



The Christians' Chronicle



SIDNEY HILL



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IRELAND REWRITTEN



A modern Celtic Revival is sweeping across Ireland today with the Irish language enjoying a huge surge in popularity, a movement many attribute to the emergence and influence of hip-hop music band, Kneecap.

A revitalised interest in Irish tradition, language and Irish language media has seen Pop-up Gaeltachts and classes multiply in centres across Ireland and the UK, with the Irish media hooked on this 'borradh' or surge.

Leading the revolution is Kneecap, a hip-hop group based in Northern Ireland, who use Irish in many of their songs. Reaching hundreds of millions of plays that have especially influenced the youth, Kneecap rap about Irish culture, advocating for Irish unity, with an intensity and passion that seems to be energising the younger generations.

Recently Conradh na Gaeilge held a vote on whether to support a united Ireland, which won with only a handful of votes not in favour. This is the first time in history CnaG supported a united Ireland; they never took this position before, during or after the War of Independence.

It has been observed that the majority of voters were young people - the "Good Friday Generation" - signifying a shift in the modern ideals of the Irish youth.

Outside of music, Irish movies have been breaking records in recent years. An Cailín Ciúin, adapted from Claire Keegan's masterpiece, Foster, was a huge cultural success. Nominated for an Oscar as Best International Feature Film, it became the first Irish language movie to ever be nominated.

2024 saw the release of Crá, a murder mystery series, which was nominated for best drama at the Irish Film Awards. Later this month two new Irish movies are being released, Báite and Aontas, with both being highly praised at their respective premiers.

TV channel TG4 is thriving in modern day Ireland, enjoying the highest audience share they've had since 2009.

Offline, a group of eight people in Dundalk decided to set up a pop-up Gaeltacht in a local pub. As the night passed, tens of people stuck around once they found out Irish was being spoken. Using a Whatsapp group to organise future meetings, 15 more pop-up Gaeltachts were organised. The group ended the year with over 150 members.

This isn't an isolated occurrence: every week half a dozen Irish gatherings are hosted across Ireland, meshing the language with modern day activities, like Zumba classes, and differing cultures, like a night of Tapas.

It is clear the Irish language is heading in a positive direction, spearheaded by Kneecap, and it's thriving amongst the youth. This marks the start of a modern Celtic Revival: mar a deirtear, 'mol an óige agus tíocheaidh sí'.

- Oscar de Róiste

**TÍR GAN TEANGA,
TÍR GAN ANAM**



**ROY KEANE
DROPS IN
PAGE 16**



**THE PLOUGH AND
THE STARS 1ST
CENTENARY SHOW
PAGE 3**



**TRUMP'S NEW
REGIME
QUESTIONED ON
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**CHRISTIANS
CATCH GREAT
MOMENTS IN
SPORT PAGES 14-16**



Christians' Young Scientists take the stage at the RDS

From early-morning trains to the tension of judging, the RDS was filled with creativity and ambition as hundreds of projects were displayed at the 2026 Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition. **Finn Harnedy** and **Nikhil Sundaram** report on a week of innovation, competition and celebration for Ireland's brightest young minds.

On the 7th of January, Ireland witnessed scientific greatness. 500 science projects were exhibited in the RDS, Dublin. This event? Young Scientist 2026, arguably the most prestigious post-primary school science exhibition in Ireland.

This event, titled BT Young Scientist from 2000 all the way until 2025, changed its title sponsor in May of 2025. Stripe was announced to take over on May 26th. Co-founders of Stripe, Patrick and John Collison, were both participants in this event. In 2005, Patrick took home the top prize at just 16, with John taking a category prize. No better to sponsor the event, with a close connection to it and an intrigue into the projects.

We left Kent Station at 7 AM, reaching the RDS at about 10. The atmosphere was electric inside the hall. Upon entering, we could already see the change Stripe had brought. All of the title cards were newly designed, and this new design language carried across all over the expo. Stripe had thought of everything, even the attachment of the posters to the wall. There was a median poster board they gave us so as not to damage our posters. From the start, it was clear that they had spent a long time on this event. There were also many Stripe representatives helping us with everything we could possibly need. After talking to one of the volunteers, we figured out that a majority of them were part of an internal Stripe events team, while some were flying out of Dublin to San Francisco later that week and were asked to help. This was especially interesting, as quite a few of the Stripe team that were present had American accents, which confused us, as they have a big enough presence in Ireland to not require American assistance. However, the internal events team was not something we had considered.

Moving further into the exhibition, we received our lunch vouchers. 4 neat little cards, with more of that Stripe design language we were getting familiar with. A big change here from last year: they upped the daily lunch voucher to €15 instead of €4. This was much appreciated, as we didn't have to spend much money inside the hall. One slight annoyance was the severe price raise this subsequently created. In no way could we get sufficient food along with a drink for the 15 euro. Most food was around the 15 euro mark, and one slice of pizza is not sufficient for a whole day.

Then, we come to the company areas, expo halls 1 and 2. These only opened on Thursday, and some stands were interesting. Stripe's own bookshop, Stripe Press, had a stand with significantly reduced prices, which I availed of. Some of the same companies as last year, AMD, Eli Lilly, but also some new faces. Patch, for example, and the University of Limerick had a big presence, as they are both sponsored by Stripe. UL was heavily advertising their ISE, Integrated Systems Engineering.

Arguably the most enjoyable part of the whole experience was meeting all sorts of new people and old friends that I haven't seen in a while. Even though I only knew one person from my section at the start, by Saturday I didn't need to leave my row to talk to somebody.



L-R Ms. Michelle O' Brien, Oisín Sheehan, Daragh O' Mullane, Ben Dwyer

After winning first place in their category

As the week went on, the atmosphere shifted. It was still incredible; of course, the air of excitement and creativity was ever-present. However, it now carried an edge of anticipation and competition. After all, we weren't just there to display our projects; over a thousand finalists had just one thing on their minds: winning. While the exhibition acts as a showcase of innovation and talent for Ireland's youth, it is ultimately organised as a competition - an idea founders Rev. Dr. Tom Burke and Dr. Tony Scott, adapted from American science fairs.

There are 3 rounds of judging which take place over the first 3 days of the exhibition, and a 4th round may follow if your project is in competition for an additional award. We found ourselves rehearsing answers in quiet moments and thinking of different angles to impress the judges whenever we could. Three out of over ninety judges were assigned projects based on category and their expertise. More often than not, this reduced the stress of judging and made the time engaging, allowing us to really show off the depth of our research and understanding.

Towards the end of the week, many notable figures visited the exhibition. Some were present earlier too, including President Catherine Connolly, who delivered the opening speech. These visitors, or rather their teams, would leave red cards, similar to judging cards, giving us a time to be at our stands. We were fortunate that my project, along with many others from CBC, was visited by the Taoiseach, Micheál Martin. Fifth years Raed Naseer and Cathal Lyons were also recognised by the Tánaiste, Simon Harris. Other visitors included representatives from various companies and organisations, who showed interest in our projects.

Throughout the week numerous student activities and workshops took place. During exhibition hours multiple screenings took place in the theatre spaces alongside live science demonstrations by Mark the Science Guy. After the exhibition, students were offered a variety of entertainment options, including quiz nights and a disco each day. More serious events also took place, such as a career talk organised by Stripe. We found this particularly informative, as it provided valuable insight into the diverse career paths available across different fields.

Yet for many, including myself, the standout moment of the week is undoubtedly the Awards Ceremony. Months of research and experimentation culminate in a few tense hours of waiting, hoping to hear your name called. Having experienced that moment myself two years ago, I understand just how surreal it feels to walk onto a stage in front of thousands of people. This year, however, it was a first-year group from CBC who experienced that moment. While the overall Young Scientist of the Year title is awarded to just one project, securing first place in a category is a remarkable achievement in itself. Their reaction, a mixture of disbelief and excitement, captured the emotion of the ceremony perfectly.

Amid all the judging, workshops, and events, what struck me most was the energy and dedication of everyone around me. Even when nerves ran high, everyone was eager to explain their projects, share ideas, and celebrate each other's successes. I probably learnt just as much from their questions and conversations as I did from preparing my own stand. Moments like these - quick chats, sparks of curiosity, and genuine excitement - are proof that the exhibition is more than a competition. It's a chance to grow, connect, and see the creativity of Ireland's Young Scientists in action.

Looking ahead, the Young Scientist & Technology exhibition remains one of Ireland's most important platforms for nurturing talent and ambition. It challenges us students to think critically, communicate effectively, and solve real-world problems while giving us the chance to engage with peers, industry leaders, and mentors. With new support from Stripe and growing opportunities, the event promises to inspire the next generation of innovators, scientists, and thinkers - students who may well shape the future of research and technology in Ireland and beyond.



A proud moment for Young Scientist participants Muhammad Raed Naseer and Cathal Lyons, who recently received a letter from Tánaiste Simon Harris congratulating them on their outstanding project, *Launching Ireland's Future: Astronomy for the Leaving Certificate*. It is a wonderful acknowledgement of the students' hard work throughout the process.

"The Stripe Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition was an extraordinary and inspiring experience for myself and Raed where we had the privilege of meeting high-ranking representatives and Government leaders including the Tánaiste, Simon Harris who showed great interest in our project. He was incredibly generous, presenting us with a letter of commendation for our work, which he intends to forward to the Minister for Education. To be granted a letter from the Tánaiste is a unique and unforgettable experience that we will forever remember."

- Cathal Lyons



Nikhil Sundaram with Taoiseach Micheál Martin following a discussion of his project at the Young Scientist Exhibition in the RDS.

"MAY YOU SUCCEED."

— MICHAEL D. HIGGINS

at the 2025 BTYSIE opening ceremony

“That the powerful play goes on, and you may contribute a verse” — WALT WHITMAN

The Plough and the Stars: The First Centenary Production

The CBC TY play is the most anticipated event for TY students every year and is often a highlight, Michael Keane and Conor Kelly recount their experience of this year's production

Announcements for the play began all the way back in late September, early October, when we were told Mr. Trevor Hussey (a teacher at CBC, and long-time director of the CBC play) wanted to run another production for February 2026. All students were emailed a google form, to fill out what job they wanted to do for the play whether that was “cast,” set design” and “PR”. From day one I was dead set on joining the cast, however, due to large numbers wishing to join set design and PR - and Mr Hussey's need for a large ‘Chorus’ - many were funnelled into the cast, but I don't think anyone regretted joining the production once the play concluded.

