

rabble

Issue #7 Winter 2013
Published Quarterly.

we are rabble
end direct provision

Hand holding a document with the following text:

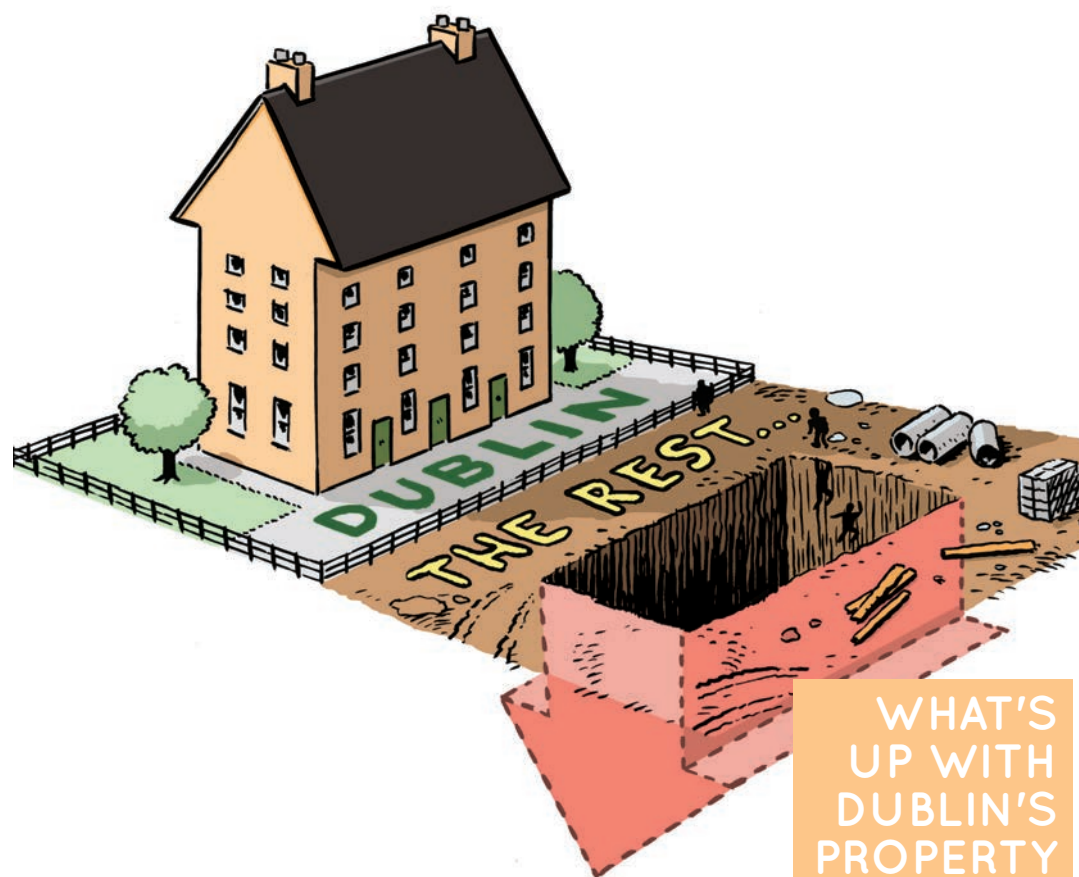
Welfare Allowance
29/11/12 to 05/12/12
Rate: 19.10

	Deductions
186.00	Means: 166.90
186.00	Tot Deds 166.90

Name:
Claim Number:
Extra Days Paid: 7
TOTAL AMOUNT PAYABLE : 19.10
I have received the sum shown above to which I am entitled.
Sign: _____
29/11/2012
Next Signing Day: N/A
Please note that Photo ID may be required from time to time.

FREE.

Well, if you call blood, sweat and tears free. Our computer monitors have burnt themselves into our eyes. Help. Please.



WHAT'S
UP WITH
DUBLIN'S
PROPERTY
PRICES?

INSIDE.

Limerick A Go-Go

We eventually find an alternative to the showband scene...

Corporate Europe

Find out how RTE makes David Cronin want to smash his telly in...

Magdalene Voices

A survivor recounts her tale of incarceration and forced labour.

Killer Fashion

So what's the cost of our love affair with cheap clothes?



Ethnicity

Without recognition Travellers remain second class citizens.

Horror Show

A whirlwind tour of Ireland's history of censorship.

Comics

A whole rake of new freaks take over our colouredy pages.

The Nick Of Time

SO HERE IT IS, THE MOMENT YOU'VE ALL BEEN WAITING FOR, AND WE'VE JUST ABOUT MANAGED TO SCRAPE IT IN ON TIME... OR AT LEAST IN TIME FOR OUR HEARTLESS CHRISTMAS JIBES TO MAKE ANY SENSE BEFORE DECEMBER 2014.

Yep, 2013 is almost over and the country is still shit and everyone is still leaving. Although we heard on the radio today that everything's going to be fine now that the bail-out program is over and done with. *snigger* If you believe that you'll believe that the sign-language translator at Nelson Mandela's funeral was actually transmitting messages from the voices in his head and that rich people's blood doesn't actually consist of black bile.

In slightly more uplifting news, rabble HQ – funded by all you fucking legends earlier this year – is fully up and running and is proving a huge help making each issue a much more cohesive and streamlined affair (this might be a slight exaggeration but it definitely makes using alcohol as inspiration for the Take-Fives and the Horrorscopes a much less lonely affair).

It's also starting to look like some

people might actually like us. Our 10,000 print run is disappearing faster each issue, our social media sites are racking up a huge number of fans (not to mention detractors and hecklers, but sure we love them too xox), and our online print versions have received thousands of views. We've also been contacted by a huge number of people who want to contribute, each of them explaining how much rabble has inspired them and given voice to their own anger and frustration, and how this voice is next to impossible to find anywhere else... which is all leading us to believe that, contrary to popular belief, people aren't happy to just sit on their holes and accept the immense, nonsensical, pitiful and degrading embarrassment we find ourselves in the midst of, like one of Santa's elves in the ILAC Centre, waving at bemused toddlers and trying to smile while wearing little pointy elf ears and curly-uppy shoes with bells on them and having to unbutton a striped onesie every time we need to go for a piss.

No, we've taken a look at ourselves in that jax mirror, taken off our stupid costume, robbed the collection box for the Central Remedial Clinic, used the money to buy a few bottles of whatever you're having, and when we're done, we're going to fuck the empties through Brian Conlan's windows. Then we're going to rob his telly, sell it, use the money to buy a bag of yokes, drive his car into the metaphorical wasteland of our minds, whack on Bob Marley full blast, get mashed out of it, burn the car out, get the first bus back to Dublin, and get a taxi to our ma's gaff just in time for Christmas.

See yis in the New Year!!! X



{EYE}

Rory O'Neill's work seeks to examine the Direct Provision system.

This image was taken in the living space of an asylum seeker in a centre outside of Dublin. Harry (not his real name) has been in the asylum process for over six years. For him this image represents the passing of time, with no solution to either the change for a better and safer life or the changes needed for a solution to the suffering that life in direct provision entails. Simply, it's like you wish to do something, but cannot.

Another of Rory's photos graces our front page. For more visit www.roryoneill.ie

HIGHLIGHTS

p5. Donal Fallon brings us on a whirlwind tour of Ireland's history of censorship.

p7. Filmmaker Donncha Ó Briain has documented those fighting against austerity.

p8. Thanks, Penneys. Katie Garrett explains why cheap clothes come at a cost.

p10. Jonathan Sugarman was the banker who shouted STOP! Simon Price finds out why he was ignored..

p12. Is there really another property bubble? Stephen Bourke looks at the housing crisis.

p14. I was a Magdalene – Martina Keogh tells Ronan Burtenshaw of her survival of the Laundries.

p18. Institutions in our blood. Rashers Tierney talks to those in Direct Provision.

p22. Breaking the cycle. rabble asks Travellers why ethnic recognition is so important.

p29. Horrorscopes. Leo, I wouldn't bother mate. Libra, watch out for buses.

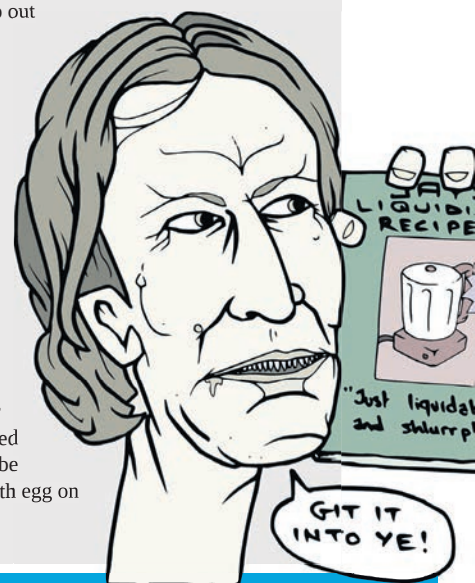


Gombeen #7

READERS MAY REMEMBER JAY BOURKE AFTER THE WINDUP OF HIS SHEBEEN CHIC VENTURE. BOURKE LANDED IN HOT WATER AFTER A DEEP DISPUTE WITH THE LANDLORD OVER RENT FOR THE SOUTH GREAT GEORGE'S STREET PREMISES.

The restaurant was shut after a battle in the High Court over €92,000 of unpaid VAT, and a valiant but doomed struggle on the by 21 employees to preserve their jobs. Those of you with longer memories might also recall a high-profile battle over the unfair dismissal of Chef Leanne McDowell in 2009, which culminated in a €50,000 award by the Employment Appeals Tribunal against the well known Dublin entrepreneur's company. He liquidated the company and the award was unpaid.

No sooner does Mr Bourke jump out of the frying pan then he lands in the fire. Mr PJ Lynch, the official liquidator has accused him of knowingly trading in a "reckless manner", as well as accusing him of intending to defraud the Revenue Commission. Mr Lynch has reported Mr Bourke to the Office of the Director of Corporate Enforcement and will be applying to the High Court to have him disqualified from running companies. Mr Bourke denies everything, including the allegation he called the liquidator "a fucking git". With papers lodged in the High Court already, it will be interesting to see who ends up with egg on their face.



ABOUTUS.

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.

Ask us out at www.rabble.ie

Your magazine needs you!

Calling all feature writers, photographers, jokers, distributors, illustrators, shit stirring malcontents an' ting...

Sound advertisors sought too.

join the rabble army at info@rabble.ie

rabble

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Layout Lackies: Claire Davey and her band of Redmonds.

Distro Fairies: Loads a ya! You know who ya are.

Typo warriors: Darragh Lynch, Paul Reynolds and Radie Peat.



The Limerick Go-Go Club

IN LIMERICK THE POST OFFICE LANE PASSAGEWAY IS ONE OF THE ARTERIES IN WHICH TRADE COURSED THROUGH THE 19TH CENTURY CITY. OVER DECADES THE PATHS HAVE SETTLED INTO ANONYMITY AS THE STOREHOUSES THEY ONCE SERVICED DISAPPEARED. PAUL TARPEY EXPLORES ONE OF THE DRAMATIC AND QUIETLY SIGNIFICANT STORIES THEY HOLD.

One well known one surrounds the famed Hanging Gardens, adjacent to the lane from Henry St.

This was an exotic architectural combination of store and garden built by the banker William Roache in 1808. It is reputed that the visiting sea captains of that time, in a spirit of one-upmanship between themselves, delivered an amount of unusual plants and fruit to Roaches garden, which, one year, accounted for an unusual crop of pineapples on Henry St.

Today the only trace of this bankers Eden is a NAMA owned waterfall fueled by rain coursing through the shell of the failed shopping development, which was begun on the original site in 2008. A development that brazenly appropriated the title 'Hanging Gardens' in its PR before folding.

The waterfall greets Kevin Cummins each day as he opens a workshop operating from one of the old bonded wine stores. Cummins Framers has occupied this space for decades. Kevin also operates here as a curator because each year a small amount of visitors call in to ask him the same question 'is this the Go-Go club?'

For a certain generation the site of the Go-Go club, now Cummins Framers, is sacred. It was here that the late 60s

Limericks youth came to dance in one of the first social spaces removed from the boundaries set for them by the authorities. The simple act of membership alone was an act of defiance towards the parents and priests who then controlled the majority of youth dances in the city.

This was the Go-Go franchise, a hip alternative to the showband scene. It had venues in Dublin, Cork and Limerick and a rulebook led membership scheme for teenagers who followed the eras left leaning 'Beat' bands. One of those scenes DJs, Danny Hugues spoke, in 1971, about the importance of a 'choice of atmosphere' for a generation who refused to accept that their youth should be socially mapped and monitored as a replica of something experienced in another era's ballrooms by their parents.

The Go-Go club of Post office Lane, as it was known locally, hosted a radical mix of music including early line-ups of Limericks' psychedelic heroes 'Grannies Intentions' who alternated with local DJs such as Peter Jackson. As its popularity grew it opened a Sunday afternoon session for an even younger crowd called Club Ipanema.

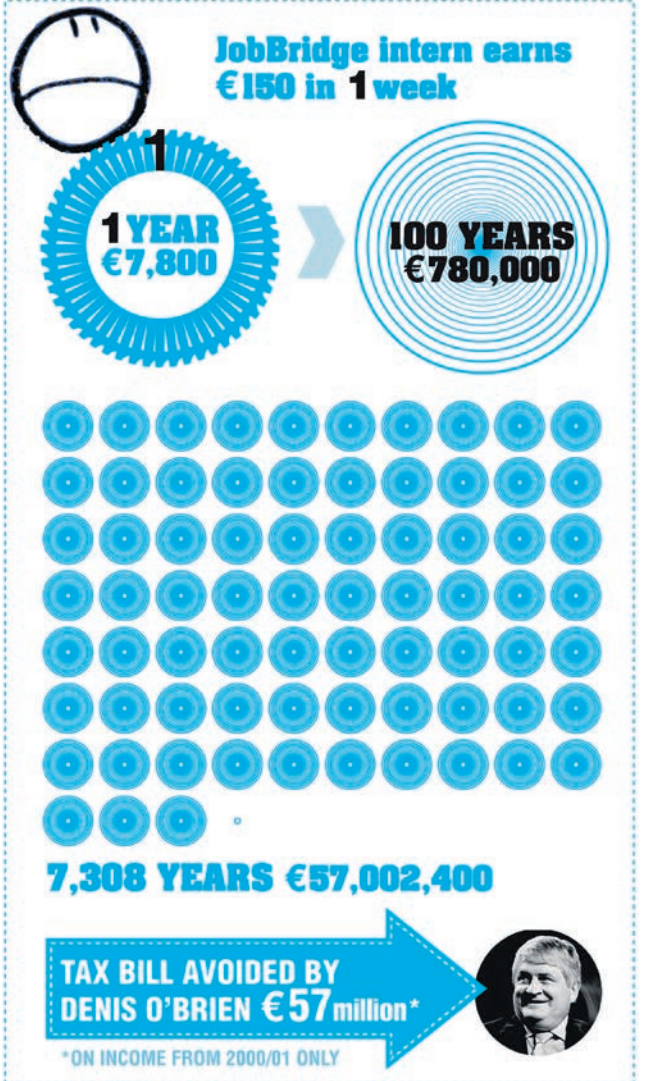
The style of the place was a mix of UK and American fashions with an early leaning towards Mod themes. Fashion competitions to choose Limericks 'Miss Mod' were a popular feature. Such events consolidated the crowd's ethos. By the time the club closed in the mid 70's it was renowned as a key Limerick spot where the sounds and styles of those potentially vital years 1968-73 were celebrated. This is reflected in a charming remnant in the upstairs of the framers where the top of the actual club features murals painted by the last of its member's remains.

Amongst the visitors who make the pilgrimage to the site of the Go-Go are those who say they left Limerick in search of the freedoms championed by the club. It's a special moment for for them to return and see the stairs and the actual toilets still working, while Kevin recount tales from other visitors. He has created a quiet loop of memory in this space and is aware that this story of Post Office Lane ends with his retirement. When that day comes he intends to leave with the original Go Go door.

Photo by Wally Cassidy

SPEAKING PIG

ANGRYLOGICCOMIC.WORDPRESS.COM



A QUICKIE WITH...

YOU MIGHT HAVE NOTICED THE GROWING NUMBER OF PAINTED SHUTTERS AROUND THE CAPITAL, MANY THE WORK OF EVOLVE URBAN ART'S GROWING ROSTER OF ARTISTS. KILLIAN REDMOND SAT DOWN WITH EVOLVE'S ENE KEENAN FOR A BIT OF A CHINWAG.

Evolve Urban Art has been running since January 2013. What made you set it up?

It's a simple idea. Connect people with artists, leading to positive art in a lot of places. Working with artists, people, businesses and the community. It's art for anything, anywhere. It continues to grow and evolve.

Would you see it as a way of getting a bit more colour onto the streets or are there other aims?

On a basic level it's more colour, it's also changing our city for the better, adding a different dynamic in the urban environment.

There's a good few shop shutters and the likes painted as part of the Evolve project. How much interaction occurs between shop owners and artists?

Different situations mean different interactions and exchanges. So far, Evolve have done many commissions, free walls, artist jams, community regeneration projects (Thomas St), workshops. All have their own dynamic.

How's the reaction been to the pieces?

We've had a great reaction, it's grown hugely since the beginning of the year. We've had over 80 pieces painted through all our activities and we're proud of the results.

Is there a focus on up-and-coming or more established artists? Do you see the project filling a void in terms of giving up-and-coming artists a chance to work in the public and build a portfolio of work? Or is it just about having a laugh?

Evolve is open: we work with artists from Dublin and around the country. There's no barrier to participating. Everyone finds their level. We have a nice mix of established and up-and-coming artists with a lot of different backgrounds.

Check out evolveurbanart.com



An Auld Dose

A Texas teen from a wealthy family avoided prison after killing four people while drunk driving because he may have suffered from what his defence

counsel termed 'Affluenza' - he was so privileged he had no moral compass.



