans, freshly roasted and ground, made with care and fairly priced - requires some searching. So scratch the embellishments and get like the continentals: a delicious espresso or macchiato won't cost you more than two quid in Caffè Italiano, Crowe St Bazaar. More demanding on the budget but pushing the concept of taste testing is the Coffee Dock in the Twisted Pepper and the Bald Barista lives up to its reputation.



04

Independent Spaces

You know us by now rabblers, we just love Dublin's hidden underbelly gems and the cracks they carve out to survive. Most of these venues have a primordial vibrancy incubated by dodgy leases, money dazed local councillors and cops who think the Berlin example is some form of restraint hold, resulting in quasi legal status and short life spans. However two examples break the mold. The Exchange (Temple Bar), and Seomra Spraoi (Belvedere Court) have been putting roofs over the heads of numerous scenes by being non-profit and volunteer ran. Between them they've housed exhibitions, talks, film screenings and gigs. Exchange is an alcohol-free venue open to all ages. Seomra Spraoi also offers a whopper vegan cafe, bike repair workshop and regular BYOB gigs. If you want to glimpse the future then drop by.



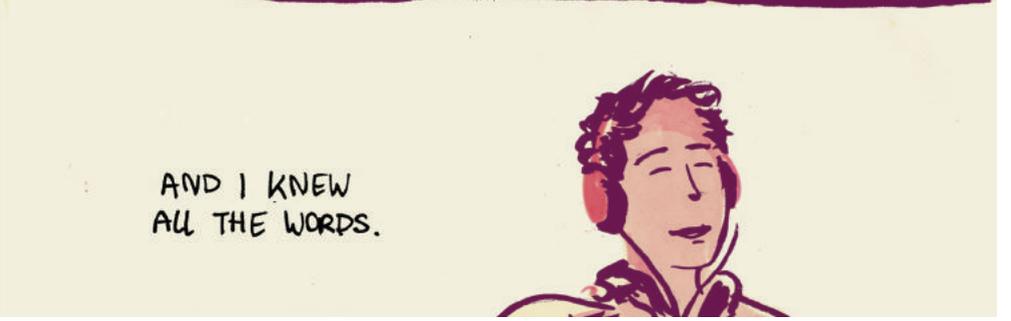
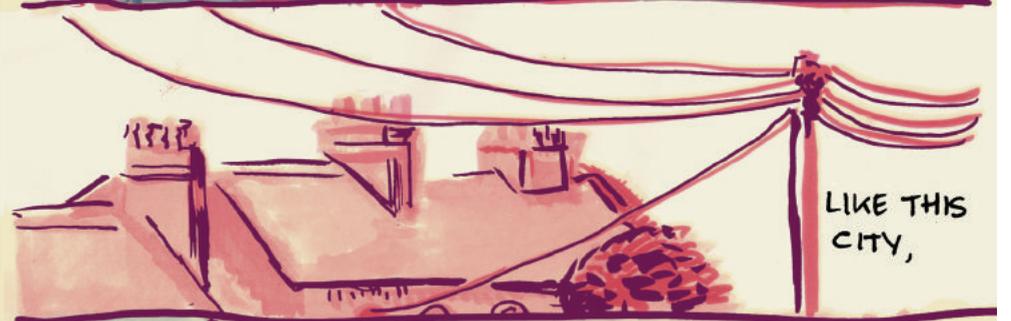
05

The 3rd Policeman

No doubt many of you bargain hunters are familiar with the charity and vintage shop route through Dublin's fair city. Starting on Capel St, one can wander across the Liffey, head up George's St southwards towards Camden St and end up in Rathmines. If this is your buzz, be sure to check out one of Dublin's finest vintage shops, The 3rd Policeman. Located at 121 Rathmines Road and, presumably named after the Flann O'Brien novel, the shop hosts a wonderful array of antiques, vintage clothes, vinyl, and quirky items. As the soul song goes, good things don't come easy, but this place is well worth a visit despite being a bit pricey. The atmosphere takes you back to a bygone era and the merchandise is top quality.

WE SPEAK IN CODE

Paddy Lynch 2013 PMRocU.Net



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45
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COI will return for a 4th series and as always we will launch with a free gig in The Button Factory on August 24th with performances from Twinkranes Hands Up Who Wants To Die Turning Down Sex , Cave Ghosts and more tbc

Season 4 hitting your screens soon on UPC Channel 802 & Aertv.ie

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COMMUNITY OF INDEPENDENTS

HORRORSCOPES

THIS MONTH'S INSTALMENTS OF CELESTIAL GUIDANCE FROM OUR RESIDENT ASTROLOGISTS, TRAGIC TERRY AND THE MAGIC COWBOY.