Following the rough divisions into the various sections, we were assigned interview times to decide cast roles. People chose various methods to impress Mr. Hussey. Some sang, some recited poetry, my good friend Kevin McCarthy chose to play the cello, which earned him a solo at the end of each night of performance. I, who had been on short notice before a match, was called into his office and haphazardly recited a passage from, “I Have No Mouth But I Must Scream.” Reflecting on it I must have looked insane, stuttering my words, trying to catch my breath, whilst sitting in my match gear. But soon after I was told I got the role of the ‘voice of the man’ which I shared with a friend of mine, Luke Barry, one of the play's producers.



As we moved into the end of October, formal rehearsals began. They either began early in the morning or coincided with after-school activities, but in fairness to the main cast, who suffered the most, they continued to go to rehearsals regularly.

I vividly remember my first rehearsal. Mr. Hussey had me stand up on a chair to the side of the main cast. I remember as I spoke and acted, he gave me advice. He wanted me to portray the character with sharp, constant sounds, with little but rigid movement. In summary, I got to shout at the top of my lungs in a German accent!

We all joked throughout the course of the play that we would be “relieved when the play would be over”, however, I understood many are sad that the journey has ended. I certainly am since there is no longer anything to work towards. However, as Mr Hussey said, “We'll reminisce about it in 20 years.”

It was enjoyable to practise the song “A Nation Once Again”, and credit to our director and the assistant directors, Ms Tarrant and Ms Murphy, for their help in this area of the play.

While we were diligently working as a cast, Conor described to me the work they had been doing. Stagehands spent time collecting materials, props and trinkets for the play, and once they began the actual construction, they blazed through it creating a set that thoroughly impressed Mr Hussey.

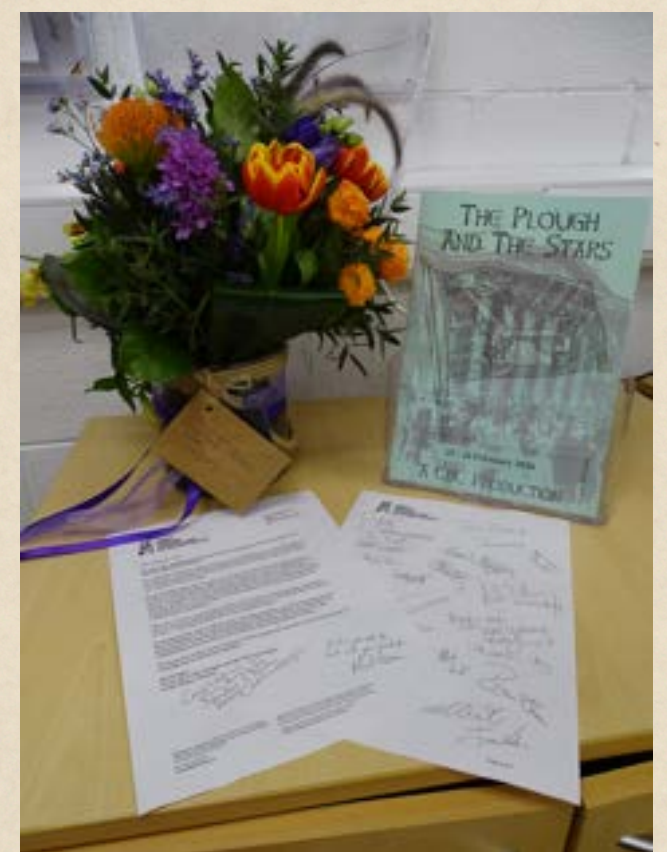


As we came to begin the final preparations, the Monday and Tuesday leading into the play on the 25th of February, we began to rehearse on the main stage in our school hall. And the stage and play were finally fully put together. It was spectacular to see all of our collective efforts accumulating into the final result.

The first night was the most stressful for all, but we managed to power through it. It was enjoyable to watch my friends perform. I am particularly impressed with those who were playing female characters as it is not an easy role to fill. I particularly enjoyed screaming my lungs off in front of a live audience who were not expecting it. Conor's favourite moment was during the second night, when he was asked by William Kelleher, who played ‘Nora Clitheroe’, to make sure that Issac Banks as Bessie Burgess entered on their cue on time.

My favourite event of mine was on the second night, when originally there was supposed to be only five people pretending to be dead bodies, it was decided, ‘what if 15 of them piled on top of each other instead?’ This led to an almost comedic scene as now others had to take precaution avoiding the large mass of bodies on the floor.

I took great pleasure and am very grateful to have been part of the play. I think all of us will remember fondly about it, even well into our adult years.



A letter from the Abbey Theatre, congratulating the TY group on the first centenary show, signed by everyone from the Plough and The Stars Company.

Behind the Curtain

Harry Walsh reflects on the great life lessons he learnt from theatre production

When I walked into my audition for the CBC TY play 2025, Chariots of Fire and played the eponymous theme tune piano, I never could have imagined the journey that lay in front of me. From scouring charity shops for extravagant costumes to the deeper takeaways gained from producing such a show, I - along with the rest of the production team - will never forget the journey of this show.

I was cast as “Lord Birkenhead”, partially to my disappointment, I had hoped to be playing live music for the show (that was to come too), but in hindsight, I thoroughly enjoyed my role. After a little research into the movie, I came to the realisation that I was to be the poshest of the posh, I would need to completely change myself for the role. When I began practising in rehearsals, it was like I could flick a switch, one minute a boy sitting in school and the next a Lord on his way to the Olympic games. Who I switched to was always changing, from the posh British Midlands accent to the way I had to look down on others, it was wonderful to throw myself fully into the role.

None of this came quickly though, and it wasn't until January when I began to feel confident in my character. A similar feeling was reciprocated throughout the cast, in themselves and in the show as a whole. In the weeks leading up to the opening night on the 4th of March however, inklings of doubt were still very much there, practising in an oratory doesn't lend itself particularly well to imagining how a show would play out in a theatre. But, with only five days to go until opening night, it all began to come together, seeing extravagant lighting rigs going up and the set being brought into the hall, the fabricated world of this drama began to become a reality.

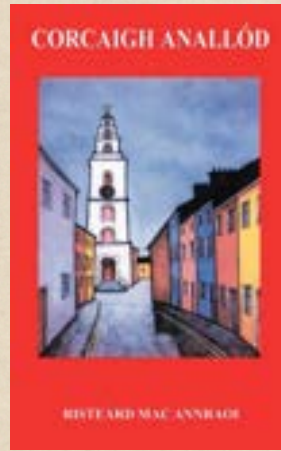
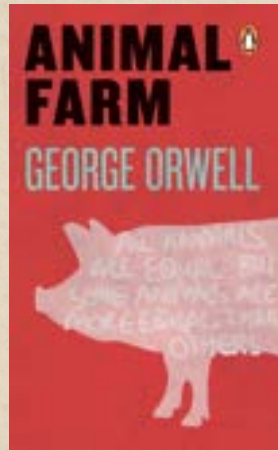
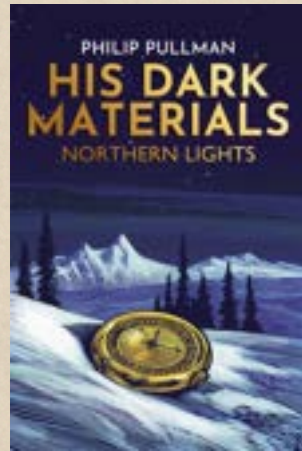
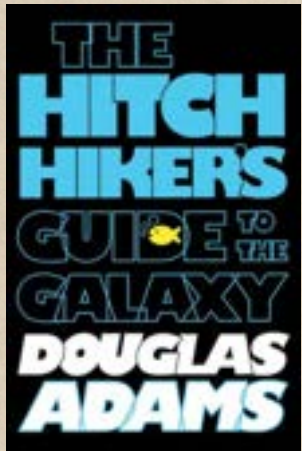
We began preparing for the show on the 3rd of September, 2024, and we didn't finish until twenty minutes before the show. Throughout the process we faced many challenges, people missing rehearsals, the difficulties of managing such a large cast and the constant adaptation of the script. But none of this will be what we remember in the future. We will remember the emotions, the friendships and the moments that led up to the final performance. I have become far greater friends with many people who at the start of the year I hardly knew; now they are some of my closest friends. Through making mistakes and forcing ourselves to be vulnerable in front of our peers, we learnt many important lessons that we will carry with us into the future. Public speaking, expressing yourself and learning to disregard the deep ingrained humility that teenagers so often have.

The final night of the show was magical, emotional words were spoken in the dressing room beforehand and the performance went by as a blur, it felt as though someone clicked their fingers... and poof it was over. When the final bows were taken and the audience had filed out of the doors, it was difficult to comprehend that it was over. So much of our lives had been taken up by rehearsals, especially in the two weeks prior to the show and now it was all over. Bittersweet, yet I can wholeheartedly say that not one member of the cast regrets taking part in this incredible experience. We did not do it for the applause or the bows, the final performance or the numerous congratulations received afterwards; we did it for ourselves and our classmates but, most importantly, we all did it for the experience.

For as John Godfrey said, “Those who are rich in experiences are rich in life”, and this experience was truly once in a lifetime.

"BOOKS ARE A UNIQUELY PORTABLE MAGIC."

—STEPHEN KING



Five books and five worlds. One enduring truth: Great literature stays with us.

The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy

The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy is a comedic science fiction novel written by the British author Douglas Adams, adapted from Adams' radio series of the same name.

The book follows Arthur Dent who is saved by an alien named Ford Prefect when earth is demolished to make way for a new hyperspace bypass. Arthur and Ford then embark on a journey through the galaxy learning the origins of earth's construction, and the meaning of life, the universe and everything, which turns out to be fairly underwhelming.

The novel is in my opinion a classic of the science fiction genre, while also being incredibly funny. The book gets a lot of its humour from Adams' great descriptions and contradictions with quotes such as "the ships hung in the sky in much the same way that bricks don't", and "a towel has immense psychological value".

In the end I believe that the Hitch-Hiker's guide to the galaxy is a fantastic book that captures the best of Ray Bradbury styled science fiction and Monty Python styled comedy.