WHEN YOUSE LOT HAVE FINISHED CUTTING UP THIS ISSUE TO MAKE RANSOM NOTES FOR THE NEIGHBOUR'S CAT, GET OVER TO OUR FACEBOOK, TWITTER AND WEBSITE AND GET INVOLVED. HERE'S SOME FINE EXAMPLES OF YER RABBLE BRETHREN GETTING ALL COMMENTY ON OUR UNSOCIAL MEDIA IN THE LAST FEW WEEKS. FONNY FOCKERS.

We linked to some bullshit Irish Times post budget dietary advice to "reduce your portion sizes. If need be, invest in some smaller tea plates so you always clear your plate."

A roasted politician head if correctly prepared can feed a family of four for three days, must be washed throughly before cooking to remove stench of tobacco, alcohol and banker semen.

- Seanán Mac Carra

Yips are "The Comeback Pill" sez The Irish Times:

So one doctor [Jean Long] sees a lot of ecstasy deaths in her department and on the other hand there are 'rare deaths' associated with it. Article is all over the place but perfect fodder for the coddled elites to read with their Saturday brunch before snorting some coke tonight.

- Matthew Mulligan

On Precious Life's very own guide to sex (and how not to have it...):

I read a leaflet that came (phnarr phnarr) in through the letterbox about staying chaste. The best part was about masturbation and how you feel guilty and anxious after wanking because your soul knows it's not ready to go to heaven so you have to get to confession straight away in case something unfortunate happens to you...

- Andrew Moore

On an interview we did with Gary Younge on Roma folk & racism:

I travelled with Roma in Europe for many years. Took hundreds of photos of white skinned, blue or green-eyed Roma. Its pure racism of ignorant journalists unbelievable that a journalist can be published this way. Without double checking etc. We see more and more racism and violence in Europe these days. Migration, deportation, killings and abuse. What a fiasco the 'decade of Roma Inclusion' (2005-2015) is going to be!

- Peter

Light-skinned green-eyed Canadian Romanichal here. I suggest all we fair haired Roma email our very high-resolution 4.7 MB photographs to all the media who are doing this racist sensationalist reporting and jam their

websites and email addresses.

- Lynn Hutchinson Lee

We highlighted a Legion of Mary poster in NUIG suggesting you could "move beyond" homosexuality with prayer:

On behalf of the greater student body, ShoutOut NUIG would like to thank you for publicising the Courage poster showing its affiliations with NUIG Legion of Mary Society. By sharing the poster you brought it to the attention of many students, prompting official complaints to administration from university societies and individual students alike.

Following these complaints an official investigation was launched and the Legion of Mary Society has since been disbanded for violating society code of conduct regarding discriminatory practice.

- Liam O'Hare, Secretary, ShoutOut NUIG

On a link to the Haughey family-approved website which whitewashed Haughey's odiousness:

No amount of websites will untarnish that greedy bastard's image. The dire turn out at his funeral said all that needed to be said.

- Hugh Comiskey

On news of the execution of North Korean leader, Kim Jong-Un's uncle for treason and "as a wicked political careerist, trickster and traitor for all ages"

Pity they killed him, he'd have had a great career in Fianna Fail.

- Sean OC



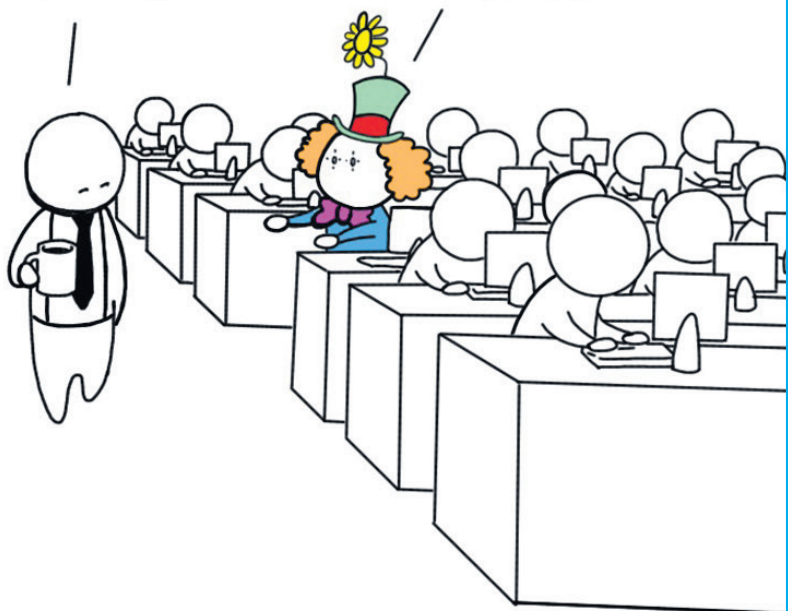
GET IN TOUCH
info@rabble.ie
www.rabble.ie

MARMALADE/JAM

@ROBSTEARS

GET BACK
TO WORK

THERE'S BEEN A
MISTAKE, I'M
NOT MEANT TO
BE HERE!



Rob Stears

LIGHTS ACTION GENUFLECT!

HORROR SHOW!



IT'S PERHAPS UNSURPRISING THAT A COUNTRY THAT WAGED WAR ON JAZZ MUSIC (THE MUSIC OF THE DEVIL, APPARENTLY) AND WHICH BANNED MANY OF ITS MOST CELEBRATED AUTHORS WOULD HAVE A REMARKABLE HISTORY OF FILM CENSORSHIP. DONAL FALLON TAKES A LOOK AT HOW IRISH AUDIENCES WERE HISTORICALLY DEPRIVED OF SOME OF THE MOST GROUND-BREAKING FILMS OF THE DAY.

The Irish state was not the only force at play in keeping certain films away in the public. Speaking in the Father Matthew Hall on Church Street in 1938, Aodh de Blacam stated that it was time the government stopped censoring films. Not because it was morally wrong but rather because they had failed totally in the task. For de Blacam, "Father Matthew's great work for the Irish nation was to save the people from the terrible curse of drink... if he lived today he would find there was a more terrible curse rotting the moral fibre of the people – the evils of the cinema, the jazz dancing and cosmetics." Father Matthew's effigy now gazes down on the late night drunks and cinema queues of O'Connell Street.

Some of the earliest films banned in Ireland were banned by the British authorities, who believed that they were propagandistic. A classic example is *Ireland, A Nation*, a 1914 film produced in the United States dealing with Irish history between the 1798 uprising and Robert Emmet's doomed rebellion five years later. In the brilliant *Cinema and Ireland*, it's noted that the film "had a remarkable run in Chicago, where it was shown for 20 consecutive weeks to huge crowds". But whatever it did for Irish American hearts it was kept at arms length from the Irish public in its original cut. Ironically, after independence, the once censored republican movement became the self-appointed censors. Launching attacks on Dublin cinemas which showed films that were too sympathetic to the British war effort in WWI. The Masterpiece Cinema, just off O'Connell Street, was actually bombed in 1925 for showing *The Battle of Ypres*. This republican censorship continued for decades. In 1963 a screening of *Elizabeth is Queen* was enough for youths to invade the Carton Cinema, where they jumped up on stage, sprayed the screen and part of the audience with fire extinguishers, threw a bottle of ink at the screen, slashed it and escaped out of a side exit.

No list of twentieth century must-see films is complete without a reference to Stanley Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange*, but for Irish audiences this was an unknown pleasure. In February 1972, the Irish Independent ran a picture of a scene from the film, asking "can screening this be justified...is

violence the real pornography?" Certainly, those in authority believed the violence was just too much for Irish eyes. Dave Fanning in his autobiography recalled that when in England as a youngster he "took advantage of the trip by going to see a few films such as *Straw Dogs* and *A Clockwork Orange* that were banned in Ireland back then. It's easy to forget what a strange priest-riddled society we were – and in some ways still are."

One solution to Ireland's outdated film censorship regime was the approach of groups like the Dublin Film Institute. Being a private members club it could get around government censorship by not showing films to the general public. Some would 'look on the bright side of life' with censorship too. Progressive campaigns which stood for more secularisation in Irish society for example showed *Life of Brian* as a fundraiser when it failed to get past the censor. Today, with the internet and modern technology, the state couldn't keep a film from us even if they wanted to – but imagine when *Life of Brian*, *A Clockwork Orange* and *Straw Dogs* were all kept from us. How times have changed.

Illustration by Luke Fallon.

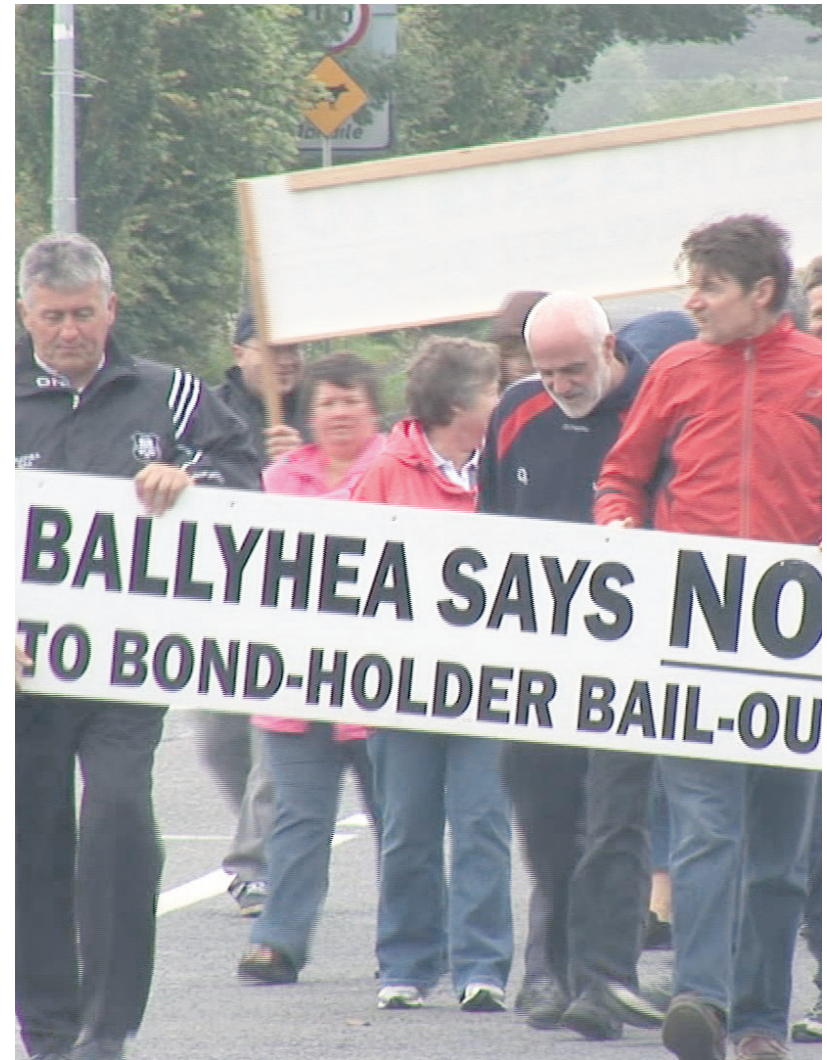
The once
censored
republican
movement
became the
self-appointed
censors.



Justice

"We started to get more and more calls on garda corruption-people ring us telling us [about] harassment they're getting. So far, we have handed in 22 files

to the Department of Justice" Luke Ming Flanagan and other TDs address Garda corruption
www.justice4all.ie



WHO KILLED DCTV?

FIRST CAME THE RUMOURS, THEN THE CONFIRMATION. WHEN THE BROADCASTING AUTHORITY OF IRELAND DECLINED TO FUND SEVERAL DUBLIN COMMUNITY TV APPLICATIONS IT MAY AS WELL HAVE HAMMERED A NAIL INTO THE COFFIN OF THE LITTLE CHANNEL THAT COULD BE SEEN OVER ON UPC 802. **RASHERS TIERNEY** TALKS TO SOME FAMILIAR FACES FROM THE STATION AND LOOKS AT THE RAMIFICATIONS FOR ALTERNATIVE MEDIA.

Dublin Community TV seemed to be flying along with a flurry of activity all summer long and then out of nowhere, boom - there was a statement on the website saying it was all over. So what happened?

Ciaran Moore: DCTV has always been project funded - every year we put applications in for individual TV programmes and other projects and got funding for these - mainly from the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland Sound & Vision scheme which had 3 or 4 rounds a year. 2013 has just been a terrible year. We were really busy all summer shooting projects we had been awarded last year. Yet when the news came in at the end of October that we weren't being funded for 2014 it just wasn't viable to continue on.

So DCTV was operating without a core budget. What did this mean for the station?

Ciaran Moore: Yeah. Obviously it made it hard to plan - you would prepare four projects but maybe do one, maybe do three. This damaged a lot of relationships and caused a lot of wasted effort. Also since we only really got funded to make television everything else - the training, transmission, promotions, outreach and volunteer support - was done by staff on top of the work we were paid to do.

The statement issued by the station management mentioned that you were approaching a sustainable funding model?

Barry Lennon: We were starting to build other departments in the station outside of just doing television production based activities. I had developed a lot of training projects with youth centres and community groups and we were also working towards developing a lot of European projects .

What was different about Dublin Community TV compared to all the other production units that compete for this funding?

John Breslin: DCTV was set apart from other

production units in that it provided space for a lot more to happen than just a crew getting together to produce a certain documentary or series. This meant we were always stretched to a degree but it also meant that we had a studio and camera equipment available to be booked by all members of the co-op. Another obvious difference was that we operated a broadcast channel and provided space on this for members to have their videos aired, for public domain material to be scheduled and for programmes like Democracy Now to broadcast.

What were the origins of the station?

Ciaran Moore: The big thing was winning the license in 2006. The group who prepared that bid included people who had already spent a lot of years lobbying for the idea of community television by the time the 2001 Broadcasting Act was passed creating the possibility of community television. They then set up the co-op and prepared the initial bid which won the license - so by the time we started preparing the first schedule for the trial period starting in 2007 and then full launch in 2008 there was more than 10 years work done already.

If DCTV as a broadcasting station, was just one guise it existed in - do you think the co-operative will struggle on in any other form?

Ciaran Moore: We hope so. The networks and volunteers and even most of the equipment should still be available. Community of Independents for example is in production at the moment and groups like the Live Register are still very much in existence, and needed.

What will the lasting legacy of Dublin Community TV be?

Ciaran Moore: 6 years, 24 hours a day, 2 studios, hundreds of shows and we never had the money to really do it. Dublin is full of brilliant, talented, innovative, skilled, funny people who will chip in if you try and do something.

AN ATTEMPTED MILITARY COUP LED DONNCHA Ó BRIAIN TO PRODUCE THE ACCLAIMED CHAVEZ: INSIDE THE COUP. HE'S BACK WITH A NEW DOCUMENTARY THAT TRACES THE HUMDRUM OF THOSE RARE IRISH SOCIAL MOVEMENTS FIGHTING AGAINST AUSTERITY. RASHERS TIERNEY QUIZZES HIM ON IT.

Get Medieval

FINBAR DWYER'S NEW BOOK 'WITCHES, SPIES AND STOCKHOLM SYNDROME' IS THE CHRISTMAS BESTSELLER THAT BRINGS MEDIEVAL IRELAND TO LIFE. WE SAT DOWN WITH FINBAR TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT MURDER, DRINK AND HIS RESEARCH

One of the first stories tells of a drunken row between Cachfren and Freysel which quickly escalates to murder. It seems drunkenness & violence did exist before Love/Hate?

Humans have been getting pissed and airy for millennia. I think where we begin to see a major difference is in terms of violence. To understand violence in the medieval world I don't think looking at it in a moralistic way is useful. Violence was very common and not necessarily a reflection on the person perpetrating it. Instead it was often the easiest means by which people could achieve what they wanted. Today it's just not an effective way to achieve what you want as you will be severely punished.

Between the Black Death and the famines, how precarious was life in medieval Ireland?

Life was undoubtedly precarious. Between 1290 and 1350 there are at least two events that were arguably more devastating than the 19th century Famine - The Black Death and the Great Famine of 1315 - 18. There are a series of other catastrophic events; famine and war between 1295-7, famine again in 1308-10,

BALLYHEA, HO - LETS GO!

Peripheral Vision is the title of the documentary. Can you tell me where that came from? It seems to suggest that the sort of movements you covered are just a little bit out of mainstream view or something?

Well, the main theme of the film – the thing I wanted to document – is the experience of those taking a stand against the bank bailouts & the austerity – because everyone was saying, “The Irish they’re passive....etc”. I wanted to capture a sense of what’s it like to be in that space , viewed from the inside. So I suppose the title grew out of that, the sense of being a fairly isolated, marginal force and yet being driven by a sense of injustice and indignation. Obviously the title also nods to Ireland’s status as a so-called EU ‘peripheral’ country.

What’s the background to the Ballyhea protests? They are presented as rather peculiar, almost out of sorts with the rest of the country really - like people seem surprised that such constant mobilization can be sustained by a small community?

Well, they are out of the ordinary – they’ve been marching every week for two and half years now! When I started filming they were only at it 2-3 months, and most of them had not been involved politically before. What struck me then was the symbolic power of just walking up and down the main street of your town/village. At the time of course that only made sense as something that might inspire other communities, which is what people in Ballyhea wanted. The fact that this didn’t transpire and yet they’ve stuck at it is pretty remarkable.

You looked at The Spectacle, Occupy and Ballyhea’s bail out marches - why were these chosen? Is it fair that many other patterns of resistance are left out such as the Campaign Against the Household Tax and the even longer running battle in Rosport?

From the beginning my focus was solely on those protesting against bank bailouts and austerity. So I didn’t consider Rosport. I was interested in exploring the reality of political engagement and conscientization or ‘consciousness raising’ in the current context - and I guess Ballyhea and the Spectacle seemed like places where I could observe these over time. For example, the documentary looks at the Spectacle’s “Books of Grievance” process – where people were invited to reflect on what the cuts were doing to them , express it in written form, and try and create a collective response out of so many private experiences.