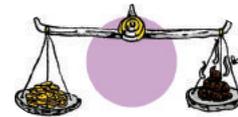
VIRGO AUG 23-SEP 22

Well it seems that you may not have been so lucky recently in affairs of the heart, Virgo, but remember, swallow your pride and you might get the ride. Drink more and don't be afraid to make a complete fool of yourself once in a while. Never mind the first move, it's the last one that counts. 4,324,902,430,214 is your number this month.



LIBRA SEP 23-OCT 22

There aren't always two sides to every story Libra, and the sword is more often mightier than the pen. Likewise, two wrongs sometimes can make a right, and as they say, sometimes the late bird catches two women in a bush while throwing glass stones at their little friends who they keep closer than their enemies who are actually choosy beggars. Don't be such a fence sitter.



PISCES FEB 19-MAR 20

A recent bereavement shows you once again that your innate ability to stick your foot in it is showing no sign of receding soon. Your capacity to endlessly witter on about the minutiae of your own personal disappointments at the most inappropriate times leaves you once again shunned and unwelcome at even the most banal events of the social calendar. On the plus side, your herpes is finally showing signs of stabilising. Stay in bed but avoid people (including yourself if at all possible!).



SCORPIO OCT 23-NOV 21

All is not as it seems though it seems like it is. Keep a close eye on your best friend, and pay attention to seemingly meaningless events as they may hold more significance than anyone could ever possibly imagine. This is a time to be vigilant, and remember, if in doubt, don't be afraid to lash out at random people who may be saying things about you behind your back.



ARIES MAR 21-APR 19

It's time to take a step back, Aries, but be careful where you tread. Your recent successes may have been over celebrated, which may leave a bitter taste in your friends' bitchy pipeholes. Money matters are looking up but everyone thinks you're a tit.



TAURUS APR 20-MAY 20

Avoid the police this month Taurus, as Saturn moves over the South Circular. This cosmic alignment may mean that your estranged lover may be becoming temporarily suggestible to your incessant attempts at communication. Always remember, if at first you don't succeed...



SAGITTARIUS DEC 22-JAN 19

It may be time for a new approach as Mars aligns with the Morning Star hostel. Remember, you are what you eat, so consider laying off those wankers. You haven't been in tune with your own body so it may be time to go exploring someone else's. As you complain about all the hipsters moving into your area it may be pertinent at this point to look in a mirror.



CAPRICORN DEC 22-JAN 19

Orion's belt is coming into alignment with Thoth's ringpiece which may lead to an interesting project with an unexpected partner. Watch out for small old deformed women as this may be a sign that money matters are about to become dismal. Be careful not to pay attention to any nonsensical or vague advice!



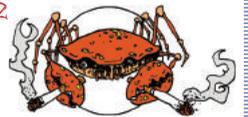
GEMINI MAY 21-JUN 20

This is the aeon of Pluto, and you may need to check that your clock is showing the right time. Purple is not your colour, although it must be remembered that this is also a sacred time in the Druidic calendar. Be wary of nonsense jockeys.



CANCER JUN 21-JUL 22

As money matters worsen it may be time to consider shoplifting and stealing from work. It may also be time to saddle up your angel spirit donkey and take a ride to pastures greener. Be wary of visits from unwanted strangers, it may be the TV licence inspector, if so tell him in no uncertain terms to fuck off.



AQUARIUS JAN 20-FEB 18

This is your time to shine Aquarius, be careful what you wish for because it will all come true! This is certainly your golden moment, you legend! You have a unique way of communicating, which others of lesser starsigns may be slow to comprehend. As well as your proven talents for artistic and musical endeavours, your sexual prowess and literary flair should now be obvious to all fortunate enough to bask in the glow of your undisputed genius.



LEO JUL 23-AUG 22

Your shameless self-promotion thinly veiled as socially conscious pseudo-protest is fooling nobody. Wind your neck in, put that megaphone away and take a long hard look at yourself. A radical change of gender may be on the cards, Leo. A sudden windfall leaves the room stinking.