Review by *Kevin McCarthy*

A Darkling Plain

'A Darkling Plain (DP)' is the final book in the 'Mortal Engines' quartet; the book continues to follow the various main characters who appear across the previous 3 books, this includes but not limited to 'Tom Natsworthy,' a man born and raised in the mobile city of London, his wife 'Hester Natsworthy/Shaw/Valentine,' a social outcast due to her facial scarring and vicious nature, and their daughter 'Wren Natsworthy,' a kind but cunning girl, born and raised the now immobilised city of Anchorage, among the ruins of the American Empires. And finally 'Shrike' the resurrected man from before the 60 minute war, that has been chasing Hester for decades.

I have a variety of con's with this book: At times I struggled to read through the series, as the books often had too many by chance or random moments which let characters cheat death, finding exactly whatever they were looking for or simply an enemy deciding not to kill them on sight. I often found the writing all simple, and did not test my vocabulary (however this could be chalked up to Philip Reeve wanting to make this book accessible to a wider audience).

I have many pro's with this book; the world building is immaculate across the series but DP brings it all together, Reeve paints a beautiful picture of a recovering Earth a thousand years after a 60 minute war. All the major mobile cities, like London, Manchester, Arkangel and Murnau, are unique with their own culture, surviving from when they were static settlements. At the finale of the book, Shrike waits another inconceivable number of years, and sees the restoration of Earth to how she was before all the destruction.

I recommend this book for the age ranges of 11-13, as there are often violent and mildly graphic scenes, but the language is still too simple for anyone older.

Review by *Michael Keane*

Northern Lights

Published in 1995, Northern Lights is the first novel in Philip Pullman's acclaimed His Dark Materials trilogy. The book won the prestigious Carnegie Medal and has become one of the most influential works of modern fantasy fiction.

Set in a parallel universe that is both familiar and strangely different from ours. Pullman blends science fiction, theology, and philosophy into a story that challenges the boundaries of children's literature.

The novel follows the adventures of Lyra Belacqua, a girl growing up in an Oxford where every human is accompanied by a daemon - a physical manifestation of the soul in an animal form. When children begin to disappear, Lyra's world becomes one of chaos and wonder as she travels North to uncover the truth about a mysterious particle known as "Dust".

One of the novel's greatest strengths is Lyra herself. She is not a flawless hero; she is impulsive, stubborn, and often dishonest. However, these flaws make her believable and human.

The story takes place in a world where the Reformation never took place, leaving a church-dominated Magisterium with absolute power. This institution controls knowledge, suppresses free thought, and interferes with scientific discovery. Through the Magisterium, Pullman reflects on real theological and philosophical tensions, particularly the conflict between faith and reason. The Church's fear of independent inquiry is symbolised by its obsession with Dust, a particle linked to consciousness and maturity.

My opinion is simple: this book is a must-read for anyone even remotely interested in science fiction or philosophy but can still be enjoyed by anyone.

Review by *Nikhil Sundaram*

"ONCE YOU LEARN TO READ, YOU WILL BE FOREVER FREE."

—FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Animal Farm

Animal Farm, by George Orwell, is an allegorical dystopian novella, in the form of a fable, first published in 1945.

On the surface, Animal Farm is a classic fairy tale but in reality has a hidden, deeper meaning. Its story mirrors the events of the Russian revolution (1917) and the subsequent power struggle and Stalinist regime. Orwell uses farm animals to represent Russian revolutionary figures. The story highlights the dangers of totalitarianism and authoritarianism by exposing how power corrupts and the truth is manipulated.

The story follows a group of animals on Manor Farm who rebel against the oppressive farmer, Mr. Jones. The animals were inspired by Old Major, the respected prize boar. He shared his dream of freedom from human oppression with the animals, laying the philosophical groundwork for the farm. This included the Seven Commandments which were later painted onto the barn. Old Major represented figures like Karl Marx and Vladimir Lenin in the story. As the story continues the farm's name is converted to "Animal Farm" and two new ambitious leaders emerge. Two pigs named Snowball and Napoleon (representing Trotsky and Stalin). They don't have the same philosophy or values as Old Major and slowly the groundwork laid by Old Major is corrupted for personal gain.

Overall I found this book extremely interesting and very enjoyable. There was subtle and smooth development throughout the book, helping slowly build up tension in the story. It was an accurate allegory of the Russian Revolution and the following years under Stalin. Animal Farm inspired me to learn more about Russia during that historical era. I would recommend this book to anyone who is interested in history and politics. Also I believe everyone should read this book at least once in their lives because it serves as a warning for us to never allow a totalitarian regime. -

"All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others"

Review by *Mati Ó Conaill*

Corcaigh Anallód

Más maith leat Gaeilge agus stair. Sin an leabhar a bhfuil d'ainm scríofa air. Bunaithe ar scéalta don chathair agus contae chorcaí.

Tá ceithre scéal déag ag an leabhar a d'fhéadfadh aon cheann seasamh ina aonar.

Éagsúlacht scéalta atá ann ón nGorta Mór i gCorcaigh go tionscal na mbrioscaí "cois laoi". (An ceann is fearr liom.) Níl ach cúpla leathanach tugtha do ghach ábhar.

Is deacair an leabhar seo a léamh is a thuiscint. Úsáideann Mac Anraoi Gaeilge an-chasta. Bainneann sé úsáid as an saorbhriathar agus an modh foshuiteach beagnach an t-am ar fad. Níl aon amhras ar bith go bhfuil an friotal álainn, ach bí curamach.

Mholfainn Corcaigh Anallód d'éinne, ach déan cinnte go bhfuil sibh ullmhaithe don Ghaeilge chomh dúshlánach. Tá na scéalta go léir ar fheabhas agus b'fhiú iad a léamh.

Review by *Oscar de Róiste*

The Heart of Reading at CBC

The college library here at CBC is a fundamental part of the school. It is used by students and teachers alike, not only as a classroom but also as a retreat. The library is a calm and welcoming space where anyone can pick out a book from the shelves and do some reading or research on any topic. It is well cared for by Mrs O'Driscoll.

Mrs O'Driscoll is an English teacher at CBC and the author of several books used by students at the college, including the Set Sail series for Junior Cycle students and Excellence in Texts textbooks used by Leaving Certificate students.

Mati Ó Conail interviewed her about the importance of the school library.

Mati Ó Conail: Would you please share your opinion on the importance of having a library in a secondary school?
Mrs O'Driscoll: I think it is absolutely vital. Books need to be visible, particularly in this online age where everything might be available online. The problem with screens, as we all know, is that when you open them to look at one thing you can easily end up going down rabbit holes looking at many others.

Even though I'm a proponent of audiobooks and e-books, I still think that having the physical visible book is very different. If you go online looking for something, you're usually looking for something specific, whereas in a library there's a browsing element. People come in, see a book and think, "That's an interesting idea" or "That's an interesting topic," and it can bring them into areas they might not have thought about.

In my Transition Year group we have a dedicated reading class once a week. At the start of the year, when the boys were choosing books, I could direct them into different areas. One boy said he wasn't particularly interested in reading, but he found the travel section and became very interested. That then led him into areas of fiction as well.

MÓC: You mentioned e-readers. Do you recommend any, such as Kindle?

AOD: I'm not the biggest fan of Amazon, but unfortunately they have cornered the market. I have two e-readers: a Kobo e-reader and a Kindle Paperwhite, which I think is very good.

I think it's better to have one that doesn't have internet browsing. One feature I really like on Kindle is Whisper Sync. I love listening to audiobooks as well. I might listen to a book in the car, then later sit down with a cup of tea and read it. When you open the book it picks up where you left off in the audiobook, and when you go back to the audiobook it picks up where you were reading.

Anything that makes reading easier and more accessible is a good thing. Audiobooks are very useful, especially now that many people listen with headphones. We used to have a CD section in the library full of audiobooks, but now they're mostly online.

MÓC: In your point of view, what types of books are relevant in a secondary school?

AOD: I think that's a very good question. When students are left to their own devices they often go straight to the sports section. At the risk of gender stereotyping, a lot of the boys tend to go for fact rather than fiction, and as they get older it can become harder to get them into fiction.

That's why it's important to have a wide range of topics. I always think of reading like eating. Sometimes you want something light-hearted and easy, and that's fine, but you can't live on a diet like that. At other times you want something more nutritious.

Graphic novels are very popular and we've been building up that section. In fiction, the two big areas students enjoy are thrillers and fantasy or sci-fi, especially books with a medieval feel and some magical element.

I also have what I call the four chapter rule. If I give someone a book and they don't think they like it, I say give it four chapters. If after four chapters they still don't like it, that's absolutely fine, but usually by then they want to know what happens next.

MÓC: Do you think it would be a good idea to provide students with digital access to newspapers or magazines?

AOD: Yes, I would. Many newspapers and magazines are now behind paywalls. I subscribe to several myself, including The New Yorker.

What students may not realise is that you can join your local library for free. Once you join, you can get a code to access the BorrowBox app. Through BorrowBox you can download e-books, audiobooks, newspapers and journals, including very specific ones for niche interests like sports or technology.

One tip I would give is not to be discouraged if a book says it's unavailable until a certain date. If you reserve it, you often get it much sooner because someone else returns it early.

MÓC: Since joining CBC, have there been many developments in the library?

AOD: One of the biggest developments has been student involvement. I'm very keen on that because it's a school library and it should be run by the school community where possible. I've been very lucky to have students helping with cataloguing and digitising the collection.

We've also received many donations. A past pupil who had a large personal library invited us to take books when he was downsizing, and we received a wonderful selection. Teachers also donate books regularly. Another idea we've been working on is creating small mini-libraries around the school. Some teachers now keep collections of books in their classrooms so students can easily pick something up to read.

MÓC: Would you be open to students donating books?

AOD: Absolutely. We'd be delighted. We've received donations from teachers, staff and students. I like to see the whole school involved because the library really belongs to everyone in the school.

MÓC: If you were speaking to students who aren't interested in reading, what advice would you give them?

AOD: I don't think trying to convince people in an abstract way works very well. What can work is giving them a taste of a book.

A teacher in my son's primary school used to read chapters of a book to the class once a week. The boys would become completely hooked and then want to buy the book themselves. Sometimes simply introducing students to a good story, or even playing part of an audiobook, can show them what they're missing.

MÓC: Thank you very much for your time.

AOD: Not at all. It's lovely to see students using the library. We've also been encouraging things like chess at break times. Even when students come in to play chess, they often notice a book, pick it up, and decide to borrow it.