While I was filming other forms of resistance did bubble up - first Occupy, and then the CAHT in early 2012, which I decided to document via some of the Ballyhea folk who were getting involved in the campaign. Also I followed a bit the Anglo Not Our Debt campaign against the Promissory Note debt. So a variety of other protests are featured in the documentary

There’s another doc in the pipeline called 2Good2Resist that pokes at that old chest nut of gallant resistance in Greece and wherever, yet the Irish set on their hole. It’s clearly a theme you set out to explore yourself. Can you shed light on how you feel about such discussions? We’ve a tiny population, much less of a recent radical tradition etc - so is the debate being fairly framed?

I think it’s only right to question why so few are protesting – because a great injustice was done with the socialization of the bank debt - and it’s still having damaging effects on society. But I don’t really agree that we in Ireland are exceptional in our passivity. Throughout Europe (with some exceptions) there has been a very weak popular response to the onslaught from the political-financial class since 2008. So, there must be some common factor in operation.

That said, this documentary doesn’t set out to analyse or explain the passivity – I was interested more in the subjective experience of the groups - the general passivity is more of a context to that.

I’d have seen you down at Occupy Dame St, camera in hand constantly quite a bit. You must have hundreds of hours of footage from it. There was a real sense of momentum then - have you any observations on why it faltered?

My sense is that Occupy suffered from not having pre-existing roots in Irish society. What I saw was people having very quickly to deal with problems of strategy and group identity – which normally would get worked out over time – and that put a lot of pressure on the camp . That said, I think the relevance of its core goals– reclaiming democratic space , keeping the spotlight on the financial class – remains.

What are the difficulties facing independent documentary makers like yourself?

The same facing anybody trying to do creative work – having a measure of financial security. Obviously you also need equipment and cash to cover basic expenses – but the main thing you need is time,

being able to devote time to a subject – and it’s hard to do this when you’re worried about where your income will come from next week/month/year – you can maybe make a few films this way, but it gets harder.

Is there any advice you’d give to folk out there who have camera and are willing, but just don’t know where to start?

I dunno, I hate giving advice, everyone is different... but I suppose: pick a subject you feel intrigued by, that you have strong reactions to, but where you haven’t worked it all out yet... you need to be exploring something, not proving a thesis. Then just stick at it...it’s an endurance test.

You’re known for a pretty famous documentary. The Revolution will not be Televised. Chavez Inside The Coup. How did you end up in the middle of a coup?

I’d spent time in Venezuela during the year and half prior to the coup – trying to get access to film an ob-doc profile of Chavez. I had managed a few months beforehand to get into the inner levels of his government – and then the coup happened.

Some of us were watching Costas Gravas Missing the other day, its known for ia tense and paranoid opening 20 minutes set during a coup where the new regime initiates a cull. Presumably you were shitting it at the time?

It was very frightening – but like all shocks to the system you only feel them afterwards – things were moving very fast during the three days of the coup and I remember just being very alert and focused.

Finally, what are your plans for distribution on this one? Will it be hitting people’s screens or will you just throw it online as a contribution to movement building?

I’m not sure yet. I’m in touch with various grassroots networks and am hoping they might be interested in using it as a tool for popular education - via small community screenings and the like. That’s where I’ll start anyway.

See peripheralvision.co

a Scots invasion between 1315 – 18 to mention just a few. Ireland in this period is not dissimilar to a region like the Middle East today where deep seated unresolved tensions and external forces fuelled wars which resolved little, only fuelling the next round of conflict.

There’s quite a lot of social history, the lifestyle of ordinary people as it were, how difficult was it to research? For example the contrasting diets of Gilbert de Bolyniop and Robert le Dryvere...

The research can be time consuming alright but it is not as difficult as people think. In the late 19th century and early 20th century thousands of medieval documents were translated and published. Some of these are even available freely online which make research far easier.

In contemporary Ireland we see the disparities between an asylum seeker on direct provision of €19 per week and disgraced bankers on over €30,000 per week. What were the most striking disparities you came across in research?

In 1305 Edward I wiped a debt of £10,000 that Richard de Burgh, the Earl of Ulster owed to the Irish exchequer in return for the Earls participation in a war in Scotland. Meanwhile the troops the Earl brought within him were not even fed properly. While people often baulk at the disparity in wealth in the medieval world as you have pointed out there is similar inequalities in the modern world. The key and very important difference is that those at the bottom of modern Irish society are nowhere near as impoverished as their medieval counterparts.

One story of early Stockholm Syndrome lends itself to the title of the book, but surely the most extraordinary story is that of Jacobus de Hybernia?

It is and it isn’t in some regards. Travelling to China was unquestionably major feat, only a few dozen other medieval Europeans appear to have made the journey before James. However that said medieval people were not as locally minded as we think – they were just limited by technology. They had long been aware of the existence of China and most in Ireland would have had some sense of the wider world. For example the fact that they were members of a church centred physically in Rome and spiritually in Jerusalem means they had a wider perspective on the world.

Foreign merchants frequently visited and indeed lived in Ireland. In the early 14th century for example a man called Betto from Lombardy was murdered in Clonmel while in 1353 a Hungarian George Grissaphan visited Lough Derg in Ireland. Clerics also travelled extensively bringing back news of a wider world. Indeed an Archbishop of Armagh Richard Fitzralph even translated the Koran while living at the papal court.

Why is medieval Irish history absent, not just from education but from our bookshops’ shelves?

I think it’s often hard to identify with themes and people from medieval history. It is not like 19th or 20th century history where we can see the roots of modern society. While there are clearly links the connections are not obvious. Medieval history particularly in Ireland

does not fit into the myth of the Irish “nation”. In England medieval history is more prominent because the concept of the English ‘nation’ traces its roots back to the 100 years war (which began in 1337) and before.

In Ireland the ‘nation’ is grounded in historical events since 1798. Therefore the powers that be, particularly in the earlier part of the 20th century, saw little use or need for medieval Irish history save mentioning the Norman invasion and moving swiftly on to Cromwell. The exception to this is academic history – however these books and articles are often completely inaccessible to those without both a university education and a good prior understanding of Medieval Ireland.

Check out irishhistorypodcast.ie



DRESS *to* KILL

- the cost of fast fashion -

AS WE APPROACH THAT TIME OF YEAR WHEN OUR CRAVING FOR CHEAP, THROWAWAY FASHION REACHES FEVER PITCH, KATIE GARRETT EXPLORES THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE POOR FUCKERS WHO HAVE TO MAKE THE SHIT.

On 24 April of this year, an eight-storey garment factory in Rana Plaza, Bangladesh collapsed. The searches through the rubble for survivors went on for three weeks. The death toll totalled at 1,127 and a further 2,515 suffered injuries. It was named the biggest disaster in garment-manufacturing history. The concrete building fell on itself like a terrifying game of Jenga. The banks and shops that occupied the ground floor had been evacuated in the days preceding it when cracks appeared in the ground but the garment workers were told to get back to work. Primark, Benetton, Walmart, Matalan and Mango were among the brands that had clothes manufactured there. In September 2012, 300 workers died in a garment factory fire in Karachi, Pakistan.

Many of us do it. We buy in to fast fashion. Jeans for a tenner. New outfit for thirty quid in Penneys. We are socialised to consume. Buy more stuff. Stuff will make you happy. Sometimes the stuff is so cheap that you feel like it would almost be a sin to leave it behind. These clothes are not designed for a lifetime's wear. They're made for a few outings and then you can throw it away. Who cares anyway because the replacement garment won't cost much either. And of course, a new dress might make you happy, particularly when you got it for five euro — but at what cost?

Unfortunately, a very high cost. The reason "Penneys Best" is so cheap and

cheerful for Western women is because women in poorer countries make them for us in conditions that would be rightfully condemned in this part of the world, and they do it for the lowest wages in the world. There are those who will argue that for some women, working in 'sweatshops' can empower them but realistically they will barely be earning enough to ensure they and their families aren't living in poverty. Our buying power and consumer choices have a global impact. After the Bangladesh factory collapse, the world was awash with calls to do something, anything, to improve the lives of those working in such dangerous conditions. And as much as we dislike it, we facilitate and enable these poverty-conditions by buying cheaper clothes.

At a recent Comhlámh debate on disposable fashion, Irish Times fashion columnist Rosemary MacCabe made the point that she was pro-democratisation of fashion and that everyone being able to buy whatever style they wanted was a great thing - and then came the 'but'; "What we really want is to spend as little as possible and we don't consider the other end of the scale. We can now walk in to Penneys and buy a top for the price of a packet of cigarettes and it's really hard to get people to think of the other end of the scale - it's hard to impress upon people. I went shopping for a friend recently and encouraged her to buy a t-shirt for €65 but she didn't want to spend that kind of money."

Understandably so. €65 for a t-shirt is not cheap. But what is cheap? For some, buying gear in Penneys is as

unremarkable as buying a Twix. For others, buying a dress in Penneys that costs €20 may be a substantial amount of their disposable income. For the more financially bereft of us, fair-trade, ethically-made clothes sold in a trade union friendly outlet are not an option and we still, for the sake of decency, need to wear something when we go outside. For some, the idea of spending €65 on a t-shirt is only something that would be contemplated having spent the previous Saturday night spinning the wheel on Winning Streak.

Up steps the Clean Clothes Campaign, an alliance of 16 organisations across Europe working for a living wage for all garment workers and compliance with international industrial laws.

Claire Nally an activist with the Clean Clothes Campaign who visited Pakistan to see factory working conditions said that without consumer uproar the shareholders won't do anything, "If they know the public are watching them, they'll say 'oh shit we have to do something about it'. If clothes were better made in less quantity the workers could be paid more, but there's also an environmental impact to disposable fashion. I think what the workers would be saying is that you buy these clothes and you should let the retailers know that we want to be able to work in a decent environment."

MacCabe believes the idea of disposable fashion contributes to people's attitudes towards their clothes. "People don't hold the same value with them. It's not like the fifties where you had a few outfits that you wore all the

time. There's a cycle of pointless and meaningless consumption," she says.

David Joyce, the Equality and International Development Officer for ICTU agrees with MacCabe's analysis and adds, "People have different attitudes to clothes these days. I remember years ago, people would wear t-shirts for years. I remember my grandmother on a sewing machine making clothes for us. I think that terrible tragedy in Bangladesh has started a conversation. There's a huge lack of trade union power in countries where our clothes are made. The safety issues in Bangladesh were known. The companies through their various corporate social responsibility issues had audited the factory, yet thousands of workers were back inside."

For David lack of organised labour and poverty limited their choices: "It is mostly women working...which provides a degree of financial independence, but really the improvements are only going to happen when workers are allowed to organise. If there was a strong trade union movement there would they have gone back into the building? So it's really important that we do what we can. I think what most garment workers would say is 'please, don't boycott' because if we did, how would it help those people? It's a complicated issue but if boycotts are called for by the people that are involved like happened in South Africa - it wasn't people in London and Paris who initially called for it - then maybe they're valid, but it's complex. There needs to be more space

for people who want to organise. The one area where it's been really effective has been in increasing the amount of unionisation."

There are no easy answers to this. The trade union representatives may feel that unionisation is key to fixing this, but as Claire Nally reminds us, people might be risking their lives joining a union in some countries: "People know that if they organise, they might be abducted and murdered and the brands need to put in place something so that this doesn't happen in stores they source from. Clean Clothes Campaign don't advocate boycotts but we say to people to pay attention to where they're buying from. Retailers are market conscious and they notice if they have an ethically labelled good and how it sells."

Public opinion makes a difference. We underestimate the capability we have to make a change here. Most people are on Facebook. Most companies have a social media page. If you don't agree with their practices and how they source their clothes, say so.

Illustration by Mice Hell.

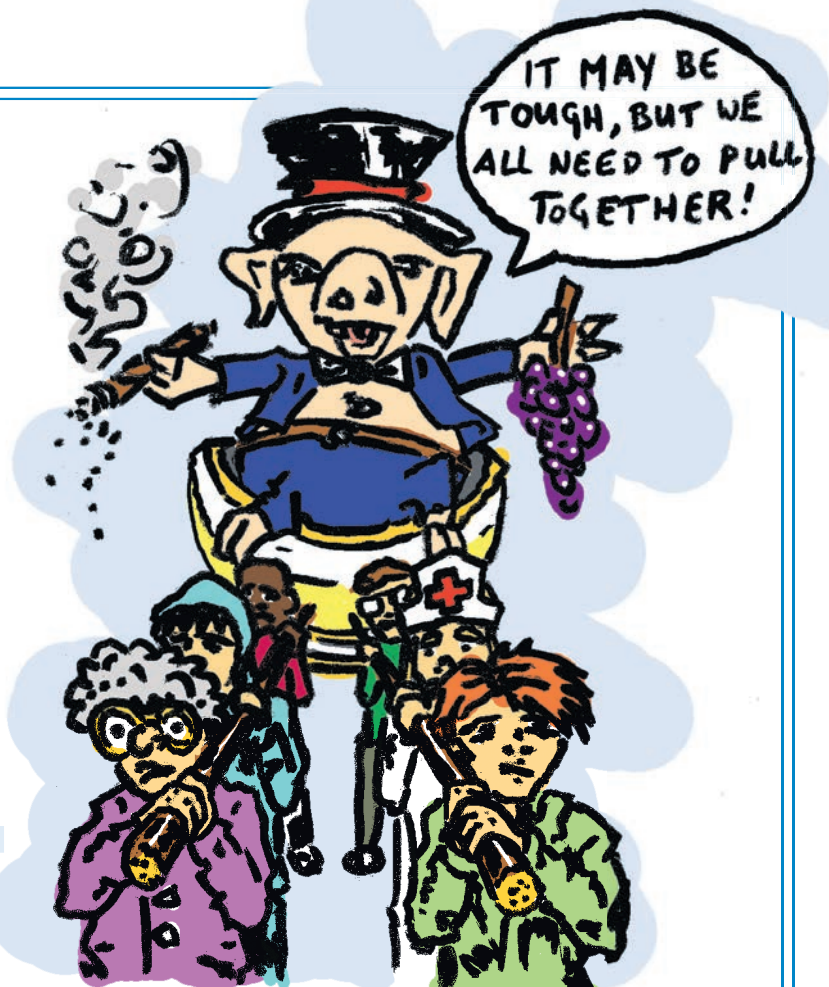




It's not like the fifties where you had a few outfits that you wore all the time. There's a cycle of pointless and meaningless consumption.

These LITTLE PIGGIES

ON THE OFF CHANCE THAT YOU COULD POSSIBLY BE IN ANY DOUBT WHATSOEVER OF THE FACT THAT POLITICAL PARTIES ARE NAUGHT BUT REFUGES FOR VILE SHIT-SPEWING SERPENTS, SCRATCH THAT ITCH LAYS THINGS STRAIGHT.



A New York governor once said, 'You campaign in poetry. You govern in prose.'

This little titbit may prove a useful anecdotal conversation-piece for the youth of our nation. Especially since the recent budget which directly attacked people under the age of 26 by halving their dole will only succeed in driving more youth into cities like New York...or Toronto...or Melbourne... basically anywhere but here. Once again Ireland is in the export business, and figures would indicate that the number of folks bailing out of our bail-out is fast catching up with the live calves we ship out of the country.

Does anyone remember the poetry we got from Fine Gael when they were running for office? Let me remind you, there was a five point plan — actually, you may want to consider pulling on your wellies here as we enter a strange and reeking landscape. It's not so much poetry as a stinking shithheap of lies and deceit. There is a youtube video which promises much (it's entitled 'Fine Gael's 5 Point Plan' for any of you who can bear the excruciating torment without bursting your own eyeballs with pliers and sticking burning knitting needles in your ears), which speaks of getting Ireland working.

Twice during the insufferable one minute and thirty six seconds are we treated to some ham-acting dullards spouting clichéd drivel about their reluctance to emigrate... I shouldn't be surprised to find them currently treading the boards Down Under... or Over Yonder. We are granted the pleasure of some equally vacuous "employer", who has probably since been 'disappeared' into the serpent strewn, sticky, dank rain forest of nonsense that is NAMA, who hopes he can keep his employees on. Another old man wants to get his operation over and done with - thankfully he's only a pitifully bad actor because if he truly was unwell in this horrendous joke of a nation I'd worry for him. A loathsome band of young people, feebly

feigning enthusiasm, inform us that they've got plans, as some other dim-witted moron blathers on about becoming a primary school teacher. Well guess what! Now she can - with Jobbridge, Ireland's ingenious answer to a lack of jobs. Lets just hope she wasn't planning on getting wages.

This fine piece of verse was also to be found on their election posters:

'JOBS. NOT EMIGRATION.'

Vomit.

These ballbags, loyally fondled by the State broadcaster, ensured that the message from this budget was that we had turned a corner, whatever the fuck that means. You've to turn corners to do all sorts of things, like running away from Tesco security guards after robbing a bottle of Buckfast... or going for a quick shower in Birkenau. They persisted in wittering on endlessly about creating 3,000 jobs a month, oddly neglecting the fact that thousands more had been lost, or that 87,000 (when we last looked) leave every year to other cities that don't stink of sycophantic failure. The current unemployment rate, in spite of all the cunning stunts (pulled by the stunning cunts) with the live register, is still 13.5%, and was 14.7% last year. Youth unemployment is the wrong side of 25% and we are vying for a place in the top ten in Europe. Of that 87,000 who legged it, 36,000 were aged between 15 and 24. And what are we treated to? Bankrupted singers of Westlife whining about how they speculated wildly in the property bubble. If I hadn't already used them, the knitting needles and pliers would have been particularly handy at this point.

If campaigning in poetry is the name of the game, perhaps an extended Limerick is in order:

Labour think their roses are red,
The blue shirts are bluer than blue,
They should never end up in bed,
Yet, that pair of them always do.
Making it last till their pensions get paid,
Whilst the plain people of Ireland get laid,

Nothing they say pre-election is true,
And in the end we're the ones screwed.