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A Cork FG councillor, Michael Hegarty, successfully appealed a drink-driving conviction following an incident in

which he sped away from a garda checkpoint before hiding in a bush behind a churchyard after a prolonged foot chase. He tested over

twice the limit for alcohol. The judge accepted he may have been placed in a garda car before he was cautioned and formally detained.



{CLASSIX SELECTION}



Bohane Dub Culture

BOHANE. THE VICE CITY OF A FUTURE IRELAND WHOSE INVENTED PATOIS AND RICHLY DRAWN CHARACTERS WON AUTHOR KEVIN BARRY THIS YEAR'S IMPAC AWARD FOR HIS DEBUT NOVEL THAT TELLS ITS TALE. NO VICE CITY IS COMPLETE WITHOUT ITS OWN SOUNDTRACK AND WE HERE AT RABBLE ASKED KEVIN TO OFFER UP SOME OF HIS SUGGESTIONS, WHAT HE CALLED "SIX SONGS FOR BOHANE".

1 'Rema' by The Observer All Stars

A bass-monstrous Trojan Records arse-walloper from, like, 1977 or something. There's a heavy vicious skank to it and it'd make ribbons out of your spine and as such it is most suitable for Bohane city in 2053, maybe as theme song for the killer-gal Jenni Ching, a homicidal 19-year-old hottie in a spray-on catsuit and a top hat, and you know what, she can sit a fucken horse, too, like.

2 'None Shall Escape The Judgement' by Johnny Clarke

A righteous plea for natural justice in the yards of a troubled city at a time of Heavy Occult Weather - which you'd get plenty of outside in Bohane an' all, let-me-tell-ya.

3 'Soul Fire' by Lee 'Scratch' Perry

From his secret laboratory, the master of all the ceremonies, the one and only Sir LSP goes deep into the pits of his scorched and tormented soul (i.e. he's probably out of weed) and he's come back up again with a demented wee lullaby. They'd be turmin' the 7-inch of this wan late in the evenings in the Back Trace on the olde wind-up record player.

4 'Scientist Ganja Dub' by Scientist

Okay, so the Feudin' is done for the day and a Bohane Fiend and a Bohane Aul' Doll (or 'Tushie', to use the correct nomenclature) are back in the shack, and things are gettin' a bit slow-n-saucy on this other gem from the sacred Trojan stable; love is in the air.

5 'President Mash Up The Resident' by Shorty

A jaunty little step-kicker which they'd be blastin' out on a regular basis down in the Ancient & Historical Bohane Film Society, in between takin' blasts off the dream-pipe and drifting again to the Lost-Time.

6 'A Pair of Brown Eyes' by The Pogues

Coz it's all a Big Sloppy Love Story at the end of the day, like, and they've all got oirish accents, too, don't they, and they'd definitely get a buzz in Bohane of the whiskified-poeticals of the Blessed Mr McGowan. Jah Rastafari

Illustration by Thomas McCarthy

Fashion Whores

SWEETIES, PREGNANCY MAY BE THE MIRACLE OF BIRTH BUT IT IS NO EXCUSE FOR LETTING YOURSELF GO. HERE AT FW WE'VE CURATED SOME OF THE BEST TABLOID ADVICE THAT A BUNCH OF MIDDLE-CLASS JOURNALISTS CAN GIVE WOMEN ABOUT STAYING APPROPRIATELY DESIRABLE WHEN GESTATING A FETUS.

1 JUST EAT ONE MORE SLICE OF WHOLEMEAL BREAD A DAY.

God, forbid you put on any more baby weight then, well, the baby! Advice columns for expectant Mums topple over themselves to encourage them not to over-indulge. Because remember ladies our number one function in life is looking sexy...oh yeah and to make babies. Bulging in the wrong places is well just simply kardashianarian.



2 DON'T FLASH TOO MUCH FLESH:

And so it begins to get complicated. While being sexy is our number one function, being too sexy when pregnant is a big no-no. Don't you dare show those expanding bellies under sheer fabrics, skin-tight leather or do a Jordan with plunging side slits. You're going to be a mumsey soon. In Irish-speak that equates with the Virgin Mary!

3 GLOW!

It is so important you glow darlings. Glow with the miracle of new life in your tumsies. Don't dare feel tired, worn out or full of morning sickness. Definately don't complain about it. You are now fore-filling your role in life. Be grateful for this. Who knows you might even be lucky enough to carrying a boy.