The library is for the students. Everything here is for them.



“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.”

— HENRY FORD

Making Student Voices Heard

I am one of two TY Student Council representatives. I entered my name into the running in the hopes of using my voice and ideas to improve the school. I have not only been able to do this, but I have also had the opportunity to bring up other students' problems that were previously going unnoticed. At the moment we are discussing solutions to problems brought up by our fellow students such as the long microwave queues in the canteen. The Student Council has organised two fundraising events during this academic year: a jersey day for GOAL, an international humanitarian response agency, along with a shoe box appeal for SVP, a Christian volunteer network. While these events had challenges, it was extremely rewarding to see the overwhelming support received from both students and staff. It felt good to see that we had made a measurable positive impact on not only the school but the people in need outside the school too.

At the start of the school year, we had a day out to Cork City Hall, where we met with other student councils. There, we discussed problems facing Cork, and more importantly, learned how we, as young people, could impact these challenges.

The Student Council is really important to me, as not only does it let me have a positive impact on my school and my peers but also it shows the students that their voices matter.

In my experience, the teachers involved, particularly Mr O'Callaghan and Mrs Whelan, have been of great support and assistance to all of our projects, from small tweaks around the school, to big events.

Throughout the rest of the year we have many more ideas to implement that we are excited for. I am extremely grateful to have the opportunity to experience being a member of the Council and would highly recommend trying to get involved to anyone reading.

- Finbarr Gulanti

Poetry Slammed

CBC TY students took part in an informative poetry programme during the academic year. We learned a variety of life-enhancing skills that will be beneficial to us as both students now and as adults in later life.

TY workshops are an integral part of a programme devised by our TY coordinator, Mr. Stephen Hogan. They allow us to learn and develop new skills that could be useful to us in the future.

The Poetry Slam workshop took place in Room 42 early in October. The workshop lasted for two hours, and we were taught how words can influence the way we think. At first, we were told to write about what we would do to our worst enemy, beginning every sentence with the words "I will." Then we were asked to change those words to "love will" and see how the meaning of our sentences had or had not changed. This exercise encouraged us to rethink how each word in a sentence can affect its meaning, yet some words that are completely different can have the exact same effect.

The standout moment in this course for me was when we discussed the importance of the way we acted around others, and how that can influence the way we are perceived by those around us. We were told about

how our body language and facial expressions can determine how other people think of us. Every person you interact with has a specific and unique version of you inside their head, and none of those are actually accurate to your true personality. That is what makes poetry so effective. It gives us the opportunity to share our innermost thoughts, inviting people to experience who we really are on the inside.

The poetry slam also put a huge emphasis on the way women are treated around the world. As a group, we debated the differences between boys' schools and girls' schools. At the end of the workshop, we were asked to write a poem about how the patriarchy affected our lives. This was an insightful topic that made us consider alternate perspectives of our society.

This course was similar to a regular English class in that it was dedicated to the English language and the power of the words we use, however that is where the similarities ended. It did not feel like we were sitting through a class; it felt as if we were just having a conversation. All students were kept engaged the entire time. Not only was it educational, but it was also incredibly entertaining.

- Adam Nagle



Matt Mapplebeck (TY) sailing for Ireland

Deadline Day



From L - R: Finn Harnedy, Nikhil Sundaram, Oscar de Róiste

THE CHRISTIANS' CHRONICLE EDITORIAL TEAM

Chief Editors and Designers: Finn Harnedy, Nikhil Sundaram, Oscar de Róiste

Chief Writers: Oscar de Róiste, William Rea, Kevin McCarthy, Daniel Aherne, Mati Ó Conaill, Michael Keane

Writers: Nikhil Sundaram, Finn Harnedy, Adam Nagle, Declan Walsh, Finbarr Gulati, Ben Hegarty, Conor Kelly, Harry Walsh, Will Manley, Oran Kingston, Andrew Daly, Alex Burgess, Andrew Daly, Rossa Kinirons

Photography: Finn Harnedy, Michael Keane, Mr. S. Lynch

Teacher Liaison: Mr. E. Newman

Engineering the Future

Declan Walsh reflects on his own experience taking part in this year's TY Engineering Week programme.

The engineering week was a workshop introducing students to the day-to-day work of an engineer and the opportunities, challenges and experiences associated with engineering. The workshop was entirely digital and was hosted on Microsoft Teams.

The workshop opened up with many experienced engineers welcoming us to the call. On Monday we learned about architecture, building services engineering, women in engineering, mechanical engineering and procurement. On Tuesday, the school had the annual Jersey Presentation, so we couldn't go to the workshop. On Wednesday we learned about sustainability and climate change in the engineering field, health and safety, CQV (commissioning, qualification and validation) engineering and process safety. On Thursday we learned about HR/Recruitment, Administration, Digital Operations, Finance, Business Development and Quality.

A highlight of the week for me was the architecture segment, which was hosted by an architect named Ross Malone. He mainly talked about the work that an architect does day to day and the opportunities that lie ahead of someone who chooses architecture. He talked about the opportunity to work abroad in foreign countries to study architecture there, as he went to New York and worked at an architecture firm there. He also showed us plans and some of the stuff he has worked on, including 3D and physical models of bridges and roads.

Another highlight of the week was the Digital Operations segment, hosted by Sam Torres. He was talking about how COVID boosted this field in terms of new technology and the course of digital technology. Torres also talked about where this field is headed in the future I would recommend this course to anyone thinking about engineering or any adjacent work that uses digital technology. This course was very informative and a great career opportunity.



A Revolver That Never Stops Firing: 60 Years of a Beatles Classic

2026 marks sixty years since The Beatles released their classic album 'Revolver', but how does it hold up, six decades later?

The songs on this album are nothing short of iconic, with some of The Beatles' most famous songs, such as 'Yellow Submarine', 'Eleanor Rigby', and 'Got To Get You Into My Life'. The musical styles vary wildly between each song on the track list, the album seamlessly changes between classic rock 'n' roll, sombre love songs, and nonsensical sea shanties. But despite these disparate genres, they're brought together by The Beatles' sense of optimism, charm and fun. The sound of the album was quite ahead of its time with a lot of emphasis on violins and other orchestral instruments, with a reduced focus on the guitars and drums that were so common in rock albums, both then and now. The music itself is very in line with what you would expect from The Beatles with a great sense of energy and bounce to it, that no doubt inspired other bands in the future, such as America and Blur.

In the end, Revolver really hasn't aged a day, and still proudly shows off the creativity, charm, and sound of The Beatles, even sixty years after it was released. It's an album I could listen to eight days a week.

- Kevin McCarthy

Gorillaz Climb Higher with The Mountain

Inspired by the rich culture of India, Gorillaz return with their ninth studio album, but is it good enough to peak anyone's interest, or should it just take a hike?

The Mountain includes 15 tracks with a wide variety of musical styles and instruments, there are many tracks that feature Gorillaz' signature energetic, electronic tunes, such as 'Orange County', 'The Happy Dictator' and 'The God of Lying'. But there are also a fair amount of surprisingly ethereal and orchestral tracks, with songs like, 'The Plastic Guru' and 'The Mountain'. The album aims to be laid-back and serene, similar to other Gorillaz albums, such as 2010's 'Plastic Beach'.

One of the selling points of every Gorillaz album is the varied and talented cast of guest musicians and artists that collaborate with the band to add a bit of diversity to the album's various tracks. The Mountain doesn't disappoint in this regard with artists such as Sparks, Tony Allen and IDLES bringing a unique sound to the songs.

Overall, 'The Mountain' is yet another fantastic album by Gorillaz, with the theme, guest musicians and music, creating a unique tone and sound that's all its own. I would highly recommend it.

- Kevin McCarthy

“PODCASTING IS ABOUT BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LISTENER. IT’S A LONG GAME.” — JARLATH REGAN



Podcast: Conspiracy Theories

Available on: Spotify

Star Rating: ★★★★★☆

I found the conspiracy theories podcast to be very fascinating and exciting. In this podcast they discuss various conspiracies that are extraordinarily interesting as well as sinister. They have all sorts of topics from well known such as the very famous conspiracy group the Illuminati and other conspiracies that didn't grasp as much attention from mainstream media and from early history, that are just as interesting.

The podcast shares factual information and fascinating facts on the various topics they cover in their many episodes. They also are very good at phrasing their stories from a neutral standpoint and make clear that what they are detailing and discussing in their episodes are events that they do not encourage or agree with and doesn't sway the opinions of their listeners.

The podcast shares exhilarating stories on history, recent and old and also very sinister true crime stories. These two genres are both very interesting and popular and it makes for many entertaining episodes, which is why I would recommend this podcast especially to those who are interested in these genres like myself.

Another important quality this podcast possesses is its very good audio quality. The narrators are very clear and professional which is key in giving an entertaining podcast because nothing is more irritating than finding an interesting podcast and the presenter just blankly reading a script with a terrible mic. The stories are very well written and very well spoken, adding to this podcast.

I would highly recommend the *Conspiracy Theories* podcast for those of you who take a liking in history and true crime mysteries. It is a very well put together podcast with interesting and exciting stories and episodes and rightfully deserves my rating of 4/5 stars.

Review by *Will Manley*



Podcast: Dalo's Hurling Show

Available on: The Irish Examiner

Star Rating: ★★★★★☆

My first impression of Dalo's Hurling show podcast is that it is humorous. It is presented by Anthony Daly (Dalo), TJ Ryan and Mark Landers. In this episode they analyse what happened in the 2025 All-Ireland final between Cork and Tipperary, and they also tell stories from their own playing days, back in the nineties.

The talented trio focus on Tipperary's dominant second half performance and Cork's collapse after a very good first half during the 2025 All-Ireland final. They blend in a lot of humour while analysing the game. One of the hosts, Mark Landers, is from Killeagh in east Cork and he was very confident that Cork would win, so this created a lot of funny jokes and moments.

During the podcast they tell stories from past experiences of playing in an All-Ireland final. Landers tells some great stories from the 1999 All-Ireland final when he captained Cork to win the Liam McCarthy Cup. Anthony Daly also tells some fantastic and exclusive stories from when he also captained Clare to All-Ireland glory in 1995 and 1997. These stories give a great insight to how they used to celebrate in those times.