The Real Plan - the prosaic truth

If a people get the government that they deserve, we must have pulled some particularly atrocious shit in a past life. We've got a bumbling assemblage of subservient swine in government now and the REAL plan with this budget was to drive young people out of the country. "Fuck off if you think we are going to give you anything like social protection, or the possibility of a future. Go home and live with your Ma, or better yet go off and get a job somewhere else, emigrate and come back to visit us and spend your tourist dollars when we have The Gathering 2014!"

By dispersing the young to the four corners of the world, the despicable fucks can continue to keep those of us that are left behind busy cleaning up the lube and strap-ons from their second-rate orgy, and before we know it we are the all-new, lower-paid, more precarious work force, which, coincidentally, helps keep them on a competitive level with their fuck-buddies in the faster growing world economies. Hmmm...

Forget the whimsy of poetry, the prosaic truth is the tale of a young person ending up working two jobs in Canada, your granny paying €2.50 for her tablets that keep her out of the mental hospital, and your suicidal young brother trapped at home, broke, depressed and jobless, whilst the pigs keep their snouts in the trough, uninterrupted.

Change comes through those who have nothing left to lose.

Illustration by Darragh Lynch

Mission ACCOMPLISHED

IT HAS BEEN THREE YEARS SINCE JONATHAN SUGARMAN FIRST LEFT COMMENTS BELOW AN ARTICLE ON THE GUARDIAN WEBSITE. HIS STORY HAS SINCE BEEN RAISED IN THE IRISH AND AUSTRIAN PARLIAMENTS, COVERED IN PUBLICATIONS ACROSS THE EU, AS WELL AS ON GERMAN, BELGIAN AND AUSTRALIAN NETWORK TELEVISION, AND THOUGH REPORTS HAVE OCCASIONALLY DOTTED THE IRISH MEDIA, SIMON PRICE REMAINS UNMOVED.

The facts; Sugarman resigned as Risk Manager at Unicredit Ireland in 2007 when his reports went ignored by the Irish Central Bank. Unicredit Ireland, a subsidiary of the Italian giant based in Dublin's IFSC, he found were regularly breaching overnight liquidity by up to 1,900%. In effect the bank was well into the realm of illegality and the Irish authorities did not care. The financial regulator was so indifferent that we can scarcely believe such practice was novel in what The New York Times in 2005 described as "the wild west of European finance". We know for a fact that Irish attitudes to regulation were and still are central in attracting business to Dublin. The collapse of Depfa Ireland, the same year Sugarman raised concerns, was a product of German bankers doing risky business that would have been verboten in Frankfurt. A world where the integrity of Jonathan Sugarman is not welcome.

The blanket guarantee of 2008 was an Irish decision. One made in the interest of those which all decisions are made. Conor McCabe has outlined how what is presented as a panic response was entirely in line with national policy while Dearbhail McDonald has described the Anglo nationalisation and recent IBRC liquidation as a "sixty four billion hermetic seal on all the toxicity and filth that lies below". The last six years are marked by an extraordinary cover up as lifeboats were duly arranged. Only the incompetence of Fianna Fáil in a global and barely manageable financial system threatened to derail it.

Vincent Browne has a long and lone

hobby horse on why Ireland's National Treasury withdrew deposits from Anglo Irish Bank in 2007. In January of that year the extent of Sean Quinn's gamble started to emerge. Brian Cowen's diary records meeting with Anglo Director & shareholder Fintan Drury some weeks later while both played golf with Sean Fitzpatrick in May. Anglo, we are told, was never discussed. Officials from the Department of Finance, Central Bank and Financial Regulator, a group who would first discuss a bank guarantee in January 2008, inspected the stability of Anglo Irish Bank in July 2007.

It is around this time that Sugarman first raised concerns with Financial Regulator. Fourteen months before the collapse of Lehman Brothers a letter was personally delivered to the Central Bank but no action was taken and practice at Unicredit Ireland remained unchanged. Daily liquidity breaches and daily illegality in Dublin. When, on his own initiative, an independent assessment showed breaches to be double first thought, Sugarman resigned.

This is six years ago, in a financial system that has seen collapse, bailout and the IMF come and go. But no one saw it coming. Sugarman for his efforts has been rewarded with hostility and silence. Economists, journalists, politicians and every other stooge who 'partied' now preach austerity with impunity. Each and every one are complicit so long as Sugerman is driven to the shadows.

The story has never been told on Irish television. What reached newspapers

was never frontpage or migrated to the wider cycle. Only Michael Smith at Village Magazine, going so far as direct ultimatums at the Director of Public Prosecutions, has, so far, stood by him but no one wants to act. Some media owners have as good as crossed the room when approached while Richard Bruton in 2010 privately claimed "we can't afford the consequences of revealing this story, we already have enough to deal with if we come to power". Last year Michael Noonan denied there had ever been any contact between Sugarman and Fine Gael. The now Minister Burton follows a similar line.

One notable piece of coverage was Mark Keenan's rehashing of the story shortly after Denis O'Brien took control of Independent newspapers. Significant here is along with the ousting of Gavin O'Reilly went his acolytes. The chairman of Independent News & Media was Brian Hillary, a former Fianna Fáil Senator and Non-Executive Director at Unicredit Ireland until 2008, after which he was appointed to the Central Bank by Brian Cowen. There is no evidence that Hillary had knowledge or involvement in activity at Unicredit but if this, in it's timing, was a parting shot at the old regime, we have a good insight into how your news plays in games between billionaires.

From Paul Williams Anglo Tapes to Richard Curran on Irish Nationwide there is significant effort to place Ireland's financial collapse on the actions of rogue and careless individuals. KPMG who earned €49.9m as auditors



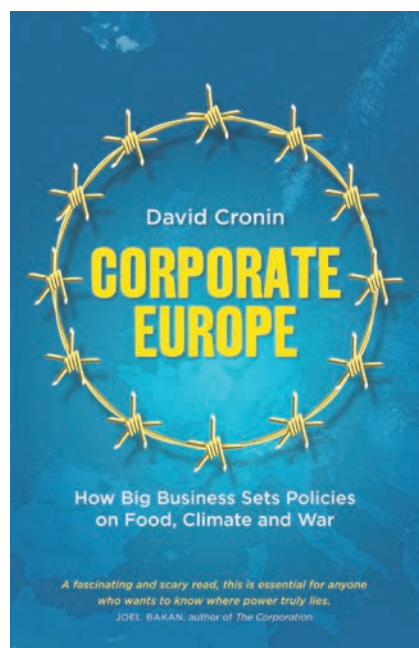
of AIB and €1.65m at Irish Nationwide have so far picked up €22.29m from NAMA. Arthur Cox represents NAMA (€40,000 a month), Treasury Holdings, the banks, the Department of Finance (€472 an hour) and the winding down of IBRC (€aaargh). Patrick Neary, the former financial regulator, retired with a pension of €2,750 per week while Governor Patrick Honohan has twice rejected further investigation of the Central Bank. Independent News & Media, Business Post & Examiner have received debt write-offs in the order of millions while Leo Varadkar paid half a million for Ireland.com in welcome boost for the struggling Irish Times.

As we exit the bailout Jonathan Sugarman remains marginalised in Dublin for refusing to rubberstamp illegality. For everyone else it's mission accomplished

Illustration by Laura McAuliffe

The financial
regulator
was so
indifferent
that we can
scarcely
believe such
practice was
novel.

I was home for three weeks while the Croke Park discussions were taking place and I felt like attacking the television.



DAVID CRONIN IS THAT RAREST THING: A JOURNALIST WORTH READING. HIS 2010 BOOK **EUROPE'S ALLIANCE WITH ISRAEL, EXPOSING EU COMPLICITY IN ISRAEL'S APARTHEID OF THE PALESTINIAN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES**, EARNED HIM HIGH PRAISE – HIS SHARP CRITIQUE OF THAT UGLY EXPEDIENCE LEFT VETERAN MIDDLE EAST REPORTER ROBERT FISK “BREATHLESS”. VAN POYNTN FINDS OUT ABOUT HIS LATEST BOOK.

Corporate Europe, is a chilling report on how an army of lobbyists sets about manipulating politics in order to undermine our health, climate and peace on behalf of “60,000” super-rich. Brussels-based since 1995, Cronin’s relative insider status never makes his writing less than readable, and what he describes is so criminal – yet so legal – that Corporate Europe proves an intriguing, unsettling account of endemic conspiracy.

Compromised policy-making as routine is the stark image Cronin paints of EU politics and its “corporate army” whose lavish lobbying of politicians has one core objective: “slash and burn regulations designed to protect human health and the environment.”

“Between 2005 and 2012, Monsanto submitted about 80 requests for approval of genetically modified (GM) crops to the [European Food Safety Authority]. By its own admission, EFSA has only issued favourable responses to such applications.” What does this mean for EU citizens?

There’s kind of a de facto moratorium on GM foods in Europe, not because of the EFSA or the European Commission (EC), but because of the attitude of a number of European governments. Monsanto has for a long time been frustrated by such attitudes, to such an extent that it’s indicated having lost interest in Europe. But it hasn’t lost interest. I know from my own research that there’s

lots of discussions going on, mainly in secret, where the biotech industry is trying to end this de facto moratorium.

And just recently the EC authorised Pioneer 1507 maize, Pioneer [DuPont] being one of the world’s major biotech companies. So there’s deliberate efforts being made to speed the process of getting GMO onto shelves. And these new trade talks between the EU and US [the proposed, must-oppose Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership] are probably being used as a vehicle to achieve that. There’s a lot of talk about “regulatory convergence” between the EU and US, which basically means ending what’s called the “precautionary principle” here in Europe, whereby European governments or authorities can say no to particular foods if they have good reason to believe they may be harmful.

Some of the more diabolical aspects you touch on are groups like Frontex, “the EU’s border management agency”, and the European Defence Agency?

Obviously we’re seeing a troubling rise of the far right and foreigners are being scapegoated in many countries. But it’s important to underline that there are perhaps even more serious discussions taking place, with no real public scrutiny, at EU level. And recently the Lampedusa tragedy, in which 360 migrants drowned, has actually given a new impetus to this work. Such tragedies are being exploited as an opportunity to escalate plans to use drones for tracking asylum seekers on their way to Europe and to stop them reaching European shores. The response from the EU’s Commissioner for Home Affairs, Cecilia Malmström, was basically that we should deploy drones for such purposes as quickly as possible, which is outrageous. Drones are warplanes and these asylum seekers are from the poorest countries in the world, doing nothing more sinister than fleeing poverty.

Would you agree with Vincent Browne’s description of the Irish as a “beaten” people?

I’ve seen briefing papers, prepared for senior EU officials ahead of the Irish general election in 2010, that basically said the political parties can say what

they want in the run-up to the election, they can talk all they want about ‘burning the bondholders’ but at the end of the day they will be compelled to stick to agreements that Brian Cowen and his cronies made in 2010. And under those agreements they, or we, will repay the bondholders (of course, ‘bondholders’ is a synonym for French, German, and some UK and US, banks) that had facilitated the extreme gambling of [Seán] Fitzpatrick and [Seán] Quinn.

There has been more resistance to this in Spain and Greece, and one reason may be that the Irish are simply leaving the country. According to some the exodus is at levels unseen since the Famine, whether that’s true or not it’s certainly extremely high and I think is one explanation for why we’ve not seen protests as large in Ireland as we have elsewhere.

Most people rely on state-corporate media for news, where the sort of processes you report tend to be portrayed benignly or, normally, are simply omitted from coverage?

I was home for three weeks while the Croke Park discussions were taking place and I felt like attacking the television. RTE just completely missed the point. It was being portrayed as this sort of technical adjustment, whereas it’s part of a much bigger attempt to perpetuate the austerity agenda and destroy the welfare state and, to a large degree, the unions.

There’s a very kind of cosy relationship here between officialdom and those supposed to be holding officialdom to account. Because journalism is generally quite badly paid, many abandon the profession and go to the more lucrative side of the fence and become propagandists for the EC, other public authorities or the private sector. Journalists here are just as much a part of what’s known as the Brussels ‘beltway’ as politicians or lobbyists. We spout the same jargon, basically. We drink in the same pubs, eat in the same restaurants.

Corporate Europe: How Big Business Sets Policies on Food, Climate and War is out now from Pluto Press.



Parks and Rec

DCC has advised the site of the former Chamber Street Flats in Dublin 8 is to be turned into a public park following a successful campaign by locals, councillors and interested parties.

Organisers are calling on locals to submit their requests on the plan for the park.

Up, Up, and Away



WITH EVERYONE SEEMINGLY GOING GA-GA OVER THE RISE IN HOUSE PRICES, IT'S LIKE IRELAND HAS MADE A MIRACULOUS RECOVERY. HOLD OFF ON BUYING THAT CHAMPERS-FUELLED JETPACK JUST FOR A MOMENT THOUGH, AS STEPHEN BOURKE LOOKS INTO THE HOUSING CRISIS THAT IS STILL VERY MUCH IN EXISTENCE.

The great big Bank of Ireland ad on Manor Street says something like, "I thought I'd be renting for the rest of my life – but these lads rescued me from rack-rents and put me in a 4-bed semi in Meath." It's back on, or so they'd have us think.

rabble toddled out to NUI Maynooth to have a chat and a leaf through the property supplements with the brain trust in the geography department.

Back in August the Sindo asked 'are you in the bubble?' Their map of Dublin had Sunni Triangle-

style boundaries around the 'hotspots' – Glasnevin, Marino, Drumcondra above; and Ranelagh, Donnybrook and Blackrock below. Housing supply in the leafy zones is tight. "Buyers are waiting for homeowners in certain prized areas to pass away," Jerome Reilly put it, "before they can land the house of their dreams."

Average Dublin prices are up 15% on last year. Prices for the rest of the country recorded a slight rise of 1.5% in October, but the first uptick all year still leaves them 0.3% down annually. This is the

'two-tier' market they keep talking about: sluggish or declining sales outside the capital while the gavel drops on rapidly-inflating bids for desirable Dublin properties. God help you if you rent in the capital, because rents are up 7.6% since last year too. The market is burning hot and bright, and there are plenty of heads running to work the bellows.

But it's grand. Independent News and Meedja has your back with its 'Ten tips on how to buy a house in the Dublin heat' and a killer pep-talk from "professional property buyer" Karen Mulvaney. Be assured: there are still 'undervalued' gaffs going, so get your nails into the last rung of that ladder before it gets hauled into the clouds.

"Dublin doesn't necessarily have the kind of housing stock that the people who are looking to buy at the moment want," says Cian O'Callaghan, a geography lecturer at NUI Maynooth. "The upward pressure on prices is in Dublin areas which always had strong demand for property."

"These are areas with very little brownfield space to build new properties," says O'Callaghan. "If

you go slightly out in the commuter belt around Dublin there's more issues of vacancy and perhaps less demand. There's not necessarily a correlation between demand for housing in these areas and a need to build new housing in others."

The builders say otherwise, strangely enough. Writing for the Irish Times Property supplement last month, the Construction Industry Federation's Hubert Fitzpatrick said that 'everyone' knows they need to be building more housing. And they'd totally be up for doing that, except the money's wrong for them. There's an easy enough fix for that though: end Section Five social housing provision by developers. That's a 'burden' they can't be bothered with in these 'austere times.' While we're at it, we should stop making them build tall things. Urban sprawl be damned, suburbs beat skyscrapers on unit profit.

"About the so-called bubble that's emerging: I think it will be in very, very specific areas," says Sinéad Kelly. Sinead studies the interplay of cities and finance. "It'll be tiny; South Dublin,

[Prices] should keep dropping until housing becomes something which is provided on the basis of need, not on speculation.



certain apartments in the Docklands area, but it'll differ from block to block. The microgeography of this will be very, very specific. The number of transactions is critical – it often gets left out of reports.”

The result on the ground can be stark. Cosgrave Developments is working on a development of 146 houses in Castleknock, Dublin 15. Ten minutes away by car is Ongar, where graffitied houses sit empty in the dark, and the only pedestrian you meet is fifteen and wants to bum a smoke. The difference in value between the former boomtime village and the better address is two bands of Revenue's Property Tax valuation, or close to €100,000 on a semi-detached house.

There's much more to the property market than young double-income professional families overbidding for too few nice houses. Things are moving below the surface that the house price statistics can only hint at. The heat in the market comes despite the lowest level of mortgage lending since the '70s. It's cash buyers that are causing all the fuss, and buying between half and two-thirds of what's sold. DIRT tax on investments has doubled in the last five years, and Sinead Kelly believes tax policy is pushing money from other investments to the property market.

“DIRT is going up to 44% and interest rates are going down,” she says. “If you're leaving your money in the bank the returns on that are very, very small, and it's high risk in the Irish banking system.” “At the moment, net yields from January after DIRT kicks in is about 1.1 or 1.2% which is pretty low.”

“Compare that to, say, a two-bedroom apartment, at say around €230,000 to €250,000 somewhere in the City Centre, the net yield on that would be around 3.5%.” Gross yields (the cash your landlord makes before costs like fixing your shower) are fairly static, but offer an investor a very strong return. Especially in Dublin City Centre, yields are at 8.2%, well above the national average of 5.9%. So for investors, apartments in town are a pretty sweet deal.

Another dynamic is Real Estate Investment Trusts. Budget 2014 allowed the formation of public limited companies exempt from corporate tax which can buy up property on behalf of a pool of shareholders. They're like hedge funds for landlords. So far the REITs which have been established have concentrated on commercial property, but Sinéad Kelly says it's early days yet. If you already own property, this is all great news. Steady rent increases mean a better return on investment. With Ireland's short leases and lack of rent controls, landlords can be extremely responsive to a buoyant rental market (and as responsive as they like to an ebbing tide).

With vehicles like REITs now available to protect capital from market variations, the renter's position seems even weaker by comparison. “Why don't we have rent control?” Rory Hearn asks. Hearn researches social housing, community develop and urban regeneration. He believes that, “rents are going through the roof – that's young workers, people who can't afford to get a mortgage – they're the ones paying for this.”