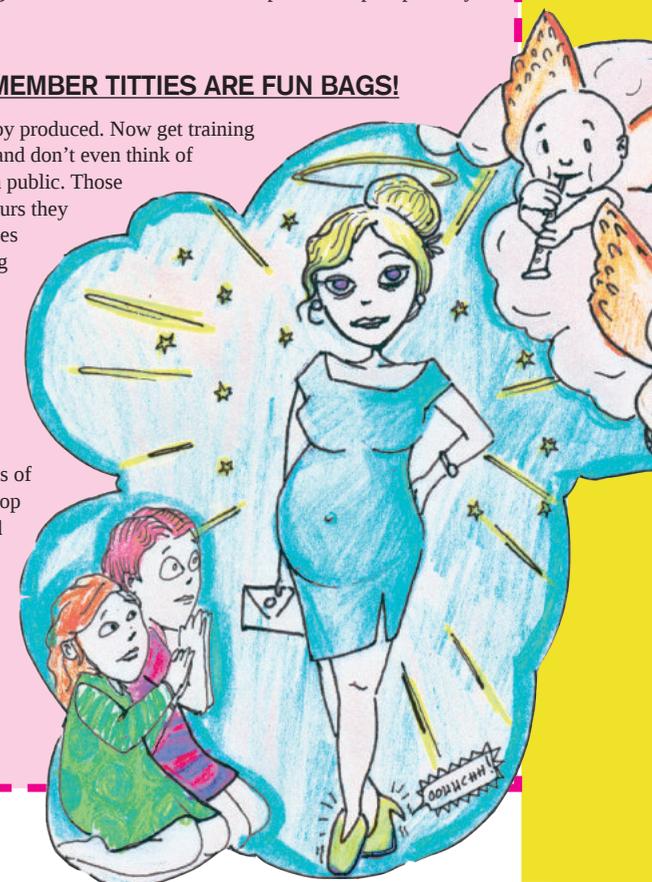
4 SPRING BACK INTO SHAPE.

If a multi-millionaires can do then why can't you? The latest trend is regaining your pre-baby shape faster then it took to squeeze your newly baked bum out. In fact let's dispense with this pre-baby stuff and go for a size 8, firm butted, perked titted never had it before. The inside scoop is that new celebrity Mums are now preforming stomach bonding in the last three months, it keeps the bump respectably demure.

5 REMEMBER TITTIES ARE FUN BAGS!

So baby produced. Now get training ladies and don't even think of breast feeding in public. Those breasts aren't yours they are wider societies to oggle. Feeding your baby... especially in public just reminds folks that they have another function beyond gracing the pages of Playboy. Now stop being selfish and look sexy...no darling not too sexy!

Illustration by Akofa



The 'Sexy Kids' Defence

Former newspaper tycoon Eddy Shah, cleared of raping a schoolgirl in the 1990s, has said underage girls who engage in consensual sex must take blame for the abuse they

suffer and described charges of rape relating to girls under 16 who "threw themselves" at celebrities as "a technical thing".



The Session Pixies



AFTER A HECTIC SUMMER OF EARLY MORNING KITCHEN JAPES AND OUTSMARTING FESTIVAL SECURITY, THE SESSION PIXIES ARE BACK WITH A PLETHORA OF ZANY LIFESTYLE ADVICE...

Dear Session Pixies,

I moved to the arsehole of nowhere last year for work. The country living has been great but I do get bored outta my skull, so I occasionally get a mate in Holland to post over some yokes, stick on Jilted Generation and some glow in the dark wellies, and run around the fields bollock naked, apologising to cows for the gentrification of the area.

Only problem is, half the time they rarely make it to my country manor, which could mean one of two things: that my mate's a thieving prick, or some sky-boy postman from the sticks is getting his sticky fingers on me jiggers. Can yis help a gal out?
Annie, Yokesville

Dear Annie,

You mad bitch. Never mind them cows bud. Sure aren't they responsible for 18% of greenhouse gas emissions worldwide the fuckers. Anyway, for reasons best known to them, Customs Officers decide to start monitoring the post for drugs last year and found loadsa yokes. Their haul went from 3,390e in 2010 to a jaw-breaking 41,000 yips in 2011. So yours are probably in that pile somewhere.

Luckily for them, they only find the

best yokes going, valued at around 15e a pop. Sources close to Revenue Commissioners have said they're 'fuckin mental boys'.