I enjoyed listening to this podcast very much because it broke down the tactical decisions, momentum swings and what went wrong with Cork. They also blended this with some exclusive stories and humour which made the podcast very engaging and hard to switch off.

This podcast is definitely worth a listen, if you have any sort of interest in hurling or even football. I would also recommend this podcast to people who have interest in sports analysis because they do a deep-dive into every aspect of the game and add their experience.

Review by *Oran Kingston*



Podcast: The Rest is Football

Available on: Spotify

Star Rating: ★★★★★☆

The Rest is Football is a sports podcast that focuses on football. It is hosted by Gary Lineker, Alan Shearer and Micah Richards. The Rest is Football frequently invites guest speakers to share their views on a topic. These guest speakers are usually former or current professional footballers, managers, coaches and/or analysts.

The structure of an episode may vary depending on the topic being discussed. For example, if discussing a player, they'll mention his or her current form but if discussing a club owner they'll talk about his or her previous involvement in football and future plans. An episode often features debates about different football topics such as transfer rumours, managers' job security, club investment choices etc. These interesting debates are where the podcast hosts and guest speakers can share their opinions freely.

For example, on the "Antoine Griezmann Special" episode, hosted by Gary Lineker and Alex Aljoe, Alex Aljoe claimed that Griezmann could possibly be the best player to ever play under Simeone. This shows the high praise and respect she has for Griezmann as many great talents have been coached by Simeone such as Fernando Torres, Luis Suarez, Diego Godín etc.

Gary Lineker agrees and mentions that Griezmann was overlooked during his time as a youth player due to his smaller size. He compares this to Maradona and Messi, who both faced similar struggles.

The pair then talk about Griezmann's "Golden Years". They talk about his achievements but also his shortcomings. They mention that Griezmann, despite playing in La Liga his entire illustrious career, never won a La Liga medal. They also talk about the fact that he never won a Champions League title. Lineker then claims that the World Cup trophy Griezmann won in 2018 makes up for the gaps in his trophy cabinet.

This episode was my favourite episode of the whole podcast because I admire Griezmann as a player and I am always in-awe of how he can effortlessly control a game, something they praised him for in the episode.

In conclusion I believe that "The Rest is Football" is an engrossing podcast that can give listeners new perspectives on the world of football and sports in general. I would recommend this podcast to anyone interested in sports, especially football, and anybody keen on learning more about how sports work.

Review by *Mati Ó Conaill*



Podcast: Real Dictators

Available on: Spotify, Noisier and BBC Sounds

Star Rating: ★★★★★

Real Dictators is a deep dive into the lives of tyrants, emperors and generals who usurped power. It tells the story of people like Joseph Stalin, Chairman Mao and Adolph Hitler. But it also dives deeper into people you wouldn't really think about when it comes to dictators, people like Julius Caesar, Napoleon Bonaparte and Genghis Khan. Presented by Paul McGann with music by Óliver Banes from Flight Brigade, it tells the story of the dynamic rise of these tyrants, their despotism once they are in power and their ultimate fall from it.

It's a must-listen for anyone who has an interest in history and a desire for learning. Each episode is roughly 40-50 minutes long, covering every in-depth detail of the different chapters of these people's lives.

In conclusion. It's a well-timed podcast that gives you a deep understanding of these historical figures, great for students who would like to brush up on a topic they are studying and teachers who want to broaden their horizons.

Review by *William Rea*



Podcast: MNF Extra

Available on: Spotify

Star rating: ★★★★★

I recently listened to footballing icon Jamie Carragher express his EPL team of the season so far on MNF Extra by Sky Sports.

This convenient fifteen-minute long podcast, accessible on Spotify, was an exemplary way to take both my and the worldwide problems off my mind. Carragher's in-depth analysis when reasoning his selections took me aback.

The new Fanalysis App which is currently bursting on to the scene was excellently advertised throughout the podcast. Its brief introduction and explanation of how loyal fans can share their views on their respective clubs via the Fanalysis App. The enticing advertisement attracted me to sign up and try out the app. The Fanalysis version of the team of the season differed massively to Carragher's team. The apps review included highly-detailed statistics, including most successful take-ons, most chances created and much more! The podcast displays the sheer quality of social media's enhancement on journalism. This helps journalists take off to heights of quality never imagined before.

Overall, I feel with such a short showing time and how simple the podcast is to access, it has an exceptional amount of detail. I feel the podcast helped me zone out of reality and can take you into a different world beyond earth. I could almost illustrate myself in my mind sitting next to Carragher and the other exceptional pundits. When performing such simple tasks I felt like I was taken out of reality by the podcast and I will definitely listen to more podcasts as such from Sky Sports.

Review by *Andrew Daly*

**Podcast: Sportsday**Available on: **Apple podcasts, Spotify, BBC Radio**

Rating: ★★★★★

I enjoyed this podcast, but it had its flaws. In this podcast the presenters talk about transfer windows in soccer, statistics of players' performances, interviews and other sports such as rugby and cricket.

The reason why I only gave it three stars is because sometimes the episodes are not related to the topic of sport I like. I prefer listening to rugby and soccer episodes, but some episodes talk about other sports that don't really interest me, such as tennis or cricket. I really only tune in to soccer, rugby and basketball episodes, as they interest me the most. In the podcast episodes I tune in to, they talk about the matches and give fully detailed explanations where they explain what the players did well and what they could've done to possibly score or defend efficiently to stop goals.

The podcast also showcases interviews of players before and after matches, which gives fans inside access to the players and coaches and what their club is like. It helps us to understand the players, which we fans love to do.

However, the part I don't like about the podcast is how repetitive it is. The podcast follows a strict routine which doesn't change and gets overly repetitive at times, which sometimes makes me less interested in the podcast episode. Another thing is the lack of humour. It doesn't have much humour in it, which I suppose is good in a way, as we get our information quicker, but it also seems quite boring compared to some podcasts that use a lot of humour to keep the audience engaged.

The podcast also talks about other sports that I really have no interest in, so I just skip those episodes to wait for the new one to arrive quickly.

Review by **Anonymous****Podcast: Scrum Special | Mike Ross and Bernard Jackson on how the Boks dominated Ireland**Available on: **RTE/Spotify**

Star Rating: ★★★★★

This podcast was great! I chose this podcast upon coming across it on Spotify. I was instantly intrigued. I had watched Ireland against South Africa in Ireland's 24-13 defeat and was disappointed at how utterly dominated Ireland were in the scrum, especially, but also in general play. This podcast offers an insight into a former Irish prop's view on what happened in the game. They discuss scrums, discipline and how Ireland can bounce back and fix these negatives. They do not only focus on negatives but also weigh up what Ireland did well in the game and compliment the Springboks on their performance.

This podcast shows a great sportsmanlike attitude from all involved with no bias. They also talk about Ireland's game plan once James Ryan was sent off, which can help the audience understand Ireland's plan. They also speak on scrum specifics and why the scrum was dominated and kept collapsing. They also discuss how big of a loss James Ryan was for the team.

Lastly, they also answer questions from social media. And Mike Ross shares his knowledge on scrummaging and how important it is to have a good pack behind you. The podcast also debates player selection and the scrum loophole and how the Six Nations' sides will look to exploit this.

It also questions some players, such as Andrew Porter, and compares the "beautiful body profile of the Springboks scrum" to the Irish scrum shape. This pod also investigates if the scrum feed is a problem for rugby safety. And looks at possible short-term and long-term solutions for Ireland's scrum.

Overall this podcast was great, especially as a rugby player myself who is keen to learn and improve when and where I can. I would encourage all rugby fans to listen to this podcast, as it has so much essential knowledge about the game that every fan and/or player should know and have seen in the Ireland against South Africa match in the Aviva.

Review by **Alex Maher****Podcast: First Conviction**Available on: **RTE.ie**

Star Rating: ★★★★★

In the podcast First Conviction, we are told the horrifying story of a young couple who were accused of committing a terrible crime against their twenty-one-month-old daughter. The father was sentenced to five and a half years imprisonment and the mother to four years and nine months. However, in July 2004 the Director of Public Prosecutions dropped the charges against them. That was the first time anything like this had ever happened in Ireland. The podcast investigates why those charges were dropped, attempting to find the true story behind what happened to the child.

True crime podcasts such as this one can often come across as exploitative, a way for someone to make money or gain media attention off of a tragedy that was inflicted on another person. However, I do not believe that is the case with First Conviction. The horrifying crime is explained respectfully and with care. It is clear that everyone involved in the production of this podcast had good intentions, with only the desire for the little girl to receive justice.

The narration of the podcast is done very well, keeping the listener engaged at all times. I would recommend First Conviction to others; however, the topics addressed are very sensitive, so this will not be for everyone. Overall, I believe it was a very well-made podcast, and if you are able to handle the subject matter, you should try listening to it too.

Review by **Will Manley****Podcast: Off the Ball Football Podcast**Available from: **Spotify, Go Loud**

Star Rating: ★★★★★

The Off the Ball football podcast is a great listen for anyone who enjoys honest and knowledgeable talk about football and various other aspects of the sport.

Regular presenters such as Eoin Sheahan, John Duggan and Nathan Murphy offer strong insight and clear understanding of the past week of football, discussing everything from match results to managers, while keeping a calm and relaxed tone.

The mix of expert guests, former players, managers and journalists adds a real depth to each episode. They offer different viewpoints, which keeps discussions feeling lively and fresh.

Overall, Off the Ball is a reliable and entertaining football podcast for fans who would like to hear a deeper insight into the past week's football.

Review by **Alex Burgess****Podcast: The Rest is History**Available on: **Spotify**

Star Rating: ★★★★★

I have chosen to review my favourite podcast currently, 'The Rest is History', presented by historians Dominic Sandbrooke and Tom Holland. In this podcast they cover historical events and characters, ranging from WW2 to Alexander the Great.

The main reason I enjoy this podcast is due to the presenters being very engaging and humorous. They clearly have great interest and passion for history, and this can be seen in their dedication to the podcast. It is certainly an easy listen, and I put it on whenever I get a chance. My favourite series of episodes is the one about America in 1968. These episodes cover political leaders, human rights, and even riots in major cities. Sandbrooke is terrific on this period and actually did his master's degree on it.

The podcasts often feature special guests, fellow historians who are experts on certain periods of history. These guests help listeners understand things better and improve the accuracy of the podcast. Paul Rouse is an excellent example of this. He is a professor at UCD and features many times on the show. He showcases his knowledge exceptionally well and has great chemistry with the presenters.