Aside from domestic investors switching to

For a large enough investor, the price of a property is essentially meaningless as long as the yield is right.

property, alone or via REITs, there are big foreign players flying in. Sinéad Kelly again: “Probably the bigger thing that's happening is that private equity firms are buying up loan portfolios from all of the major loan holders – NAMA, IBRC, RBS, and Lloyds bank - which are basically trying to sell off their distressed assets very, very quickly.” For a large enough investor, the price of a property is essentially meaningless as long as the yield is right.

“A driving force in NAMA, in all the decisions it makes, is to increase property prices,” says Cian O'Callaghan, “and that's been automatically seen as something good, but it's not. They need the property prices to underwrite all the debt they're writing off for developers. This then is being celebrated because we don't lose billions on NAMA, and so we're all then bought into this idea where we're looking for property prices to rise.

“Even if there is an increase in house prices, there will remain a very serious housing crisis,” says Sinéad Kelly. “For most people that have need of housing, or have huge mortgage debt and are in arrears or negative equity – that won't change if

house prices increase.”

There over 100,000 households on the social housing list nationally and 83,000 citizens receiving rent allowance. The Government on clean-up has failed to make the kind of serious investment that might put a dent in these numbers. Instead it has opted to reinforce what Kelly calls the “rentier class which is being heavily supported, promoted and incentivised.”

“That's the Fianna Fáil model of Irish capitalism and it hasn't changed,” Hearn adds, “This government is promoting it the exact same way and more.”

“And more,” says Kelly, nodding.

Rory concludes, “people are asking when we will we reach the bottom of the property market – I hope we never reach it! [Prices] should keep dropping until housing becomes something which is provided on the basis of need, not on speculation.” And in the end, do we need a portfolio, or a home?

A MAGDALENE

1966 ★ STORY ★ 1968

A SURVIVOR SPEAKS

RONAN BURTENSHAW
INTERVIEWS MARTINA
KEOGH - A SURVIVOR OF THE
GLOUCESTER (NOW SEÁN
MCDERMOTT) STREET LAUNDRY
- ABOUT HER EXPERIENCES OF
INCARCERATION AND FORCED
LABOUR AT THE HANDS OF THE
CHURCH AND STATE.

Martina Keogh was sixteen when she was arrested for fighting in 1966. Originally from Whitefriar Street in the south inner-city she spent much of her childhood in institutions or struggling with a sexually-abusive step-father. At her court hearing she remembers the judge “roaring” at her - telling her that she was “out of control” and that “if [her] mother couldn’t control her, they would”.

The value placed on control in the laundries was immediately clear, she says. “When I went to Gloucester Street first all my clothes were taken off me and I was put into a grey dress. You were meant to bow down to them. I’d give a little bit of cheek, so I got the clatters. They’d try to break your spirit.”

She recalls the fear which pervaded inside the institution. Older women, some there for years and many who could “barely walk”, would tell on younger girls who tried to spark up conversation. “They’d call, ‘mother, mother, mother - she’s keeping me talking’. I used to kick them in the shins when they’d do that because I couldn’t understand why they were turning on us. Now that I’m older I do - that was a way of not being beaten themselves.”

The punishment beatings handed out by the nuns were severe. “If you weren’t working quickly enough they’d belt you with a strap. They always had a strap on their belts - and beads, keys. They wouldn’t care what they hit you with.”

The watchful eye of the nuns extended over dinner break and tea in the evenings, as well as private conversations during the one hour a day the women were allowed for recreation. Martina remembers a young woman from Scotland seeking her out for a chat after work. The next day, after they were reported, nuns quizzed them as to any “impurity” in their discussion. “They wanted to see if we were talking about sex,” she recalls, “they were filthy-minded.”

Days were bleak. Up at dawn to be in work before nine, they could expect hours of hard labour. “We were made to work in the laundry all day ironing priests’ vestments. Can you imagine a little thing like me? Picking up a six-foot man’s vestments and ironing them over and over until they were stiff. Every crease out of them. Then you would have to iron the hankies, underpants, shirts, pyjamas - everything.”

The women were allowed to bathe just once a week, on Saturdays. The water would only be changed after six or seven baths. And the nuns maintained a dress-code - white slips were to be worn. “You hid your body for baths. It was ‘for purity’.”

One of the more controversial aspects of the Magdalene legacy, particularly as it pertains to the refusal of religious orders to compensate survivors, is the amount of money made by the laundries. Those involved in running the institutions deny their profitability. But Martina tells a different story.

“I used to make what we called ‘celtics’. That’s a b́anín cloth that you iron transfers onto to. Then you outline the patterns in black and fill in the colours. I used to get £2.50 for one but the nuns got £20. That £2.50 bought me soap, shampoo, toothpaste - really I was giving it back to them. They should have been giving me this stuff but I was buying it. I have no doubt they made money.”

She also remembers how a much-celebrated Irish crooner from the 1960s gigged in the laundry once every year in exchange for incarcerated women minding his children, cleaning his house and washing his clothes. “He thought he was the bees’ knees, so he did. But I hated him and his songs. I’ve noticed in interviews he has done since he never once mentioned the times he sang in Gloucester Street.”

The contempt she carries for the cosy é́lite which allowed the laundries to survive so long is

clear. It is a feeling she struggled to contain amid the contrived piety of Gloucester Street. “When we finished after five we had tea, which wouldn’t be much. And then you had to pray. Five decades of the rosary. I fucking hated it. Oh my god, it would drive me mad. Pray for the souls, pray for this and that. And the language of me inside. I’d be going, ‘fuck the souls, fuck the prayer’. I wouldn’t even be listening. But you couldn’t let the nuns know that. You’d be killed if you did.”

To this day she still won’t set foot in a Church. At funerals she will sign the book of condolences but stay outside. “Whatever I have to say to whoever is up there I can say at home. Why do they still have these big buildings anyway? They should be made to sell them and give the money to their victims.”

When she was first released from the laundry in 1968 after two years inside Martina struggled on the outside. Finding herself on the northside and looking to get to George’s Street locals directed her to North Great George’s Street, off Parnell Square. It wasn’t until one of them realised that she was a southsider that she was put on a number 19 bus home. This wasn’t uncommon, she says. Moore Street traders from the time have told her stories about women brought for walks in the area, disoriented from years of institutionalisation, with “fear in their faces”.

In the years since her release she has been unsatisfied by the enquiries into and apologies about the Magdalene Laundries. She tells me that February’s much-vaunted apology by Enda Kenny wasn’t accepted by many survivors. Not only was the “two weeks he needed to think about it” an insult, but the state continues to deny its central role in the whole affair.

“I don’t trust the government. Not in a million years would I trust them. They told us these were private institutions and it was nothing to do with them. They lied. They sent us there and they knew

we were there. This has come out now. They know if they admit to it then they could be liable for compensation.”

She rejects the McAleese Report - which not only said the laundries weren’t profit-making but also claimed no physical abuse took place in the institutions. “I was very taken aback by them saying there was no physical abuse. In my interview I mentioned three times the physical abuse I had seen. A girl getting her hand burned by a nun - I’ll never forget it. I told them about the abuse I got. And I actually couldn’t believe it when they said survivors didn’t speak about physical abuse. They did. I felt that the government was hiding it again.”

On the back of that report’s conclusion - that the laundries were essentially charitable organisations - religious orders have refused to pay compensation to the women incarcerated. Martina is unambiguous about what should happen. “They should be made to. We should take their property and give it to the people they locked up and abused.”

In trying to find her way to justice Martina began working with Justice for the Magdalenes and the Oral History Project. That, by contrast to the state’s whitewashes, she says, gave her and other survivors a voice.

The project, which concluded in September, conducted seventy-nine interviews with thirty-five survivors as well as relatives, people who had been adopted and other relevant parties. Most lasted longer than two hours and the result is a 5,000-document archive. Religious orders were invited to participate in the process but refused.

Martina Keogh doesn’t mind. Recently diagnosed with cancer she is still fighting the Church and state over its incarceration of her and almost 30,000 other women in Magdalene laundries. And, she says, the most important thing is that the survivors’ voices are heard.

“We can speak. That’s what this project has done for us. There are loads of women who can’t because their families don’t know and my heart breaks for them. But we can speak out and tell people the truth. After a long time and all the stigma we can say, ‘yes, I am a Magdalene’.”

Check out magdaleneoralhistory.com

Illustration by JTB

They always had a strap on their belts - and beads, keys. They wouldn’t care what they hit you with.





While the Immigrant Council of Ireland announces that reports of racist incidents are up 85% in the last year it's reassuring that Fine Gael councillor Darren Scully has cleared up his

'Naasist' comments ahead of local elections. He doesn't dislike 'black Africans' anymore, just Nigerians. Grand.



WHERE TIME BECOMES A LOOP

BACK IN EARLY OCTOBER, SOMETHING UNUSUAL HAPPENED - INSTEAD OF RECYCLING THE REACTIONARY MORAL PANIC OF HIS LISTENERS INTO STELLAR RATINGS, JOE DUFFY TURNED HIS ATTENTION TO THE FATE OF THOSE LEFT LANGUISHING IN DIRECT PROVISION. RASHERS TIERNEY TAKES A LOOK AT OUR NATION'S LATEST INSTITUTIONAL WRONGDOING.

With Joe's blessing, the oddball maze of myths and lies, the stories of free cars and prams and of eating up local authority housing lists - lifted for a moment as Joe Public heard the voice of a Syrian called Ali describing six years of his life systemically stalled.

A string of articles appeared in the Irish Times. Anyone with their ear to the ground already knew most of the facts: adults forced to survive on €19.10 a week, cramped conditions, no proper cooking facilities and people locked away awaiting decisions for the best part of a decade. Taking their lead from a favourable ruling in Northern Ireland, two families (with support from the Irish Refugee Council) went to the High Court challenging their exclusion from social welfare payments.

After years of closing its eyes to this ticking time bomb of human despair, direct provision was centre stage in the Irish media. Campaigners weighed in, and Senator Jillian van Turnhout brought a motion to the Seanad backing their calls for reform.

Shatter of course inveighed against the motion. Yet like many of our hypocritical politicians, he had very different opinions before power. Back then he went as far as to criticize the "inefficient and maladministered asylum system" for its "detrimental and stultifying impact on individuals."

In the offices of a city centre based NGO that works to support refugees, Nathan (name changed to protect identity), an asylum seeker activist dissects Shatter's official-speak to the Oireachtas.

"The minister said in the Dáil that the policies are working because people are not coming in. In a way the people who are already in the country are being punished for the others who are coming in! That is what is implied!"

Rather than the direct provision system being broken, from the point of view of the state, its very much doing its job as a deterrent. As its chief architect John O'Donoghue put it: "Giving a right to work would simply create another 'pull' factor which would put further pressure on the asylum-processing system."

Nathan is among a new generation of outspoken asylum seekers who have been working on the End Institutional Living Campaign supported by the Irish Refugee Council. Using the dirt cheap Lyca phone network, they are able to build a network of activists across the 35 or so centres, many out of the way and isolated.

"Social media has created empowerment. Before, there were issues that were kept quiet but now the moment they go public the media will definitely get

it - no matter that the centres don't allow journalists in, but now someone can use their smartphone and record something...and give it to journalists."

Trinity academic and ardent critic of state racism, Ronit Lentin, argues that direct provision centres keep people in a "state of deportability" - fear is purposefully maintained. Tools like Facebook might forge strength through shared knowledge, but the community is a hard one for heads like Nathan to mobilise.

In April, there was a demonstration followed by a deportation - he remembers the same thing happening back in 2010. Is the state deliberately carrying out reprisals against the community? Nathan doesn't think it could be officially that callous but maintains cynicism. He continues:

"Look at it this way, this demonstration we did, people were afraid to participate, but it was the largest across the country, but two days after that a lot of people were issued with deportation letters, a lot of people who had participated - what a coincidence! So the next time you call for a demonstration how many people will come? The timing! These guys will know, 'when we did THIS, they did THAT'. That is how it plays out in my mind."

It's not like the Irish state is known for its subtlety. Remember World Refugee Day in 2012? Deportation raids took place in Carrick-on-Suir, Cork and Portlaoise. The Anti Racism Network described how "A woman called Adekemi tried to harm herself with a knife while she was being taken from her room. After having dragged her outside naked from the waist up, the police pepper sprayed her, beat her severely, and handcuffed her in front of early age children who were visibly distraught."

Nathan told me a story about a middle aged woman, so upset with what she'd heard on Liveline that she brought down thousands of euros worth of vouchers to a hostel in Dublin. It's the deliberate dispersal of asylum seeker housing that keeps the problems they face out of sight.

"Those who know about it tend to say it's none of my business, it doesn't affect me directly - so they ignore it." Locals, he says, sometimes get a notion and pop into the centres to see what it's like with their own eyes. "The moment people get an awareness, of what is happening and how the taxpayer's money is being used to fund such centres for asylum seekers the more infuriated the taxpayer is getting."

It's the economic irrationality of it all that bugs him too. In 2005, researchers for the European Migration Network put the cost paid to a contractor

as somewhere between €189 and €230 per resident per week in a privately owned centre.

"To me that doesn't make any sense, I don't know how they go about calculating their money. I want to go get a job, I want to earn 60 grand a year or earn 15 grand a year - I could still sustain my family, why give me 12 grand for nothing? I just wake up and sleep and they give me 12 grand."

This forced idleness means each day becomes the same as the next, time becomes a loop and it's mentally devastating. "If someone has more than twelve hours in a day to do nothing, it all depends on your mental strength how you are going to survive that." Nathan occupied himself with volunteering and keeping on top of his professional field. Others don't fare so well. "I mean this is an ever changing world we are living in...we have lots of professionals in the direct provision centres, but now they are deskilled."

One guy he came across has some of Microsoft's highest qualifications: "He's a super whiz, but he's in Mosney! At one stage Dell called him from Poland. I don't know how they got his number. But they couldn't pay him because he is an asylum seeker."

Conditions in the centres are famously bad and the human costs obvious. Carl O'Brien has reported extensively in the Irish Times on the 800 million given to a string of privately owned former religious buildings, failed hotels and mobile home parks and hostels. The system is a huge financial lifeline to private companies that may well have hit the wall once the recession hit. Many of which shield their profits from public view.

A care worker that worked with separated children in an Aungier Street hostel told me more about their conditions.

"At some point over 30 young men were living in that hostel which is a tight squeeze. The conditions were very bad. Only when we went in did we request that they bring the standards up. The HSE did not advocate (as far as I could see) for better living conditions...the food was appalling."

Nathan has been through a string of these centres. While Mosney sits in the popular imagination as a dilapidated holiday home made up of prefabs it's far from the worst he says: "Mosney is like the show house, any official coming into the country to deal with asylum or how we are accommodated, we have seen all kinds of people coming...there is a house that is kept and never opened."

He gestures around the tiny office we're sitting in, with barely room for two desks and says: "in Hatch Hall this is the size of the room...you have your bed there, and if you are a married couple you have a bunk bed, so you are sharing your space with your family, so there is no privacy."

The first time I met Nathan, he recounted how someone else's child drew a family picture in school. A stick figure mother just sat on the bed crying. There's a deep psychological scarring being ploughed in here.

"A friend of ours got their papers and they had a little child who was my four year old daughter's friend, and they are moving out so my little daughter was crying and I said 'don't worry our own papers are coming' and my four year old was looking at me saying 'how come they got theirs and ours didn't come - is it that we are not praying enough?' Those are questions that when you hear them they hit you."

"I mean, there are things that the Irish government are apologising for now, they are going to be apologising about this really. These kids are going to question this. My kids have been born and bred in direct provision, they don't know any other life."

There's a bittersweet twist to this story, Nathan's papers arrived a few weeks after we talked. But one of the High Court cases challenging the entire system has fallen by the wayside, the Irish Times said it was due "on foot of papers received from the State." A further 4,650 are still left to live like ghosts in institutional living.

Over the clatter of chat and dinner plates in a Phibsborough cafe, I meet with a representative of the Asylum Archive project. What started off as a visual arts project has grown beyond that into a collective historical documentation of direct provision centres. His words provoke a much broader question: "Why does Ireland have a tendency to incarcerate people? And I'm talking about the historical aspects of laundries and industrial schools? And then even direct provision, it seems like the country really has a tendency to put people into institutions and I don't know why."

It's not like
the Irish state
is known for
its subtlety.
Remember World
Refugee Day in
2012? Deportation
raids took place
in Carrick-on-
Suir, Cork and
Portlaoise.



These kids
are going to
question this.
My kids have
been born and
bred in direct
provision, they
don't know any
other life.



All photos from asylumarchive.com



JUST THE TONIC

WHILE YOU'RE BUSY LICKING THE FLOOR AND RUBBING YOUR NIPPLES, WITH ONLY SOMEONE ELSE'S CHEWING GUM FOR A FRIEND, THERE'S A DEDICATED CREW BEHIND THE SCENES WHO HAVE MADE YOUR ENTIRE AVANT-GARDE PERFORMANCE PIECE POSSIBLE. MADISON S. PAULY TALKS TO BODYTONIC'S TREVOR O'SHEA ABOUT KEEPING DUBLIN CLUBBING THROUGH THE RECESSION

When Trevor O'Shea acquired a beat-up storefront on South Abbey Street, the deal was his company's biggest venture to date. Trev had been scouting out a second Bodytonic location since local competition had sidelined The Bernard Shaw, the headquarters for his jack-of-all-trades music company, into a pre-game bar on Saturday nights.

His negotiation for the new venue — the future Twisted Pepper — was messy and prolonged. Trev eventually wrapped up the deal just after returning from the fourth Electric Picnic. Back then Bodytonic hosted a successful arena at the festival but that year he'd received a call from a friend warning that people in the U.S. were lining up outside their banks.

It was September 2008.

"Probably the worst time to sign a deal in history," Trev reflected, sitting at a red-checked table in the Shaw's daytime cafe.

Now, he can count on one hand the number of places he'd worked prior to the crash that survived. "Every other venue I've operated, for the last five years, has either closed, been sold to someone new, or has a new name and new management."

Yet the new venue did more than just survive. The next year, the Pepper was picked by a DJ Mag panel as one of the 100 best clubs in the world.