And let that be a lesson to you – always shop local.

Dear Session Pixies,

I hit 30 and decided to get my act together. I scored a job reeking of responsibility that's shunted me well up the career ladder. Yet my life has fallen into a shambles. Gone are the relaxed mornings reading and doing house work. My dole days were poor, but there was an inner peace. Now I barely have time to change underwear never mind masturbate into a sock.

My dog hasn't been walked in a month, and between fucking around online and complaining - there's no time to pick up his favourite food - in fact it's cheaper and less time consuming to feed him euro value meals from the McDonalds than trek to Lidil. How is this growing up? I miss my unemployed zen. What to do?

Randy, Babylon Falls, Wexford.

Dear Randy,

Welcome back to society. Ah yes, the stress of the work-a-day 9-5 slave. Have no fear though. It's all about balance - you are stressed with the adjustment. There are cognitive behaviors you need to change. Have you tried talking to someone? Preferably a stranger. When Friday comes, try skulling 40 pints before vomiting your heart out to some manky fool you met in one of the bars out of Love/Hate. Then lob the gob. In the morning you'll feel much worse then you did at 4:45pm Friday and the rest of the week can only be an improvement.

Illustration by Dara Lynch.



Death & Magic

PISEOGS ARE THE DISAPPEARING, PECULIARLY IRISH SUPERSTITIONS THAT ATTEND EVERY ASPECT OF HUMAN BEHAVIOUR. JOHNNY DILLON EXAMINES OUR BIZARRE FASCINATION WITH MORTALITY.

There is an old saying: 'Níl luibh na leighas in aghaidh an bhais - 'there is no herb or cure for death'. Despite its inevitability, there are a multitude of traditional customs and practices surrounding this most critical moment of human experience. These range from the fanciful and the emotionally resonant to the grotesque. A great many traditional practices were aimed at protecting the life-force of an ailing or weakened individual. In houses where a person lay ill for example, the fire would be kept burning brightly and not be allowed to wane – a failing or extinguished fire betokening the weakening life-force of the patient. It was also thought more likely that a person might make their passing to the otherworld as the tide began to lower and flow out to sea, or as the moon began to wane and diminish.

When a person was dying, every effort was made to ease the passing of their spirit to the otherworld. Shortly before the moment of death, the windows and doors of the house would be opened wide to allow the spirit to escape. None present would kneel or stand between the person and these exits. At the moment of death, mirrors in the house would be covered and clocks would be stopped, a practice still observed today, and stemming perhaps from an older belief in reincarnation; that

the spirit of the deceased might pass into some object in the house. For those with beehives on their land, it was imperative the bees be told of any bereavement in the family, lest they flee the hive or die themselves.

In making the journey to the graveyard, the coffin carrying the deceased would be taken from the house feet first, and the chairs upon which it had been resting would be turned upside down on the floor. When the corpse had been carried from the home, an iron might be pointed round about the roof of the house in order to help to drive the spirit out. Even the route taken to the graveyard was surrounded with ritual practice, and if you were to meet a funeral coming towards you along the road, it was said that you should always turn around and walk at least three steps with it.

Not all who died were afforded the same degree of ceremony. Unbaptised children would not be buried in consecrated ground. Special plots away from normal burial grounds were necessary for these children. Typical unconsecrated burial sites included fields, hedges, cliff ledges, beaches, the outside of a church wall, or the north side of a graveyard. Such children were often buried at night with little by way of ceremony. These spaces were viewed as having their own particular power. A person who walks on the spot where an unbaptised child has

been buried will most certainly be sent astray and lose their bearings. The antidote was to turn a garment of your clothing, such as your coat or hat, inside out, thereby restoring your situation to order.