One criticism I would have of this podcast is the occasional bias of the presenters. Often they have subjective views, ones with a strong British perspective. Of course, the presenters jokingly refer to British historical figures with a great sense of patriotism, which is part of the reason why the podcast is so good. But on a rare occasion, they can mislead and even be inaccurate.

Review by **Rossa Kinirons****Podcast: Caravan of garbage**Available on: **Spotify**

Star Rating: ★★★★★

Caravan of Garbage is a comedic media review podcast hosted by James Clement and Nick Mason. In each episode the pair will review a film, video game, tv series or graphic novel, with film reviews their most popular area of discussion.

The podcast's comedic tone makes it an engaging listen, with only small sections of the broadcast focusing on facts about a film's production and trivia. Their style is quite laid back and charming, and one hears James and Mason's casually chatting about different areas of media. It appears unscripted and improvisation dominates an episode, with the pair sharing grievances or problems with the film, such as making fun of a character's choices and actions in the story.

The presenters have great chemistry with each other, and the most memorable parts of the episodes for me are when the pair actively try to belittle and annoy each other.

With quotes such as "not just friends, contractually bound together", or James telling the listeners that they will be reviewing all four films in a franchise, to which Mason groans and says, "There's four!?", and "we're doing all 4!?"

In conclusion, I think that there isn't much fundamentally wrong with the podcast. There might not be much valuable information that you can get from it, and it certainly isn't life-changing, but it only really sets out to make the listener laugh, and it achieves this goal brilliantly by making it feel like you're listening to a genuine conversation about a film between a few friends.

Review by **Kevin McCarthy**

“NOTHING IS POLITICALLY RIGHT THAT IS MORALLY WRONG.”

— DANIEL O'CONNELL

A Trumpian future is a dystopian future

As instability and chaos pervades this geo-political era, *Daniel Aherne* wonders whether Donald Trump's world is spiraling out of control or whether there is method to his madness.

When Donald Trump was inaugurated in January 2025, the world feared the worst. We feared for our jobs, our country and world peace itself. We didn't know what to expect from the orange man, so we just shook in fear and waited for the blast.

In truth, Trump's world is not one of good nor evil. The only word to describe it is 'chaos'. Over the last year, every way you turn, there has been another article on Trump, whether that's him receiving the "Nobel Peace Prize" or him attempting to take Greenland, hiding files that could disgrace him or making sure the world knows he is eradicating supposed trafficking boats.

The positives? Trump is proactive on ending wars in both Gaza and Ukraine. There is a peace plan in place in Gaza (albeit a bit shaky), which is a lot more than was there before Trump came to office. He also seems to be the only one attempting to end the war in



Ukraine. Whether his motives are the goodness of his heart or personal gain and fame is debatable. What remains indisputable, however, is that he is doing more for these people than his predecessor, Joe Biden, or than any other world leader. He is also cracking down on illegal immigration into the US. His methods are at best controversial and, at worst, bordering on illegality, but he is following through on his election promises and tackling a problem previously ignored.

The negatives are easily spotted and often more focused on. Trump is tearing apart world peace and stability in an attempt to strengthen America. His drive to obtain Greenland is nothing short of pure greed, as he argues it is for "national security", even though he really just wants it for the rich mineral resources it carries (and maybe to make America bigger on a map). He has also toppled governments around the world, such as Venezuela and Iran.

Farage's Second Act: Reform UK and Britain's Shifting

Politics *William Rea examines the rise of Nigel Farage, the surge of Reform UK in the polls, and what it could mean for the future of British politics.*

Farage: The man who had "a few pints with the lads" Nigel Farage was born into luxury. His father worked as a stockbroker, and Farage attended a fee-paying private school in South London in his formative years. At 19 Farage became a banker, and for the next 21 years would work up the corporate ladder. All changed in the world of finance in 2008 with the financial crisis ruining the economy. This outraged the people, but especially in Britain where harsh austerity put thousands out of jobs and on the food stamp line. Farage noticed this and founded UKIP, the United Kingdom Independence Party, which had one simple goal: get Britain out of the European Union. On the 31st of January 2020, following four years of political discourse, Boris Johnson (then British Prime Minister) fulfilled this goal. Britain had formally left the EU. In the following Westminster assembly, Farage turned to those who had previously shunned him and said, "You're not laughing now, are you?" before adding: "This is 'Independence Day' for a new United Kingdom."

This is remarkably similar to Trump claiming the 2020 US election was rigged and represents the general rightward shift of European politics. Despite this stunning victory for the Greens, the future remains bleak, with Farage on the rise, and given all the facts, it's looking like he will continue to win.

There is now even more cause for optimism. For the first time in over 100 years neither Labour nor the Conservatives will be leading a Westminster government. The Green Party has freshly overtaken the Labour Party in a poll by YouGov. They now have 17% of the vote, beating Labour's 15%. It truly is a sign of how bad of a mess the UK is in that their infamous two-party system is no longer enough on its own to ensure the establishment does not change. Perhaps it is a sign of things to come that in the world of politics nothing is certain anymore.

It's easy to ponder how Farage got this far, from dwindling on the edge of public consciousness to dominating the political sphere. Likewise, it's easy to wonder how it all went wrong for Starmer. He's gone from strength to strength, building up the Labour Party, but the question we must all ask is, "Did he really win?"

The competition was weak, and in combination with remarkable electoral planning, Starmer undoubtedly had an easy election, winning just enough votes (31%) to make a massive electoral swing. Meanwhile, Farage landed 14% of the vote. If we had followed the popular vote, Farage would have had a right to 91 seats, and Labour should have gotten 214. Instead, Farage secured five, and Starmer won 416.

The next election will be one of the most impactful in Britain's history. Will Nigel Farage fearmonger his way into 10 Downing Street? Or will Zac Polanski's message of hopefulness and a positive change bring him to power? We will have to wait until August 15th, 2029, to see.



There is another party that has gained traction recently: The Green Party. Overseen by Zack Polanski, it has shot up in polls, and in the same estimate, the Greens would win 79 seats, overtaking Labour. Although this is only the beginning for the Greens, in the recent Gorton Denton by-election, Green Party member Hannah Spencer won with a clean 43% of the vote. The Reform candidate only got 28%, while Labour lost, receiving 14% of the vote. In what was previously considered a safe seat for the Labour Party, it's a sign of how poorly things are going on their side. Perhaps taking a page out of Donald Trump's playbook, Nigel Farage accused the residents of Gorton and Denton of "family pressuring" and "rigging the election" with little to no evidence.



He has spurred the violent protesters in Iran who are looking for change and blatantly captured the president of Venezuela. Now, Maduro was a criminal, the last election was a pyrrhic victory, and he didn't deserve to sit in the office, but it isn't up to Trump to decide when (and where) a man should be taken to court.



That is up to the Venezuelans and no one else. So where do you sit? Trump is certainly more productive than his predecessor, Joe Biden, but whether what he is doing is beneficial to anyone but himself is still up in the air. Certainly, Trump's world is one of chaos, and one where everyone is caught in the crossfire. All we must do now is cover our heads and wait out the next three years.

However, with no Brexit to fight for, Farage came to the realisation that his party was composed of far-right zealots, and he soon left UKIP. Only three years later, in a town not far from Central London, he created Reform UK. A new far-right party, he claimed, was different to UKIP, in that it was not a simple protest group but rather a genuine government in waiting. Reform UK stands on a platform of harsh anti-immigration measures, Islamophobia and radical views. Unlike traditional far-right conservatives, Farage has a more centralised view of the English economy. Some describe it as authoritarian. After campaigning in its first general election, Reform UK could only a mere five seats out of 650, two of them being defections. You may think this makes Reform a fringe party not worth paying attention to, especially when the Labour Party under Keir Starmer had the fourth largest majority in British political history.

However, there is a difference between being in parliament and being in power. Keir may have a strong government majority of 404 seats at Westminster, but his polling numbers are falling over the last 12 months. Now, not only are the Conservatives and Labour not the majority, but according to the polls, if an election were held right now, Labour would come in third alongside the Conservatives at fourth behind - you guessed it - Reform UK who would win a monstrous 308 seats.

WAR BETWEEN THE US AND IRAN HAS BEGUN WITH ONE OF THE MOST DESTRUCTIVE DAYS THE MIDDLE EAST HAS EVER SEEN

William Rea Recaps the War In Iran, the upcoming Us Midterm Elections and where the invasion of Ukraine is now.

Only 2 days before writing this, Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, was bombed and killed at 8:10 local time. This will undoubtedly start a war between the US and Iran and will start a conflict that the world has not seen since George Bush's invasion of Iraq in March 2003. This attack has been brewing for months, consisting of rapid negotiations with neither side agreeing on anything; the sticking point has been nuclear development. The US wants Iran to have zero nuclear facilities including ones purely for making energy. This clashes with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, NPT for short. Which allows for civic use of nuclear energy and in fact encourages it, however, Trump demanded that there be no nuclear facilities at all. This was a hard line for Iran's government who, in spite of their oil, is in an energy crisis and are not in a position to make such drastic changes in fear of a revolution. Relations broke down and the US commenced with the attack. However, this is not the first time an unpopular US government has invaded a middle eastern country over "weapons of mass destruction", there are undeniable similarities between George W. Bush's invasion of Iraq and Trump's plans for Iran. Both planned to remove an unpopular government and to stop an unfriendly government from achieving nuclear/chemical military capabilities.

This is relevant because the invasion of Iraq went horrible. From the most conservative estimate, 400,000 to 1,000,000 people died. Regime change was successful, the transfer of power was not. Instantaneously, the replacement government collapsed and American, British and Israeli soldiers looted \$800 million worth of gold and \$200 million worth of oil. This was an unexpected robbery, and was responsible for the collapse of the government. Not to mention the American and Israeli soldiers left their weapons in Iraq, leading to decades of conflicts still going on today. The Iraqi invasion is undeniable proof that US involvement in the Middle East rarely goes well.

It now becomes a question of what will follow. The Iranian government lost its supreme head of government, their general advisor and the leader of the Iranian revolution guard; the decapitation of the state's main leaders leaves their next move unpredictable. The Iranian government is in a rough state after the backlash from the internet shutdown in early February and the killing of protesters in late February. A bombing also took place earlier this year which bolstered the government's popularity as it became a national struggle. In this case, it is hard to imagine this bombing will not create a similar effect.