Bodytonic had outlasted clubland catastrophe before. Originally conceived in 2000 as a way for Trev and his friends to get more gigs — by running their own nights rather than scrambling for individual DJ slots around the city — Bodytonic barely made it through its very first party. Crammed with their decks into Trev's tiny car, the group drove from Co. Meath into Dublin for their club-in-a-pub, at Toner's on Baggot Street. For a December night, it was "snowing like mad," and they expected to find the place empty — and they were right. But after sending out some friends to fish for potential partygoers, the place began to fill.

Trev called that night a metaphor for everything that would happen next. "It was a great accident. That's how everything has worked out since. It didn't necessarily start out great, and it could have been a disaster."

In their early years, the Meath natives struggled to break into the right circles to book their Dublin gigs and gain followers. Meanwhile, super pubs and late bars were on the rise.

"These big huge bars opened where they had late night and you didn't have to pay in," Trev explained. "And for just one, two to three years they became quite popular. So people who just wanted to drink late could stay rather than move at half twelve. Nightclubs had to give better value — a reason to pay in."

Bodytonic, evidently, could do that. After a few years of venue-hopping, John Reynolds at Wax offered them a home on Thursday and Friday nights, and he hooked them up with Electric Picnic in its infancy.

"Our name really grew then because that festival grew to be huge," Trev said. They brought in international DJs and bands, experimented with music types, started record labels and developed a website and a reputation for being eclectic.

By 2006, Bodytonic was ready for its first venue. When a landlord offered them a one-year lease on a decrepit Richmond Street building — "to stop it from burning down" — they signed the deal.

"When we were running events in other places it was like we were babysitting, and when I took this place on it was like having our first baby. You couldn't just hand it back. No matter what happened here, it was my responsibility."

By all outward appearances, The Twisted Pepper seemed to sail through the initial recession, but the account books told a different story. Door prices, as always, went straight to the acts, but booze profits had dropped off by 20 to 30 percent. With people choosing to drink at home for cheap, the club was packing out its parties but operating in the red.

"If you can't get any busier, and you're losing money, that's a serious problem. What we had to do at the time was attack our costs," Trev said.

They had always "bootstrapped" for income, mostly ignoring the lure of bank loans and grants in favor of personal investments, donations and borrowing from family and friends. "If I made a bit of money, I kept it. If I lost a bit of money, I fucking learnt from it," Trev said.

But to save The Twisted Pepper, Bodytonic needed to go beyond cutting costs. The trick, Trev said, was when he realized that both the Shaw and the Pepper could be more than just bars or clubs.

"If you're ever in them by day, they look really miserable, and they're really cold...and then at nighttime for some reason when you

switch the lights on, put the candles out, and it sort of makes sense. I always thought you couldn't use these spaces by day," he described, sitting back and gesturing to the rest of the room. The Shaw brimmed with sunlight and cafe noises: the whirr of the espresso machine, the babble of lunchtime conversations, the clang of tableware. Every so often the cafe's operators would call out to each other in their native Italian. David Bowie's "Modern Love" played over the sound system.

"They're just independent spaces where people meet, discuss and enjoy ideas, and that's it. That's a very vague, open-ended thing, but that's just literally the only way I can describe it. It's too broad and open and evolving to ever go deeper than that.

Across the two venues, Bodytonic hosts book talks and poetry readings, comedy nights, folk nights, record fairs and a host of other drink, lit or music themed events. It fits right in with the wellspring of other undefinable, independent spaces springing up over the last five years.

"That's what I love about Dublin at the moment. I don't like things to be linear. It all makes sense to me, because I'm a Dub — or, well, Irish. I like things to be nonlinear, a little bit random, a little bit human," he said.

Their latest label, Bodytonic Music, launched with a new EP from White Collar Boy at The Twisted Pepper's fifth birthday. It sold out by midnight, with an all-local lineup and packed with friends and family. Trev said the October 5th party was his favorite night at the venue.

And there's more to come, Trev promised, rattling off a list: an app launch, a new website, festivals, more labels, a brewery and more locations — in cities like New York, Berlin and Barcelona. "It's just a matter of time," he said.

"If you try to think internationally — whether it's an ego thing or whatever — are we world class, but in a very Irish way?" he asked. And although he was careful not to make too broad a prediction, he said he has a good feeling about Dublin's economic recovery.

"I'm very optimistic at the moment. And I wouldn't have said that five years ago, no way. I just would have said it's very difficult. But I think things have become easier. Things have loosened a little bit, or become more open-minded. I can't define it exactly, I think it's just a common acceptance — that everyone knows that it's a difficult situation for most, so everyone's a little bit more willing. It took a few years for that to kind of become a collective consciousness."

A lot of my club ideas were driven by being thirteen or fourteen and listening to radio and club mixes, closing my eyes and imagining what it would be like to be there.



Do...

1 Use your imagination. Sure go to London, Berlin, NYC or wherever to get inspired and see what's out there but nothing beats being unique. A lot of my club ideas were driven by being thirteen or fourteen and listening to radio and club mixes, closing my eyes and imagining what it would be like to be there. Having no real reference was actually a great thing.

2 Look after yourself. Eat well, exercise and best thing I learned recently — meditate. Living in the moment, clearing your mind, appreciation. All that stuff I used to write off as hippie-dippie shite. In the music game it's easy to get sucked into the party side of things. Keep that stuff to the weekend and look after yourself every other day.

3 Get a great team around you. DJs, live acts, designers, creatives, buzzers. Behind every good promoter is a great crew. People first, music second, always.

Don't ...

1 Ignore the numbers. Money in, money out, margins, costs etc. Sounds obvious but most (including me until the recession hit) ignore this. My main talent is chaos and creativity. I had to learn science and structure. You need both for this to be sustainable.

2 Do this unless you're passionate, driven and willing to work hard. You'll need it when times get tough and your back is against the wall.

3 Give up. Ever. If it doesn't work one way, try another. And another. Eventually you'll get there. There are not many feelings in the world better than making your vision a reality, so do whatever it takes, because it's worth it!



WE ARE THE ENEMY

SLEEP DEPRIVATION, BOOZE-FUELLED EXCESS, PUNTERS ACTING THE BOLLOCKS. GARETH CUMMINS FROM THOMAS HOUSE GIVES US AN INSIGHT INTO THE GLAMOROUS LIFE OF THE PUB MANAGER.

The stress almost killed me. A few years ago I went temporarily blind in my left eye while trying to book a US tour for a band. This was worse. My fucking teeth started to fall out.

These days I rarely drink, the fact that I'm surrounded by it all day just kills the appeal. I'm sure the staff in Burdock's never want to see another bag of chips.

I've dealt with assaults, floods, electrical emergencies, bad staff, junkies, theft and, of course, students. I was a student once, I was probably a bollocks sometimes but I like to think I was a reasonable enough bollocks. These days I have to deal with all sorts of student related bollockry. I caught one of them walking out with my cup of tea one night. Literally walking out the door with my cup of tea that I left on the bar. When confronted he simply replied "Ah sure I was just taking it for the craic".

This is my life now. It's not the worst.

I drank a lot during the first year, and I mean a lot. Standing behind the bar and conversing with customers while they were gradually getting drunker became a chore and I would have a few pints to keep my energy levels up. Throw in a few shots of whiskey or rum and try to turn each work night into a party. This became a slight problem for me, I didn't become dependent on the drink, but I felt it creeping up on me over time.

I remember one night being alone in the pub and it was mentally busy. I'm not the best behind the bar and I'll be the first one to admit it. I panic at large orders and crowds but I felt the only way to handle

the problem that night was to get smashed drunk and let the night handle itself. I drank two bottles of Bushmills and literally fell around the bar while serving people. I smashed glasses, dropped drinks and forgot all about time and served for almost an hour over the legal limit. But apparently I was hilarious.

Thomas House had been handled poorly in the recent years, changing hands a few times and generally not doing the business it needed to do to stay open. The doors finally closed in 2011 and a few days later myself and my business partner Kevin received a phone call about taking up the lease on the pub.

For some reason we said yes, borrowed money from our families and dug in. I'd be lying if I told you it was easy. It was without a doubt the most difficult thing I have ever done in my life. To run a pub like this takes a fierce amount of time, as it stands I have no personal life. I sleep, wake and work. Lather, rinse repeat. 7 days a week.

I recently returned from a trip to Europe. My first "holiday" in two and a half years. I was driving a camper van across Poland while suppliers, agents and debtors wore my phone out. Turning it off is simply not an option anymore. I get calls in the morning from delivery companies and calls at 4am from drunk mates looking for a late gargle. I try to keep my office hours between 1pm and 10pm.

My sleeping pattern? Chaos theory. I find myself sleeping whenever I can; grab a few hours at night and an hour or two during the day. At home, in the van or on the seats in the pub. I'm turning into a soldier. My t-shirt reads 'Defend Thomas House'.

If you told me three years ago that I would be managing a bar and venue I'd probably have spat in your eye and called you Matilda. But here I am, 32 years old, tired, sick, broke and stressed but fucking loving running a pub.

Illustration by Daragh Lynch.

The Department of Social Protection has sent more than 6,500 letters since the start of the year to Irish jobseekers here telling them about job opportunities across

Europe and further afield. Must be turning the corner, yeah?



{TRAVELLER RIGHTS}

Mincéirs Whiden

ON THE LONG ROAD TOWARDS EQUALITY FOR TRAVELLER PEOPLE, RABBLE EXAMINES THE STOPS ALONG THE WAY. FREDA MULLIN HUGHES AND PAUL REYNOLDS SPEAK TO TRAVELLERS AND ACTIVISTS WORKING TOWARDS ETHNIC RECOGNITION.

On a cold November's morning a single heater battled to warm the converted lock-up garage. The shutters were up and three young men inside sipped the morning's coffee surrounded by bicycles, parts and tools. Francis had just stripped a lawnmower-engine for a go-kart he was rebuilding for a local man while Patrick and Terrance were working on bicycles that had been donated in poor repair to the workshop.

'It keeps me out of the house, if I wasn't here I'd be at home on the settee watching Judge Judy' explained Francis 'I should be here every Tuesday but I'm here nearly every day. Love it. When I first started here (5 months ago) I hadn't a clue about

bikes but Barry Semple showed me what to do, same with Terrance here, but now I'd be able to fully service 5 bikes in one day.'

The men work in Crossbar Bikes which is part of the Clondalkin Travellers' Development Group (CTDG). They take in bicycles for repair from local people. They also get donations, often from local Travellers, of frames and parts found abandoned or thrown out and prepare the bikes for sale. There is a certain beauty in seeing a rusty-looking High Nellie go through the hands of dedicated mechanics and come out gleaming and ready for the road. If these bikes could talk.

David Joyce is the administrator here and explained his vision for the workshop. 'We

are looking at certification. We could train people to a stage where they could take City & Guilds examinations, unfortunately there are no qualifications in Bike mechanics in this country yet. 'David has a twinkle in his eye when he speaks about 1940s roadsters and his own first Peugeot. There is a love of bicycles, in fact David reckons Barry is about 30% bicycle at this stage.

Barry Semple trains the apprentices in every aspect of cycle mechanics. He carries this enthusiasm from a similar workshop in the autonomous space, Seomra Spraoi, in Dublin's north Inner City. David explains 'We're a bit like a poor man's version of Rothar. We want to bring the bikes back to the workingman'.

The CTDG sees the space as more than just a workshop. Those involved are expanding it's use to include a kind of Men's Shed where older Traveller men can meet on Thursday evenings to discuss what is important to them. Mincéirs Whiden is Cant for 'Travellers Talking'. There are plans for cycling groups to use the canal cycle-way for day trips. People can cycle bikes built by Traveller men, borrowing from their ancestors' traditions in every

aspect. There are art projects and history days, a photography exhibition highlighting Travellers long association with bicycling.

When asked if their being Travellers hinders their job opportunities the young men responded, 'We don't tend to tell them'. David sees the mechanic course as a way out, 'While there's always been an aspect of discrimination in employment from the mainstream we'd hope there is potential here for self-employment. It's a low investment startup. You can setup from home.'

David is a Barrister and Traveller activist, a man of many talents he has traced his Traveller roots back to about 1770 and what he calls 'a crowd of mad tinkers from Westmeath!'. We met up with him again at an action at Fingal County Council offices in December. The large crowd was there to highlight the case of the extended McDonnell family. Geraldine McDonnell explained her family's plight.

'Our family have been living on Dunsink Lane for the last 15 years. There are 4 generations of our family on site from 3 months to grandparents in their 60's. We've got no electricity, no running

We want to bring the bikes back to the workingman.



water and no flush toilet. We've got no services on site save for what we provide ourselves. Mothers getting up in the middle of the night with no electricity to heat bottles for newborn babies and no fridges to keep them in. 'The families here have been struggling through almost two decades of broken promises and abandoned Council Traveller Programmes but their case is being used as a totem now to focus attention on the plight of Ireland's most maligned native ethnic group. Catherine's nephew David tells us 'I've spent more than half my life on Dunsink Lane', the families use toilet portacabins they bought themselves and have to pay €6 to use shower facilities in the local swimming pool.

Catherine Joyce, Chair of the Irish Travellers' Movement (ITM), expanded on the protestors' demands, 'We're asking the council to provide the accommodation that they said they'd provide, not just in the new plan but in their three previous plans. The McDonnell family and other families are in the three programmes that we've seen out. We're calling on Minister Hogan to use his discretionary powers – look at local authorities that haven't

provided, haven't spent their budgets and force them into provision.'

The ITM is basing current activities on its founding principle – Travellers are an ethnic group. For Catherine this recognition is vital, 'If our ethnicity is recognised we will have a much stronger position to campaign for our other rights in accommodation, education, health, employment and justice'. While the state does recognise Travellers as a separate cultural group it won't concede 'ethnicity'.

But how does this notion of ethnicity have any practical impact on the men in Crossbar Bikes or the families on Dunsink Lane? Dr. Robbie McVeigh, a prominent activist and academic in inequality research has written at length about 'ethnicity denial' how this lack of recognition leads to internalisation of oppression. Catherine Joyce expanded 'Oppressed minorities across Europe have fared badly at school and in employment and these communities have seen alcohol and drug abuse rise. These issues lead to exclusion from mainstream society.'

There are direct, immediate implications from

the way our laws are drafted without ethnic provision, as David explains 'I'm talking about legislation around control of horses; that kind of legislation has direct impact on the traveller community and that is a form of denial.'

So there is a practical side to this demand for recognition. We afford Travellers all the impact of racism in this society without granting them the one damning aspect of racism that they could turn to some advantage, ethnic difference.

Councils consistently underspend their allotted budgets for Traveller accommodation, to the extent of tens of millions. It's a form of internalized Irish racism but as a society we let it slide, sure it's not really racist we say. Meanwhile those who suffer are living in rat-infested, inhospitable housing around Blanchardstown and across the country.

Catherine Joyce makes it clear, 'Recognition would signal for us that we live in a society that values us and our way of life.'

For the full interview with David Joyce & Catherine Joyce visit rabble.ie

Recognition
would signal
for us that
we live in a
society that
values us and
our way of life.



Scene Report

Go Wesht

A new radio doc produced by John Lillis and Peter Curtin for SPIN South West covers hip-hop scene in Shannon. It's called Show N' Prove: The Story of Shannon

Hip-Hop, looks at the wider role of hip-hop in Shannon as well as focussing on specific artists, God Knows and Bubba Jay.



Ireland is going through a fertile time for music at the minute. How are you finding it?

MynameisJohn: Yup, its all pretty lovely right now. I think Ireland goes through a lot of cultural shifts in terms of music, with certain genres getting more shine or having really productive, inspiring eras. Definitely right now there's a lot of interesting artists doing stuff - I'd be equally as excited about what all the Working Class lads are doing, as I am about hearing some of the noise acts in Cork or the fresh traditional coming out of Clare. A lot of the music around right now seems to be of a really high standard, but then it did 5 years ago as well.

God Knows: I feel that now is a good time in Ireland for music, because the people out there are really making music for themselves, rather than following a path that everyone has already been down. It's like they took their time to really find who they are and what it is they want to do, instead of just fitting the usual stereotypes. For me, I think someone like Lethal Dialect is the kind of guy who isn't afraid to have a bit of fun with his music, but still take it serious. There's more freedom in the discipline now. I can only mention the guys i know in hiphop though, cause I ain't following the trad and noise scene too much.

That freedom in the discipline. Is there is a confidence in hip hop allowing deviation from all the usual expectations?

God Knows: From my perspective, yes because of the new generation of Hip Hop are more comfortable in their skin and are willing to do a lot

more with their talent which allows a little more room to not conform to "the norm". In my opinion there is a lot more passion coming from a lot of us which can only grow as the scene develops.

mynameisJohn: Yeah definitely. I think the old stigma of 'Irish people shouldn't rap is slowly disintegrating. Again, people are now making music that's of a real high standard, not just a high standard in Ireland. I do think that there's still a lot of work to be done in terms of live shows - a lot of dudes I meet through work are just interested in rapping and have no real concept of how to make the music bang in a live context, or really take ownership of the production or whatever. But, that said, I get more hyped about some of the Irish stuff getting released than say the new Danny Brown. And I quite like Danny Brown. It's exciting for sure.

Live is key in challenging those perceptions. Stevie G has also talked about the necessity of getting into the studio. He's seen so many come and go with very little record of their best. Tell us about Ennis and Random Acts of Kindness. How important do you think it is for people to build up something for themselves in that environment across most Irish towns?

mynameisJohn: I'm from Ennis originally and have a lot of pride in the home county. Like any town in Ireland, the recession hit it pretty hard and suddenly you're left with an urban area that's just a series of closed down businesses. But there's some cool younger heads out there who are doing their thing and trying to change the cultural view of the town. Things won't change too much until someone closes down those lowest common

denominator nightclubs though. In relation to building your own scene, it's the most important thing. For yourself, for your friends, for the next generation. Music can change society, or at least the cultural landscape of a small town.