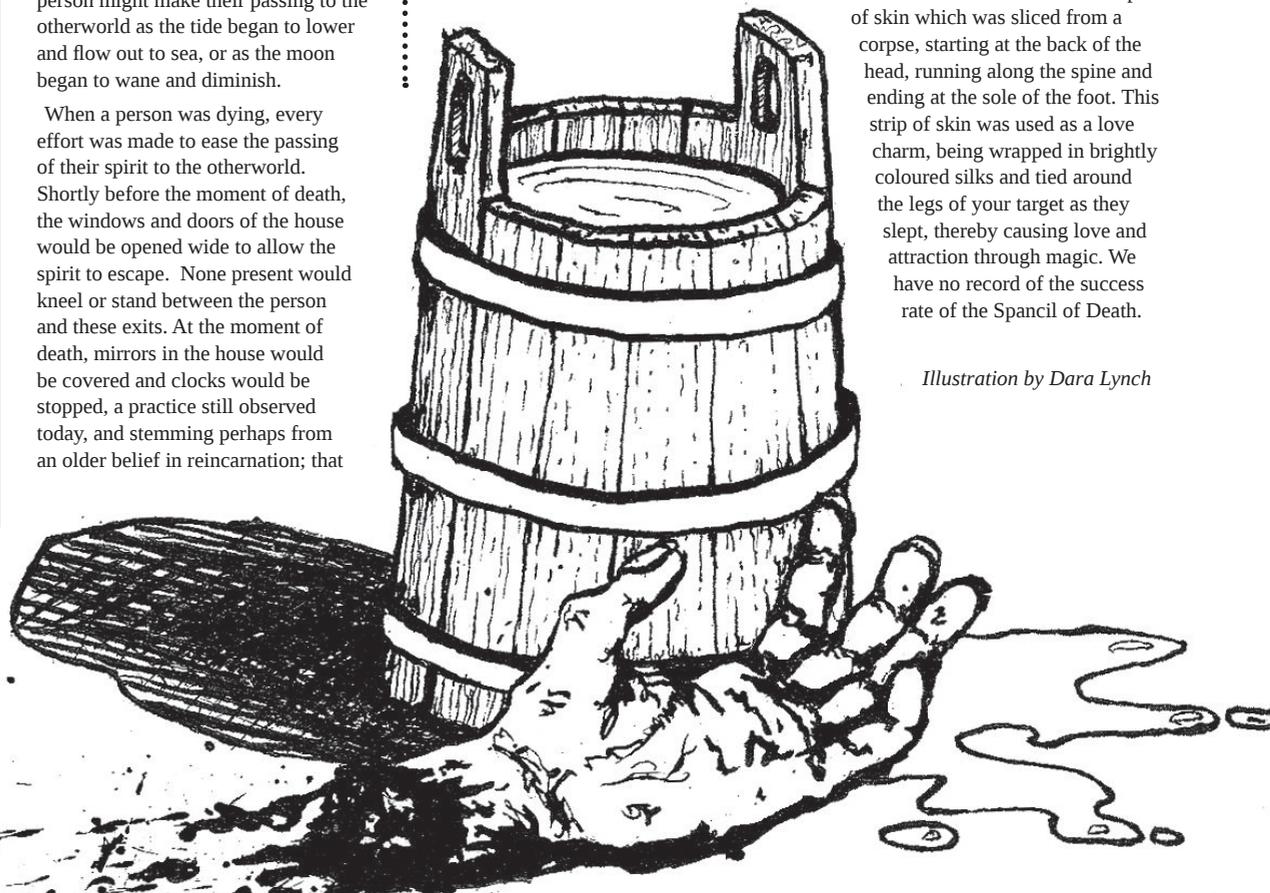
The bodies of the dead were understood to have their own particular power. Certain maladies could be cured by those whose hands had massaged a corpse from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head. This was thought to bestow the ability to cure diseases in humans or animals for up to a month after the body had been buried.

More gruesome still, was the severing of hands from the corpse by a Bean Feasa or 'Wise Woman', in order to use them as a talisman by which the 'profit' or good fortune of a chosen individual could be stolen by magic. The severed hands would be placed in a pail of milk which would be stirred while certain incantations were recited over them. This being done, the good fortune and profit of the targeted individual would be taken from them and transferred to their aggressor. A hand cut from a corpse was used by thieves. Lighting a candle in its palm, they could travel unseen through the house. It was believed to stop any occupants from waking, allowing the marauders free reign of the place.

Most grisly of all perhaps, was the Buarach an Bháis, or 'Spencil of Death'.

This consisted of an unbroken strip of skin which was sliced from a corpse, starting at the back of the head, running along the spine and ending at the sole of the foot. This strip of skin was used as a love charm, being wrapped in brightly coloured silks and tied around the legs of your target as they slept, thereby causing love and attraction through magic. We have no record of the success rate of the Spencil of Death.

Illustration by Dara Lynch



Sticking Up For Choice.