The Arab nations hate Israel for their continuous war on the innocent people of Gaza. And only a few hours ago, Iran launched missiles at Dubai, almost hitting the Burj Khalifa. It is anyone's guess how the Iranian people and people of the Middle East in general will respond. So far, Jordan and UAE have come out against the attacks, however, these countries are overwhelmingly pro-US and Israel, so that more than likely swung their choice.

Trump's position on this can be summed up in his quote, "the Iranian government seeks to kill, many brave and courageous Americans may die." Not long before appearing to support a revolution in Iran saying, "Regarding the great proud people of Iran, the hour of your freedom is at hand, stay sheltered, bombs will be dropping everywhere. When we are finished, take over your government [...] this will be your only chance for generations". Trump's actions here are not at all comparable to his actions in Venezuela. Where he bombed the capital, kidnapped the president and left. Here, however, he has most of the US navy outside Iran and his rhetoric is a lot more aggressive this time, leaning towards an entire revolution. We can also take from his words that we will see US soldiers hit Iran relatively soon, which would be a move that may forever change Middle Eastern politics.

So what can we predict for the coming wars in the middle east?

First, Benjamin Netanyahu will more than likely continue his aggressive course of action in Gaza and likely join Trump's oncoming invasion of Iran. The Arab League consisting of the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Jordan, Kuwait, and Iraq all condemned Iran after bombings by Iran hit each of them. These bombings killed anywhere from 3-9 people. Dubai was hit the worst; the Burj Khalifa, the world's tallest building, narrowly avoided a missile, the air defence thankfully shot it down with the building suffering only superficial damage. This was an attempt by Iran to inflict damage on US owned air and navy bases, however, their attacks also landed in densely civilian populated areas which can not be justified by "Military defence". NATO has put all its anti air capabilities on high alert following these attacks and Turkey's early radar system is now on 24 hour watch. This turn of events left Europe feeling left out of the conversation, with them not being informed of the attack beforehand. Ursula Von der Leyen called a meeting of the European commission to decide their next move, but safe to say, Trump's actions imply Europe is a minor party in the discussion of global politics.

What can we predict will happen?

First of all Israel's position, although temporarily strengthened, will likely weaken, following the inevitable loss Iran is going to face. Whereas before, Israel always hid behind lobbying groups or simply complying with the US. This time they are directly responsible for a war by choice. This conflict is not one of survival. They are now directly in the open for declaring war on a Islamic nation, which in the face of the twelve day war, has tarnished their reputation among their Arab neighbours. Benjamin Netanyahu was never popular to begin with so it would come as a great surprise to any reasonable man if this is not the catalyst for the next great conflict in the world between the entire Middle East and parts of Central Asia. In contrast with Israel's ever-weakening position, the Arab League is strengthening theirs. This includes the following countries: the Kingdom of Egypt, the Kingdom of Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Republic, Transjordan, and North Yemen. These countries have formed an alliance together against Iran, but also they remain skeptical of the US and Israel. It is not entirely fair to say they are on America's side, but they are most definitely anti-Iran following the Iranian bombings of their city.

Then there are the two key players: Trump's America versus Iran. It is immediately clear that while Iran does have the advantage of this being a defensive war meaning they can rely on home defenses. Alas, in the modern age of warfare this land defensive advantage will not have a great impact as today we fight with drones and bombs rather than with soldiers on the ground. As for the future of Iran, it's not hard to imagine they will lose. The Iranian state will survive more than likely under a forced liberal constitution. This looks especially clear as the supreme leader's son, Mojtaba Khamenei, is the favorite to succeed him and Israel has said that, "no matter who takes over Iran, we will." If the precedent of foreign countries trying to insert themselves into middle eastern politics has anything to say, then it is likely that this too will fail.

"Khamenei, one of the most evil people in History, is dead," - Donald J Trump

The US Midterm Elections: A chance to topple Trump?

To say Donald Trump's presidency has been eventful would be akin to calling the bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima mildly relevant to the second world war. He has put tariffs on what feels like every country on earth, only for them all to turn out to be illegal. He has started a war in Iran, kidnapped the Venezuelan president, torpedoed negotiations in Ukraine and sponsored far-right groups in Eurasia. To say he is unpopular in Europe is also an understatement; he has a meagre 30% approval rate. So it's no wonder that thoughts of impeachment have come up, but how does impeachment work? The US Congress is bicameral, meaning it has two branches of the government, effectively an older and smaller group in the form of the Senate and a more accessible and larger group in the form of the House of Representatives.

The main chamber relevant here is the House of Representatives, where the Democrats have 214 seats vs. the Republicans (Trump's party), who have 218. In the upcoming elections, the Democrats have a few chances to win more seats. But why is this important? As per the constitution, the House of Representatives has the ability to bring the president to court if he or she has committed crimes like treason or illegal actions such as enforcing tariffs, paedophilia or starting wars without congressional approval. As of now, most pollsters put the Democratic odds of winning the House at 80% with a 41% chance of a sweep of both the Senate and the House, which would all but guarantee Trump's presidency coming to an early end. It would not be unfair to assume most people on the earth hope that the Democrats are successful.

The only unknown variable in this complex problem is Trump. There is no knowing what he will do if he fails to win the midterms. He has already attempted to gerrymander the vote in Texas; this ended in failure. Furthermore, democratic governors also threatened to change electoral boundaries in their own states if Trump attempted something like that again. Ultimately, regardless of one's feelings towards someone who I'm sure will be remembered as one of the most controversial presidents of all, it is undeniable that the man known as Donald John Trump has changed the world we live in forever, and regardless of what happens next, the world will never be the same.



The war in Ukraine: Four years on

Four years ago as of February 24th, 2022, Russia launched their most recent attacks into Ukraine, attempting to take the country outright. While it is clear early predictions that Ukraine would instantly crumble proved to be wrong, the later reports that Russia could only sustain a two-year conflict have also been proven incorrect. So what is actually happening in the region?

First, a very small recap. Ukraine used to be part of both the USSR and the Russian Empire. Vladimir Putin (President of Russia) wants to recreate the Russian Empire. He began in 2014 by annexing Crimea. Then on the 24th of February 2022, Russia invaded a region called the "Donbass", which is split down the middle of Russia and Ukraine; hence, the current war was started.

In the early days of the war, Russia did advance substantially, conquering most of Donbass, and people were forgiven for thinking Russia would get the quick victory and annex another chunk of territory, but then the advance stopped. The whole advance stopped due to American, European and global aid pouring into Ukraine, combined with Ukrainian soldiers fighting nobly for their country. They managed to stop the incursion and push Russia back. Eventually, however, there was a stalemate, and that is how things stayed until recently.

With the swearing in of Donald Trump as President of the United States, things have changed rapidly. Aid to Ukraine dried up. Trump has recently urged Zelenskyy to make a peace deal in which Russia would gain all the territory they demanded and Ukraine wouldn't be able to join NATO or the EU. This would effectively turn Ukraine into a Russian puppet state. Zelenskyy refused this, stating he would rather take "no deal at all than force his people to accept a bad one." Since then, Trump has changed his mind many times but now seems to be set on Russia giving Ukraine back some of their territory, not including Donbass or Crimea. However, he would let Ukraine join NATO and the EU. This seems like a more acceptable plan, but only time will tell whether Putin will let this go on or shoot down yet another peace deal.



Debating Europe: Inside the Munster Session of the European Youth Parliament



William Rea reports on the 2026 Munster Regional Session of the European Youth Parliament, where students from across the region gathered for three days of debate, collaboration, and policymaking on some of Europe's most pressing issues.

The European Youth Parliament Munster Regionals 2026 recently took place from the 15th to 18th of February.

What is the European Youth Parliament (EYP)?

In 1987, a woman from a French town called Fontainebleau named Bettina Carr-Allinson saw that younger people of lower socioeconomic backgrounds were not nearly as involved in politics and simply had no interest. So, in an attempt to fix this, she established the EYP to act as a bridge for young people to get involved in politics. She was largely successful, now having over 40 national organisations throughout Europe under her name.

How does the event work?

The most fundamental organisations are the committees. These were the organisations which people worked in. The goal of a committee was to come up with an idea to pass a motion. For example, I was in Culture One and our motion was: "More than 60 Regional and Minority Languages (RMLs) are spoken by 60 million people in Europe. However, this diversity is threatened, as some of these languages are at risk of disappearing, despite language rights being safeguarded by EU law. How can European countries protect the right of RML speakers and the linguistic diversity within Europe?"

Our goal was to find a way to make this motion pass, by creating a resolution which we would then present on Day 3.

So, who was involved? In EYP there are several types of roles. The most common are Delegates. These are all the talented Senior Cycle students that went to the event and participated in sharing their ideas for a new Europe and suggesting motions. Then there were the Chairs. These were the officials who ran the committees, leading the Delegates through the experience. Lastly, there were the Officials. They covered a number of roles from photography to looking after the delegates staying in the hostel, to the president, Adrian, who was running the whole organisation. Everyone worked incredibly hard to get the end result and to make this event a massive success.

DAY 1: All of the delegates assembled in Sheila's hostel, where they would stay for the next three days. The first day would be hosted here in Christian Brothers' College. After a short tour of the premises, we were divided into our committees. Then we would go to our rooms to do ice breakers.

After the main events of the day all the delegates and officials returned to the Hostel, where they would rest for the events that were to come the next day.

DAY 2: The sun rose on Day 2. We all enjoyed breakfast and got dressed before heading down to the College of Commerce and Education. That day we had to come up with our resolution. This was the proposal that we would come up with to present to the Parliament on Day 3. The process was not easy and required everyone in every committee to do hours of research at night and day prepping their speeches and fact-checking their data. In the end, everyone had the resolution prepared and we went back to Sheila's hostel.

DAY 3: On day three the Parliament finally convinced everyone to get dressed up in suits and dresses alike and walked to Clayton and then the presentation could begin. The Youth Parliament was an effective mock-European Parliament. The presentation would go like this

- A committee would be selected to present their motion to the committee
- A person on a team would make an opening speech explaining their goal
- Two people from different teams would then make position speeches explaining their teams' position on the motion
- A person from the presenting team would respond either thanking or countering the speeches made
- The rounds of debate would then begin. Four from any team could present questions to the presenting team which the presenting team would then pick someone to respond to the questions this would happen three times
- The team would make a closing speech summing up why the council should vote for them
- Finally, voting would take place and, if the presenting team got 51% or more of the vote, then it would pass.