God Knows: Random Acts of Kindness is a label, and in my opinion, a movement that I started because I felt there was nothing for us. Myself and my friends had a rap group called True Blood Soldierz when we were teenagers and then it felt like it was time to move and build something new. I started RAOK, transforming it from just a rap group into a collective of talented graphic designers, videographers, producers, singer/songwriters, and rappers. We creating a movement that's not just my friends that are involved - my brothers and a bunch of youth from around the way are all a part. I believe we are creating a scene rather than waiting for people to make one, like Stevie G said - not enough heads recording. Well, we're taking advantage of every right opportunity; you gotta play the game to change the game.

Lots of interesting stuff happening in the 80/160 soup at the minute including your new EP. West of Ireland is the original fastchat. Was there any particular approach you took and what kind stuff are ye drawing on at the moment?

mynameisJohn: The 80/160bpm stuff came about from DJing, and just hanging out with Graeme S, to be honest. Graeme is a boss, a producer who can turn his hand to anything and always stays up to date with what's going on in electronic music. We both felt that there was a lot of potential to switch the tempo from half-time to double time, and we knew God Knows was the only MC around

who would really do it justice. And, as a trio, we just all gel real well. Hanging out and making music is fun and we spend a lot of time laughing and drinking, which you just don't get all the time in collaborations. But we're all keen to do our own thing and work on separate projects, and we still know that the bond is there, ready to bash out new stuff when the time is right.

Trying to stay as open as possible. I've been listening to less electronic stuff over the last couple of months, and just searching for other exciting sounds. So far today, the stereo has been banging out Costello, Woven Skull, BBNG, Tod Dockstader and myself and God Knows are now literally bouncing around my kitchen to that DJ EZ mix from last year.

God Knows: I wanted to address a few issues in Ireland that were on my mind and The Struggle EP was the right feel that let me channel into the state of mind and express myself. At the moment I am still listening to Pusha T's My Name Is My Name & Danny Brown's Old. Everything else is in house: I am listening to mostly my team's music.

Any shouts?

Shout out to all animals, minerals and vegetables out there. Stay energized. AND OUR MUMS.

'The Struggle EP' by Graeme S, MynameisJohn and God Knows is available to purchase on Bandcamp.

take five

*It's an
Xmas special
with a distinctly
traditional
twist...*

SEASON TO BE MERRY? SEASON TO TAKE A MACHINE GUN TO THE STREETS A LA MICHAEL DOUGLAS MORE LIKE. "CAN ANYBODY TELL ME WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?!" A HEARTFELT 'BAH HUMBUG' FROM ALL HERE AT RABBLE TOWERS!

01

Christmas Jumpers

This pursuit was, until recently, confined only to the realm of cute grandads and Gay Byrne. Not, unfortunately, anymore. The silly christmas jumper has become a rampant scourge of our nation, and has succeeded, along with the recent import of 'The Twelve Pubs of Christmas', in rendering the first three and a half weeks of December completely unbearable for anyone looking for a good old fashioned Yuletide knees-up. You know the ones. Travel in packs. Not too bright. Inclination towards mind-numbing subservient occupations. A startling lack of experience with alcohol. Total messes within three hours. This is a fairly recent phenomenon, and one can't help but think, "How could you possibly think that what you are doing is humorous, you twats?" as they pour in the door, all jumper and antler, wrapped in a tangle of fairy lights, flashing more than a French pervert. Oh for the days way back when (aka four years ago), that one could simply enjoy a yuletide ale in some cosy tavern without being surrounded by dickheads.

02

The Twelve Pubs

See above and add vomit.

03

Midnight Mass

It doesn't matter that you're 35, an atheist and a militant pro-choicer. When it come to xmas mass the umbilical cord might as well never been cut. The only compromise in this entrenched, unwinnable war is midnight Mass. Not only does this keep the family, the ones that didn't get out, happy but it allows you to spend the six hours beforehand lashing back pints, catching up with your mates who stayed in the village and avoiding that third cousin you snogged at the school disco in fourth year. The only draw back is one pint too many and you'll raise up in a Lady MacBeth like un-sex me now moment just as the body of Christ is hoisted above the congregated to denounce their hypocrisy, regale them with a litany of the Catholic Churches abuses and rip your bodice asunder. Now try explaining that to the Mammy over the fry tomorrow morning. Or you could be lucky and be a Protestant.

04

Selection boxes

Chocolate. Where would we be without chocolate? Well with lower rates of diabetes, tooth decay and heart disease probably. But who doesn't like a tooth-curling treat after you've had the turkey and ham dinner, pudding and custard, boozy coffees with cream and a few pints? Sure it's only the one. Only it isn't, is it? One Superman V and a Mary Poppins later the blood sugar levels are through the roof. The only thing more terrifying than the palpitations and manic giggling is the knowledge that in half an hour you're going to be a headachy, mess sobbing 'don't look at me' as they come crashing down.

05

Corned Beef

Not the lard encrusted stuff you get from a can, and your gran could get a dozen sangwiches and a dinner's worth of fritters outta, but the spice encrusted variety favored by the Irish as part of their xmas gluttony. The further south, into the land of the grazier class be-jaysus, you go the more likely you are to be served up a plate of this festive delicacy. Apparently this carnivorous treat has ancient antecedent. Back in the 12th century when the bards walked bare chested and proud, their locks flowing in the wind surrounded by bare-breasted maidens, Kings used to eat corned beef, along with imported wine and olives... while the rest of the plebs got buttermilk or something.

IT WAS MY EARLY TWENTIES WHEN HE FIRST SHOWED UP. I REMEMBER IT AS IF IT WAS YESTERDAY...

STROLLING BACK THROUGH TOWN AFTER AN AMAZING PARTY. THINK I EVEN GOT OFF WITH SOMEONE.

THE SENSATION GOT STRONGER AND STRONGER...

BUT SOMETHING WASN'T QUITE RIGHT.

THERE WAS SOMETHING IN THE AIR.

IT FELT LIKE SOMETHING WAS ... COMING.

AND THERE HE WAS.

JESUS YOU MUST BE FUCKIN' WRECKED AFTER THAT. GREAT BUZZ ALL THE SAME. YOU WERE HILARIOUS!

DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR MAN SHOVING PILLS UP HIS ARSE? HA!

OR WHEN YOU PISSED IN THE SINK WHILE YOUR ONE WAS ON THE JAX? PRICELESS.

SHE WAS MAD INTO YOU THOUGH ...

TILL YOU TOLD HER YOU LOVED HER WHILE PUKING ON HER SHOES.

NOW SHE'S PROBABLY LAUGHING ABOUT YOU WITH HER FRIENDS, YOU CUNT!

TUNE IN NEXT TIME FOR

THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF
HARRY HANGOVER

AND HIS WICKEDLY WHACKY GANG OF
MINDFUCKING MISCREANTS!

Brian Burke

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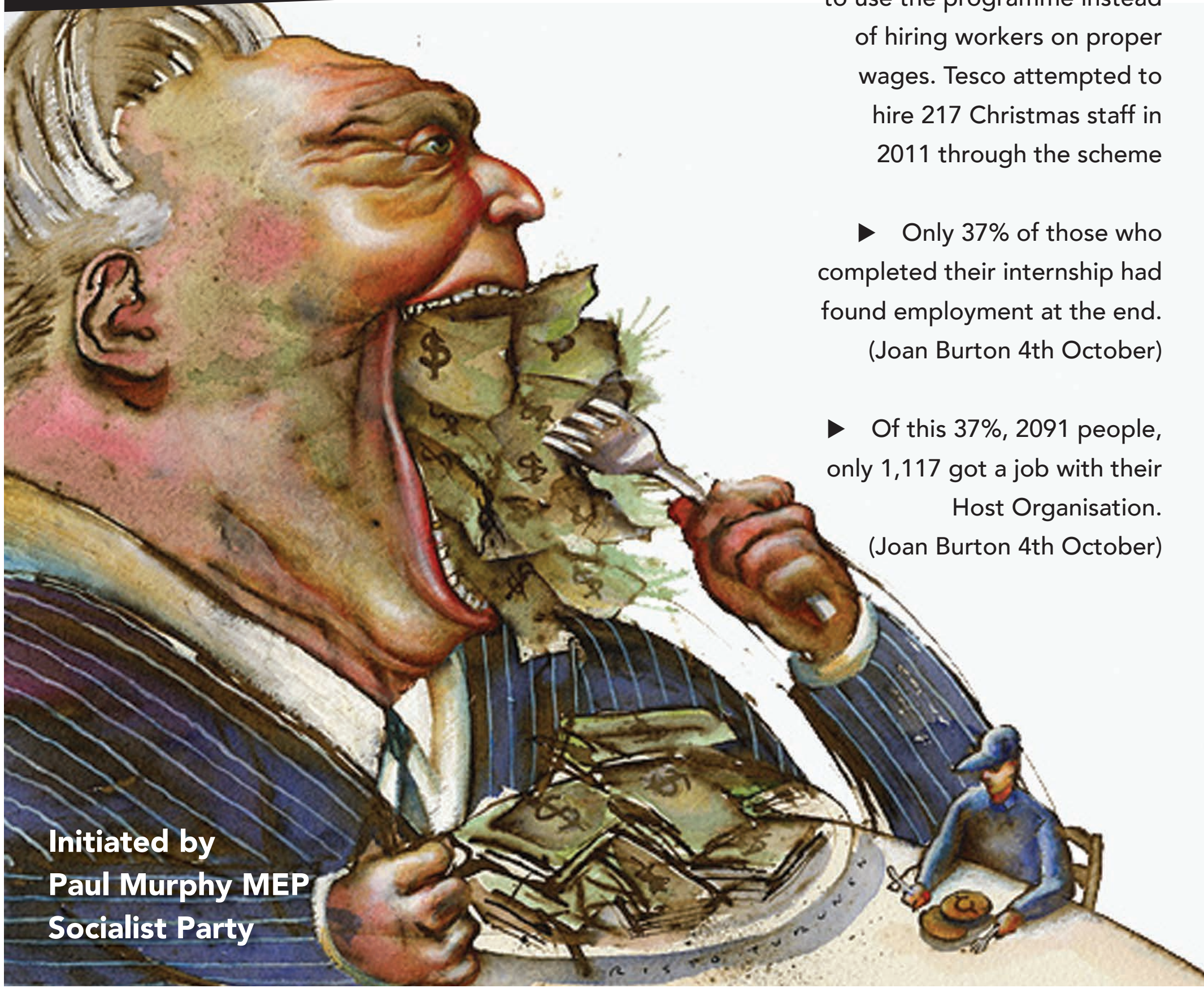
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► Huge multinationals like Tesco, O2 Telefonica and GlaxoSmithKline are attempting to use the programme instead of hiring workers on proper wages. Tesco attempted to hire 217 Christmas staff in 2011 through the scheme

► Only 37% of those who completed their internship had found employment at the end.
(Joan Burton 4th October)

► Of this 37%, 2091 people, only 1,117 got a job with their Host Organisation.
(Joan Burton 4th October)

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TRouble BREWING
IRISH CRAFT BEER

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OTHER THAN
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USUAL?

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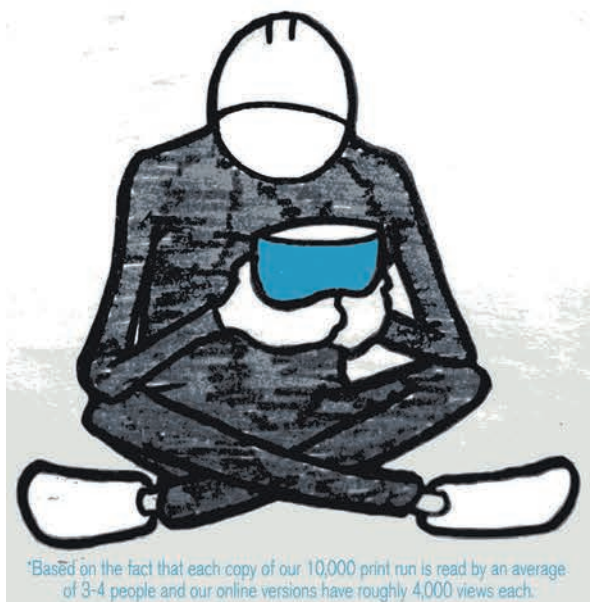
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WHITE LADY ART

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HORRORSCOPES

OUR REGULAR INSTALMENT OF CELESTIAL GUIDANCE FROM OUR RESIDENT ASTROLOGISTS, TRAGIC TERRY AND THE MAGIC COWBOY, ALONG WITH THIS ISSUE'S SPECIAL GUEST SOOTHSAYER, CHADWICK ST. PAPPAN.

SAGITTARIUS DEC 22-JAN 19

The New Year promises much but delivers fuck all. This is your life Sagittarius, and it shows no sign of changing any time soon, as you quickly slip back into the same old habits of half-arsed mediocrity, forever blaming all and sundry for your own shortcomings. Maybe try an arts and crafts course, or leaving the house once a week. Brendan O'Connor is not better than Ryan Tubridy, they're both complete shits.



CAPRICORN DEC 22-JAN 19

As we enter the year of the horse you may want to consider placing a reckless wager on a nag or two, for the chances of monetary gain from any kind of legal employment are fast dwindling. Entrepreneurial matters aside, your romantic pursuits are finally showing signs of improving as we enter the festive season and every moron with an office job and a stupid jumper decides that it's acceptable to go home with some vacuous, irritating twat in flashing antlers.



AQUARIUS JAN 20-FEB 18

Ah, Aquarius! Some craic 2013 was, and 2014 is set to be even better, filled with fantastic sex, whopper sessions, amazing financial opportunities and the best, funniest and most loyal friends anyone could ever wish for. As you sit around the fire this yuletide, sipping brandies and fondly regaling your attentive fans with epic stories of the year gone by, try to take a moment to think of those of less fortunate starsigns than yourself.



PISCES FEB 19-MAR 20

As the sun's polarity switches, equally unlikely events may cause you to question the sanity of those around you. Your over reliance on horoscopes leaves you feeling desperate and dependent, and likewise, as we approach the end of another year, you may find yourself questioning every choice you have made up until now, and rightly so! Be wary of those who come bearing gifts, as well as bearded men and children. Red and white bring bad tidings.



ARIES MAR 21-APR 19

Never one to back down from a challenge, try going head to head with someone your own size for once. You may find yourself choking on the fumes of the bridges you've burned as those you've been trampling on rear their ugly heads, as you deservedly gorge yourself on the fruits of your labour. Be careful not to gag on the small seeds of discontent however, and remember, the largest trees can grow from even the tiniest, most bitter pips. Grey is not your colour.



TAURUS APR 20-MAY 20

Before you try and change the world Taurus, maybe you should consider starting with your own wardrobe. Beware of polyester this month, as well as polyunsaturates. Step back from picket fence rivalries which may spill over into areas of your life you would rather keep private, and thus dull the shining star of your creativity. Beware of foreigners in the company of fair haired children.



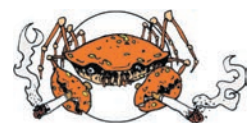
GEMINI MAY 21-JUN 20

If all the world is a stage, Gemini, then maybe it's time to lend a hand backstage for while. You've had an easy ride of late, but things are about to get pretty bumpy, so roll your sleeves up and get stuck in! You might even discover that you have yet another hidden talent. The Heron brings bad tidings this month, as do the colours red, blue, green, pink, burgundy, beige and metallic aqua marine.



CANCER JUN 21-JUL 22

The chances of you moving on lessen with the passing of every drab decade. Mother's apron strings could well become a noose, and although auto-asphyxiation may very well still yet hitherto thus far indeed actually in truth just possibly perhaps prove to be the ultimate thrill that this existence has to offer, it would be wise to remember that some of the greatest minds of our generation have thrown it all away in search of the most extreme load-blow.



LEO JUL 23-AUG 22

Cancelled due to lack of interest.



VIRGO AUG 23-SEP 22

Well done Virgo! You always get the job done, no matter what the obstacle. Always ready to impress, your persistence and perseverance have consistently ensured your favour with your superiors. A wild weekend in London may be on the oyster cards, and if your boss hasn't already succumbed to your pathetic pandering, then this just may be the chance you've been waiting for!



LIBRA SEP 23-OCT 22

You are one of a kind. Your desire for social change is matched only by your desire for small Indian trinkets. Try watching a soap opera or two. Emmerdale is alright, as are the Aussie classics, though it all really depends what you're into... similarly you could pretend you're above all that and watch hour long HBO episodes of equally lamentable tripe trotted out by similarly inept actors and convince yourself it makes you more valid as a human. Watch out for buses.



SCORPIO OCT 23-NOV 21

Sometimes you have to turn left three times to go right Scorpio, but beware of jumping the gun. A well meaning visitor may prove a fly in the ointment, especially as we approach the festive season. Don't be too quick to jump to conclusions, and don't forget to turn off the heating before you go out on Friday. Remember what happened last time dickhead.



Occupy Wall Street bought \$15m personal medical debt and wrote it off in 'rolling jubilee'. Buying the debt for \$400k highlighted the cruel

nature of these debt sales when sick people's lives are literally traded for profit.



OSMOSIS

"Come on out here, yis pricks!" Jimmy roared as Dermo rounded the corner onto North Wall Quay. "Yis are supposed to be lookin' after us, not those rich fuckers in there".

Dermo kept his head down and walked in a wide arc to avoid Jimmy, but besides the two guards patrolling the top of the wall, they were the only two souls about.

"Ari' Dermo?" Jimmy shouted. "Gotta smoke?"

"Ari' Jimmy? Yeah, no bother."

Dermo looked up at the two guards as he handed Jimmy a cigarette and held out the lighter. They looked tired, leaning on their rifles. Dermo thought it must piss them off not to use the guns; to just take this little bottle-throwing bollix out. Bang-bang. Dead.

The cigarette caught, and Jimmy dragged on it.

Too much hassle, Dermo concluded. Too much bad press. The guards and their superiors had learned a few lessons from the Israelis in the PR management of segregation.

"Giving these lads a tough time, Jimmy?" Dermo asked.

Jimmy kept his eyes on the end of the cigarette as he dragged on it.