STICKERS, FLYPOSTERS AND GETTING CREATIVE WITH A SHARPIE ARE DUBLIN TRADITIONS. WHETHER IT IS RIVAL FOOTBALL TEAMS, ANTIFASCIST SKETCHES, MASER DESIGNS OR PENNED DECLARATIONS OF TEENAGE LOVE. AOIFE CAMBELL INVESTIGATES A RECENT WAVE OF FEMINIST ACTIVITY THAT'S GOT THE LOCALS ALL A FLUTTER AND WAS EVEN COVERED BY THOSE VIRTUOSOS OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS VICE MAGAZINE.



Women On Web are a non-profit group based in the Netherlands who provide early abortion pills to women living in countries with restrictive abortion laws. The website refers you to a survey about your health and a consultation with an online doctor. If you are deemed suitable then they will post you out a drug called Mifepristone, commonly known as the abortion pill. This is the most commonly used drug to induce an abortion before nine weeks. It is not safe to use after this stage of gestation. A suggested donation of €90 covers the costs of the medication although there is flexibility according to a woman's means.

Under Irish law these pills are illegal, as is sharing information about them. The newly passed Protection of Life During Pregnancy Bill allows medical abortions only in limited circumstances, where there is risk to a woman's life (including suicide). It criminalises women who have abortions on Irish soil outside of these grounds with a possible maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment.

WOW maintain strict confidentiality on behalf of the women who contact them. They do not release the number of pills dispatched to any given country, however they said: "Women in Ireland, just like all other women in the world, need abortions. The legal status has no impact on their need to access abortions. Those women are you and me, our sisters, friends and mothers. Making abortion illegal does not at all reduce abortion rates. It only makes abortions unsafe, pushes it in the underground".

The Irish state still prefers to export its abortion 'problem' abroad at over 4,000 a year. Yet, ironically the right to obtain information about foreign abortion services is still severely restricted. Although the days of removing offending ads from international publications are over. The 1995 Information Act still prevents an Irish doctor from referring a woman for an abortion abroad and

restricts her access to information to face-to-face counselling sessions. And we're only talking about exporting the problem here. Advertising the pills to self-administer an abortion on the soil of the Republic-of-holy-Ireland is a criminal offence. Which under the new legislation could result in 14 years imprisonment.

So the stickers and posters advertising WOW's services throughout Ireland are a bold statement in the face of the consistent failure of the Irish state to care for the health and lives of women. The stickers are not mass produced and appear to be the work of a number of groups or individuals.

Molly, a confident young woman in her early twenties, began making the WOW stickers after she woke up to a "barrage of pro-life posters lining her street in North Dublin". Despite the possibilities of jail-time for her actions, her 'nervousness' lifted after the first week of counter-cavassing the poles on her street. For Molly, it was the concern over the desperate measures the women will go to to prevent an unwanted pregnancy that spurred her actions. She choose to highlight WOW because Molly believes that they are trustworthy and "dedicated to ensuring women have safe abortions with safe medication which has been approved by the World Health Organisation."

Once the first stickers went up it began a domino effect. The message took on a viral energy we usually associate with social media. Jessica, a mature student not previously involved with pro-choice activism, was inspired to get together with two friends. They made simple posters, using paper, markers and sellotape to advertise WOW's service. Jessica explained: "I now see the website written in pen in toilet cubicles and even in a library book in my college. Lots of them are being ripped down and scribbled out but it's not something we can give up on. Even though it's positive that women can access the pills from a

safe reputable site a woman might still be left with the feelings of anxiety that come with taking any medication and left to cope with those feelings alone. Which is barbaric"

This grassroots DIY tactic is not new in the battle for Choice in Ireland. Before the constitution was amended in 1992 to allow the advertisement of foreign abortion services, pro-choice groups illegally distributed information on abortion services. Publicly defying state censorship, the Women's Information Network advice line number was handed out on leaflets, scrawled on women's toilets, placards and laneways: the same spaces which now advertise WOW over twenty years later.

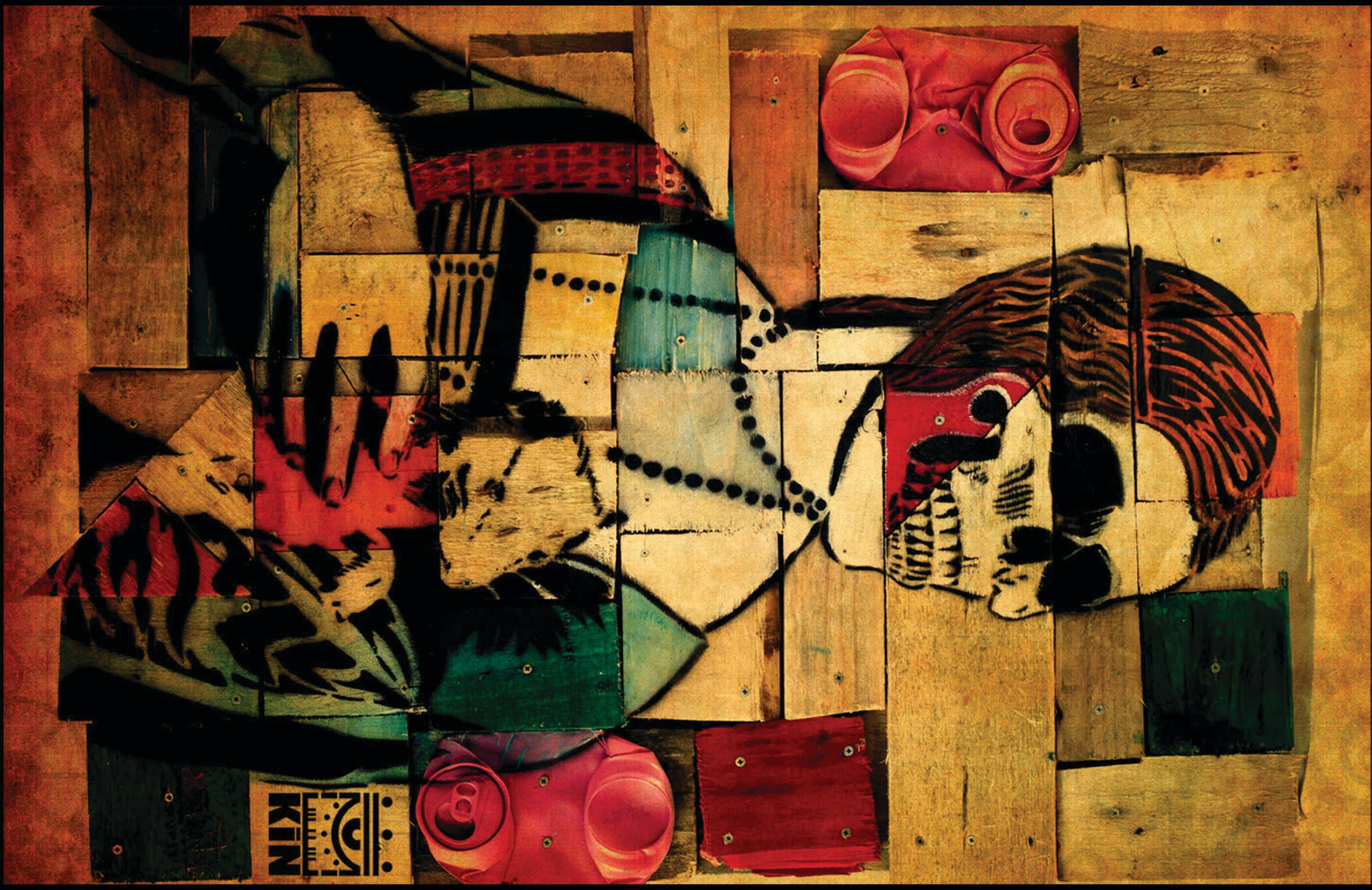
Indeed tourists enjoying an unexpected heatwave on Dublin's streets might be puzzled by lampposts extensively topped with glossy pro-life signs funded by Youth Defence fighting for space amid a variety of home-made stickers, posters and graffiti declaring 'safe abortions with pills'. These stickers speak boldly and directly to women seeking abortions, evading a pro-choice/pro-life message turf war.

The reality is that criminalising abortion doesn't stop it happening. It just makes it difficult, expensive or unsafe to access. Irish women know this already. In the last decade the HSE have released statistics which suggest a decrease in the number of women travelling for abortions. This does not indicate a drop in abortions but rather a drop in those travelling to access them. This decrease may reflect better knowledge and access to the abortion pills which WOW provide. While we wait for our elected representatives to get their heads out of the 1950s we will continue the surreal experience of accessing public health information on the city's lampposts.

Photo by Paul Reynolds



Warning
This issue may contain some flashing images. Be advised...



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