"Ah yeah, same as I'm supposed to, yeh know? Sure there's fuck all else to be doing out here".

Dermo didn't like to stay in Jimmy's company for too long. He was a grand lad, and Dermo had his dealings with him through the resistance movement, but he'd to be on his way.

"Headin' on, Jimmy".

"No worries. Sound for the smoke. How's Janine, by the way? With the baba an' all?"

"Grand, Jimmy, thanks. She's nearly there, butsher what can you do?"

He looked at the ground.

"Good luck, Jimmy."

"G'luck Dermo".

The three-storey perimeter wall stretched all the way down to the Custom House - the seat of the administration inside the wall since the IFSC had declared its independence. As Dermo looked across to the tops of the ruined buildings on the opposite side of the river, the gravestones of havens reincarnated inside the wall, he could see the outpost guards of the administration ready to act if any major hassle were to break out down below. Beyond, hidden by clouds of rubble and debris, were the Dublin and Wicklow mountains, where he'd left Janine earlier that day.

"What were we thinking?" Janine cried, in the early hours of the morning. "Trying to have a baby here? In this?"

Dermo didn't have an answer. After Ireland's expulsion from the EU over its refusal to negotiate its corporate tax rate, and the sanctions that had followed, the flow of goods had gradually started to dry up. As the years went on, even contraception and medical equipment were in short supply. The Red Cross hospitals were overwhelmed. Giving birth outside the wall was not only unsafe for the infant, but a gamble for the mother.

Still looking across the river, Dermo saw two boys of ten or eleven running down a side street, away from the river. A firework screeched up towards the top of one of the buildings. Dermo saw the guards on the roof scurrying to see where the noise had come from, then track the two boys around the side of the building from above. The boys laughed as they ran away, looking up at the guards and giving them the finger.

Dermo reached the Custom House and sat on the steps facing the river. Fog and dust moved east with the water from above. There was a knock on metal behind him. He stood and approached the huge iron double-door, looking at the small security camera above. One of the doors opened a few inches.

"Its yourself" said a male voice from behind the door.

"Yeah".

"Here's the, eh... yoke. You'll have to put it somewhere near the middle of the second or third floor, now. For it to work properly, yeh know? 'Cos if it doesn't work properly, we don't keep our end of the agreement."

"I know yeah" Dermo scowled. "Shouldn't be any bother".

A backpack emerged from the gap in the door. Dermo was taken aback by how small it was: a child's schoolbag.

"And you know... where to collect her an' all?" Dermo went on. "It'll have to be soon, her waters broke there this morning."

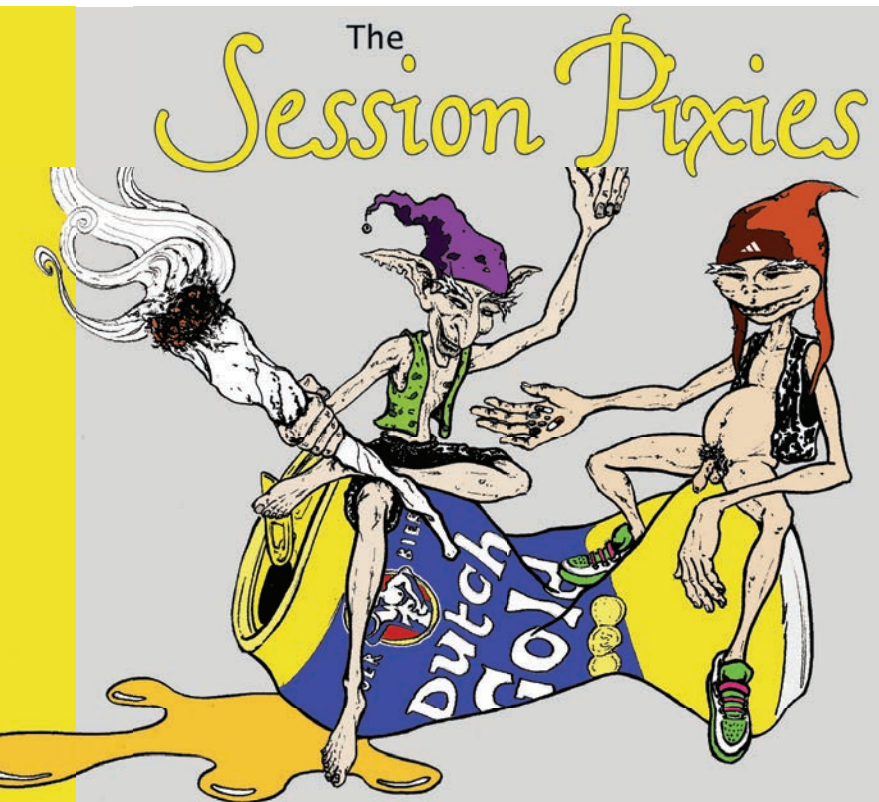
"Look, you take care of that," a finger emerged and pointed at the schoolbag. "And we'll look after her. Got the top docs in here we do, and we can chopper her to London if needs be".

Dermo looked at the bag, descended a few of the steps, and craned his neck to look up at Liberty Hall. It looked empty. It probably was, other than the odd squatter. It was more a symbol these days.

Words by Niall Murphy

Illustration by Dara Lynch

Send your flash
fiction to
info@rabble.ie



WHILE SANTA'S ELVES ARE SLAVING AWAY CONSTRUCTING TRAIN SETS AND TRICYCLES FOR A MEASLY EXTRA 50 EURO A WEEK UNDER THE NEW NORTH POLE JOBBRIDGE DEAL, THE SESSION PIXIES ARE KICKING BACK AND CRACKING OPEN A BOTTLE OF YOUR AUL ONE'S BRANDY AS THEY GEAR UP FOR THIS YEAR'S FESTIVE FROLICS.

Dear Session Pixies,

I bought my elderly grandfather a bottle of 12 year old Jameson for Christmas this year, as he is quite fond of a wee nip. Problem is, I had a bit of a shindig on the weekend and ended up knocking the whole thing back with a gang of fucking weirdos I invited back to mine on Saturday night. I've no idea who the fuck they were and I'm flat broke, what should I do?!

Maggie, Lucan

Dear John,

Seems to us you've two options. One, you could go rob a bottle from Dunnes in Stephen's Green. It's handy enough and on the off chance you do get caught you can probably get away with bawling your eyes out. Two (or if you've any previous convictions), fill the empty bottle up with water and a drop of soy sauce. The senile old fucker wont notice a thing.

Dear Session Pixies,

I was at a party last week and it was

shit. How do I avoid this?

Ciara, Sutton

Dear Ciara,

The party got pretty good after you left. Sincerely,
The Session Pixies

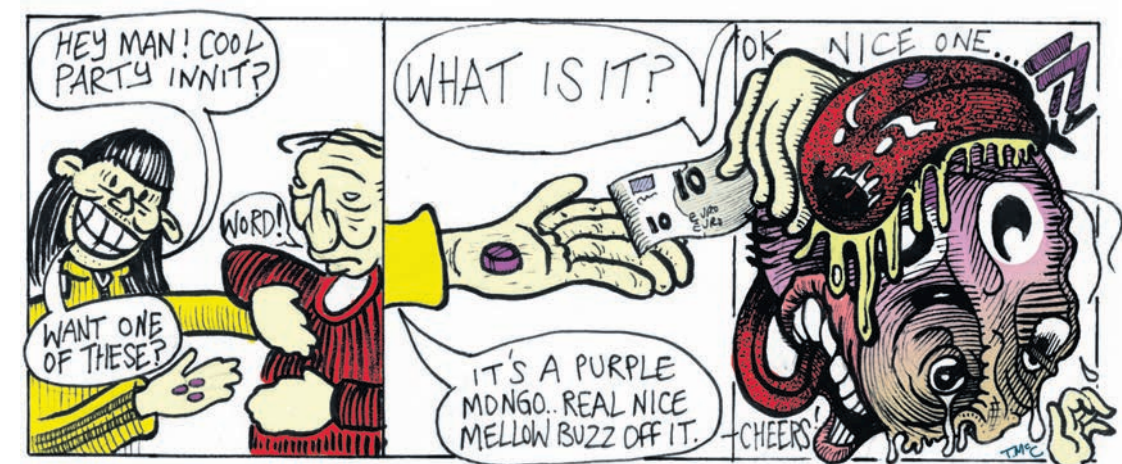
Dear Session Pixies,

I was recently out with a pal of long standing, I assure you. As it happened, we chanced into one of the city's most renowned, up-and-coming eatery slash drinkerys. Whilst dining, we were harassed enthusiastically by some plain Jane, with a friend who, I might add, was quite larger than life (if you follow my meaning). I tried to resist, honestly, but it was ultimately quite futile. She insisted I take her digits, and thereby forthwith instructing I contact her immediately I was home, which I did, most reluctantly, rest assured. This unfortunately led to a weekly piss-up in said tavern, I'm afraid, which only led to stranger and stranger encounters with those of increasingly opposite sexes, until I found myself, quite frankly, on... sigh... sale, to windy-necked, bap-allergic, rambunctious, all night party boys in Belfast at tuppence a go. Thankfully that's all behind me now, and I can proudly insist that I am a man of quite high regard. My problem, dear pixies, is this: Sometimes I pine for those nights of wild abandon. As I watch, moist eyed and full of sentimental yearning, as my fellows witter on endlessly on the plight of the modern economic pioneer and such, I long for those long nights of hard liquor, jenkem, glue, poppers and whizz. Am I a bad man?

Eamon, The Dáil

Dear Eamon,

Yes.



THE WIDOW'S CURSE

PISEOGS ARE THE DISAPPEARING, PECULIARLY IRISH, SUPERSTITIONS THAT ATTEND EVERY ASPECT OF HUMAN BEHAVIOUR. IAN Ó LOINGSIGH TAKES US BACK TO THE DAYS WHEN THE ACT OF CURSING IMPLIED SOMETHING SLIGHTLY MORE SINISTER THAN CALLING YOUR FRIEND A FUCKHEAD FOR ROBBING YOUR FLIP-FLOPS.

One often wonders what has become of that famous Irish spunk that we're all supposed to be full of. Siphoned off by weekly rituals of city-centre mental obliteration, compromised in consistency by an unhealthy diet of TV and cultural insecurity, only to be dried up within the kleenex of inertia and societal ennui. It often seems that our fierce sponc has all but crusted over and flaked away, and with it, our worldwide reputation for being fighters, lovers and dreamers. In ages past, violent forms of revenge upon our tyrants and oppressors were far more commonly indulged in, but forget about the Whiteboys and the Ribbonmen: it was the actions of elderly widows, and in particular their specialised brand of supernatural class warfare, which could really put the wind up landlords. Thus showing equivalent acts of violent energetic revenge with male regenerative substances to be nonsensical and redundant.

Folklore, in documenting how people viewed the world around them, is not shy when it comes to expressing the vitriol and rage which was felt against the upper classes. Legends which describe widows cursing their landlord have enjoyed widespread popularity in this country, particularly in the wake of the evictions which spread across the country following the Great Famine. These stories detail the ultra-violent revenge which was reportedly waged upon the landlord who happened to evict a poor widow from her home. As

the most vulnerable member of society, the widow's power to curse people via ritual, imprecation and prayer, seemed to stem from her perceived powerlessness at the time. The most common of these rituals involved the widow kneeling down, sometimes in an area of strategic importance eg. outside the home of the intended target. This act could also be coupled with the widow raising her arms in the air and praying destruction upon her target.

The curse could cause ill fortune or bad luck to follow the target and his family for seven generations. So that a male member of each generation of the family would meet 'with either a violent or an untimely or some other kind of tragic end'. It could also cause the target's prized land and livestock to die away:

'The animals did not prosper and the majority died on it. When he would put the seed into the ground nothing would grow in its place but brambles and thistles. The potatoes also decayed... They used to blacken again in the ground'. Alternatively, it could simply cause an immediate and painful death: 'He got on his horse, he was riding a horse, he was a good horseman, he had two mile to ride then to the Big House; and when he landed at the Big House he was hardly able to get off his horse, with illness, and him a young man at the time. He lived three days, and [then] he died.'

It wasn't just landlords who were liable to be cursed by the widow. Any powerful male who acted against her best interests could find themselves regretting their actions with bailiffs, agents, land-grabbers and lords all coming under the terrifying power of her curse.

The thing to note about these legends, even if one does take their veracity with a pinch of salt, is that they were not only fanciful stories. As any good student of folklore knows, the life of a folk legend is usually bolstered by a level of belief in the events described. In this respect, stories involving the widow's curse are no different. A court case which was reported in the Kildare Observer in May 1881, describing a widow who knelt down and cursed the landlord who wished to evict her, is testament to the

gravity with which such situations were taken at the time. Another thing which is clear from this newspaper report, as well as others, is that real-life widow's were capable of utilising the motifs in the stories in order to empower themselves.

One wonders about other real life situations which could have strengthened belief in the widow's ability to curse. The well-documented history of the de la Poer Beresford family of Curraghmore house, Co. Waterford, undoubtedly did. The deaths of male members for seven generations of the family undoubtedly served to do just this, and to this day legends regarding the widow's curse are more common in this area of the country than in any other.

Psychosomatic responses to certain external stimuli are a real and documented phenomenon. In the case of the widow's curse, we can only speculate on the results of this type of response on those people who believed not only in the efficacy of the curse, but also in their own personal guilt in the situation. One is reminded in this respect of stories involving the imprecations of Lodowick Muggleton, a key figure of the Muggletonian religious movement which developed in seventeenth century London. Apparently, the curses which he was so fond of uttering, gave rise to 'spectacular incidents, in which the power of auto-suggestion seems to have brought about the rapid demise of several victims.' One of these 'spectacular incidents', apparently led to one of Muggleton's targets being struck dumb, falling sick and dying ten days after being cursed.

As we all know, there is a current bunch of wealthy and powerful males in this country, as well as a large section of discontented elderly people, who along with many other vulnerable groups in society are being forced to pay severely for the financial frivolities of a greedy and short-sighted minority. I don't think I am the only one who would welcome the sight of gangs of blue-rinsed elderly women kneeling down at the gates of the Dáil, muttering dire curses, condemning each and every one of those responsible to a violent, untimely death.

The Price We Pay

RONAN BURTENSHAW EXAMINES THE STATE OF THE NATION FOR IRELAND'S YOUTH. FROM INTERNSHIPS TO PRECARIOUS EMPLOYMENT, WHAT IS THE REALITY BEHIND THE FIGURES?

Young people in the west increasingly find themselves with worse standards of living and career prospects than their parents. But is there really a crisis of young people here and abroad? And, if so, why?

Unite economist Michael Taft puts it strongly, "don't be under any illusions. There is an economic war being waged against young people. It is being fought on a number of fronts: education, social protection, labour market... Young people are no longer being raised to be the subjects of tomorrow. Today, they are being turned into mere objects."

Unemployment for young people in Ireland has consistently hovered around 30% since the crash. Our PIIGS comrades are in even worse state. But better-performing OECD states like the UK and Sweden also have crisis-level unemployment for young people. For a variety of reasons youth unemployment tends to be higher than the rest - but not on this scale. In the 1960s the US and Canada were the only OECD economies to have youth unemployment over 10 percent. Now all but two are in double-figures, with most well into the 20s.

When young people find work it's likely to be poorly paid, insecure and unprotected. Unsurprisingly, Ireland is a market leader in this field. 25% of the workforce is in part-time employment, around half involuntarily, with 135,000 people classified as underemployed. That's the highest number in the EU. A survey by Mandate trade union into their members in the bar and retail sector found that less than one-third had full-time contracts, half had their hours changed

at least once a month and 60% were seeking additional hours they could not get.

A rare foray of research into zero-hour contracts in Ireland this year discovered that 90% of McDonald's workers work with no guarantee of hours and can be sent home at a moment's notice with minimal pay. Domino's Pizza and Burger King were similarly atrocious. And one in five of those in work in Ireland are poor.

Then there's internships, figures for which are hard to come by. But, as an indicator, the number of people in state-run 'labour activation' schemes, such as JobBridge, has nearly doubled in four years - from 45,000 to 86,000. A JobBridge intern working an average week of 40 hours makes €3.75 per hour, less than half the standard minimum wage of €8.65. And the intern economy is massively expanding in the US, where we should be looking for trends. In 1992 17% of college graduates took on an internship. By 2008 that number was 50%.

Across the OECD the benefits young people receive from the state have also been under attack. What we've seen in Ireland - such as a 1,579% increase in university fees between 1995 and 2015, specific cuts of between €2-4,000 per year from young people's dole as well as general cuts to things that disproportionately affect young people like rent allowance, tax rebates and single parents benefits - are repeated across the West.

Shane Fitzgerald of youth campaign group We're Not Leaving argues that we're seeing young workers used by capital to resolve the crisis. "To escape the crisis it must build a new precarious workforce with less pay, less rights and

less security than the generations that have gone before. This is the disciplining we see in mass youth unemployment, age-specific welfare cuts, internship culture and jobbridge." But, if this is the role young people are serving, what is its future?

One possibility is that young people are seeing a glimpse of what is to come for workers in general. But this presents a big problem for capitalism. Western economies are suffering a chronic lack of domestic demand. If these conditions are repeated for the working population as a whole there might not be enough money around the place to soak up what is produced.

Another possibility, trends continuing, is that the young precariat is to be made a labour pool of exception. An indigenous supply of cheap labour to help western economies compete with those in, say, southeast Asia. If this pans out we can expect to see an increase in young workers being targeted specifically - written out of protections and guarantees, subject to different requirements and paid less than older workers for the same jobs.

The picture isn't pretty. But the reasons for it are not hard to understand. The young are being hit because they're soft targets. Not organised, not active. Less interested in politics, less likely to vote. More likely to take it on the chin or just up sticks and emigrate.

Maybe somewhere between dole queues, fee hikes and internships a penny will drop. There's a price to pay for not giving a shit.

Photo by Paul Reynolds



Poster!

Jump to the centre for a Jason Kearney collage called "We're Not Leaving."