At the end of the day most motions passed, and some sadly did not. At the end there were plenty of celebrations, many friends were made, photos taken, and core memories created. Most people enjoyed themselves and had fun and, as the writer of this article, I would highly recommend the experience for anyone, entering Senior Cycle in the coming years.



Should we elect our leaders in same way as our juries?

Daniel Aherne responds to an opinion piece that appeared in The Irish Examiner by Colin Sheridan : Should we select leaders like we do juries

This article examines the potential efficacy of appointing government officials by random selection, akin to jury selection, rather than by democratic election, as is the current norm.

Firstly, this may solve quite a number of problems that often surround a general election and the process by which it is carried out. There would be no more lobbying, no more campaigning and it would remove the hassle that the general election often graces us with every five years.

Imagine, if you will, a simple takeover of power, where those selected would be given a week or so to make their way to Dublin to fulfill their roles in the government. It would be simple, although safety measures will have to be put in place to ensure the stability of their pre-existing job, and its availability in five years' time.

However, there are many concerns surrounding this idea, especially given the importance and role the government plays in our daily lives. Firstly, I doubt the people would be happy with the random selection of those people chosen to represent them. The person chosen may not be fit to lead or represent them.

They also may have a minority view of an existing problem in the area, and this will not bode well for the general public, whose views will ultimately be overshadowed by the chosen person's ambition for their own idea.

This completely throws the principle rule of democracy out the window: Majority Rules. Here the minority may win, should they get lucky, and the majority of people will be left unheard. Should luck play a part in the most important state decisions?

There is also the possibility of someone unqualified or unfit to be put in a position of great power. Imagine a plumber being given the role of Minister for Finance. They haven't a clue what they are doing. They haven't seen this kind of Maths since Junior Cert Business. Problems will arise where a person is completely unprepared for, and/or inexperienced in the area assigned to them. There are reasons that the ministers of government are experienced politicians, and often have years of high-level decision making under their belt.

Finally; Where can we see this in the world today? Well, there is no direct example of this, but a relatable situation is the current US president, Donald Trump.

He is a businessman at heart, and that's how he turned millions into billions. The past US presidents have been politicians all their lives, some longer than others, but they all have experience in representing people on the big stage. Now we have a very rich man with no past experiences leading the most powerful nation and army in the world. It worries some people, and rightly so. Some of his actions are very questionable and his decision-making differs greatly from what "proper politicians" might do. Who can promise us that this won't happen globally should we make the idea reality? No one, so why should we risk it?

While the current system brings inconvenience every five years, I personally would rather have problems every five years, than daily problems with every "politician" that sits in Dublin, and the country they are running. The democratic process is flawed, and when dealing with people, nothing is guaranteed. That said, the individual vested interests of a population will always be more representative than those of a select group already in power. Therefore, democracy should prevail.

"Democracy should prevail"

CBC's Peter Barry remembered: Architect of Anglo-Irish Agreement

Kevin McCarthy reflects on the life and legacy of Peter Barry, former Tánaiste and a key architect of the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

There are probably a few commonalities shared by Christian Brothers' College, Cork, Irish politics and Barry's tea, but the most well known - and the subject of this article - is none other than Mr. Peter Barry.

Peter Barry was born on the 10th of August 1928, and died at the age of 88 on the 26th of August 2016. Peter was born in Blackrock Cork, and would go on to have a very well-rounded career, from being the Tánaiste of Ireland, to owning the majority of shares in his family business of Barry's Tea.

Peter got a range of education from the beginning, first attending the Model School, where he gained skills surrounding Ireland's first official language, before changing schools to Christian Brothers' College, where he took up rugby. His short-lived rugby career with the school took him places, as he went on rugby tours to Belfast and Wales. This is arguably what deepened Peter's love of rugby and Gaelic sports in general.



The President of the United States, Ronald Reagan, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Peter Barry, TD, toast Ireland and the United States at the Embassy of Ireland, Washington DC, on 17 March 1983

After completing his education, Peter rather predictably went into the family business of Barry's Tea. However, while Peter was successful with this career, he didn't simply rest on his laurels. He had greater ambitions and continued to grow his knowledge, by attending lectures at night.

His ambition paid dividends, as in 1970 he became the Lord Mayor of Cork. He set about new developments, such as opening the new Parnell bridge. His political career continued to further heights, becoming the minister for transport and power in 1973. He had a successful career in politics, with his stint in office being remembered mainly for his hand in the creation of the Anglo-Irish Agreement of Northern Ireland.

In the end, Peter Barry's story is one of ambition. While I'm sure many people would settle for controlling a large, successful company, Peter broke the mould somewhat, by forging a new path for himself and not settling for floating through life without making a name for himself.

Peter Barry shows that with determination and willpower you can truly make a life you can be proud of.



"On taking over at Foreign Affairs, I felt we had to make a new attempt to achieve something positive about Northern Ireland"

Decrypting the Legal Challenges of Online Freedom of Speech.

Online freedom of speech is a complex and multifaceted issue. However, *Oscar de Róiste* believes it can be broken down into three unique areas: cancel culture's source; the issue of regulation; social media platforms' need for increased moderation.

Cancel culture's source: the algorithms

Cancel culture is defined by Oxford as "a social environment in which publicly boycotting or withdrawing support for people, organisations, etc. regarded as promoting socially unacceptable beliefs is widespread practice." Cancel culture is becoming increasingly prevalent in our lives, and is now, arguably, commonplace. I personally believe that cancel culture's origin can be sourced from one place: the algorithms employed by social media platforms. Per 2024, people spend on average six hours and forty minutes per day. This is a fifteen minute increase from 2014. A study from the University of Kent showed that Tiktok inevitably led to echo chambers, due to the way the algorithm is solely based on engagement, and human nature where we tend to engage more with

hateful rhetoric. The newly created accounts eventually fell into misogynistic bubbles. These social media algorithms are at fault for creating such polarised and tribalist communities online, or in other words, cancel culture. When a person is silenced through cancel culture, the only place they may seek solace is the group into which they were put. Typically, the silencing from the "opposing" group is used to further reinforce their "socially unacceptable belief". By generalising, the other party is put in a lose-lose situation, becoming as if it were a self-fulfilling prophecy. This forms the "us versus them" tribalist mentality. Social media platforms are to blame for creating cancel culture as we know it today, stifling freedom of speech, creating this dichotomy.

Social Media Platforms need increased moderation

Platforms must be held more accountable to stark errors in conduct. For example, the Charlie Kirk assassination, X hosted uncensored videos of the assassination.

According to the Online Safety Code, platforms will be held accountable for holding extreme or gratuitous violence. Alas, the Irish government failed to impose any consequence on any social media platform that showed the videos. With both systems failing, videos of the assassination were freely viewed for hours after the crisis.

On January 6th, 2021, the US Capitol was stormed by a few thousand people after a speech made by Donald Trump, where he said, "all of us here today do not want to see our election victory stolen by emboldened radical-left Democrats, which is what they're doing." Swathes of people took to Twitter and congregated to organise the riot. According to one media organisation, "social media sites [were] used by the far-right, such as Gab and Parler, directions on which streets to take to avoid the police and which tools to bring to help pry open doors were exchanged in comments."

This event sparked wide debate on the power that political figures have using social media.

In my mind, the platforms should work hand-in-hand with local governments, to not give one or the other complete control over the narrative of a situation.

Clear-cut rules and guidelines ought to be established to create transparency and to eliminate as many grey areas as possible. I am of the opinion that social media algorithms are the birthplace of cancel culture. They are the first barrier to online freedom of speech. We need to tackle the root of the issue, as opposed to simply the visible aftermath.

I share the opinion that the proposed "Chat Control" will only damage the online space and our fundamental right to privacy and data protection. There is a fine line between overstepping and maintaining balance.

I must advocate for social media platforms to be more responsible in the content they allow on their platforms, from housing videos of an assassination, to fuelling a political riot and looting, change must be made.

An issue of regulation

Should everything online be traceable to an individual? Legislation like the Online Safety Code 2024 (OSC) and the potential "Chat Control" make attempts to answer this question. The OSC endeavours to "hold online platforms accountable for keeping their users, especially children, safe online." "The Code protects children from extreme or gratuitous violence by requiring platforms that permit this content to use an effective method of age assurance."

Moreover, "Chat Control", officially the EU's Regulation to Prevent and Combat Child Sexual Abuse, hopes to bypass encryption of texting apps like WhatsApp, Signal and Telegram in order to scan for child sexual abuse material. This has sparked major controversy worldwide with some even calling it "an Orwellian nightmare". Many dispute the efficacy of this legislation in protecting children, and are more concerned with it jeopardising people's privacy. Websites argue that Chat Control is a vessel for mass surveillance that is ineffective at protecting children. While also violating our fundamental right to privacy and data protection, as guaranteed by Articles 7 and 8 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU.

Legislation that tackles online defamation, while protecting the necessary privacy of individuals, is yet to be refined and perfected to maintain our rights. Mass surveillance is not an apt solution in the face of freedom of speech, it can quickly turn into complete censorship of anything deemed unsatisfactory by the government.



As a final word, we must push for a pluralist society, instead of one where different opinions are shut down.

"For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others."

— NELSON MANDELA

Boys not too swift to become "Swifties"

Taylor Swift has risen to significant prominence in the turn of the modern era. Amassing over 100 million monthly listeners on Spotify alone, it is clear she has found a recipe for success in the music industry. Her most recent album "The Life of a Showgirl" shattered records, earning \$135 million in the first week of the album's launch. Without any doubt, her music has certainly struck a chord with listeners all over the world. As made evident through her astonishingly high listener count, Taylor Swift has a legion of committed fans. One could even go as far as to say that the modern-day buzz that surrounds Taylor Swift in the 21st century is equal to, if not greater than, that of the likes of "Beatlemania" in the 60s. A remarkable difference between Taylor Swift's listener base and other legendary artists is that the vast majority of her fans are female, whereas for the likes of artists such as The Beatles there is no notable disparity in this regard.

It is definitely a possibility that boys are less inclined to listen to Taylor Swift for certain reasons. I conducted field research to get to the bottom of this phenomenon. I interviewed a handful of my peers to try and understand why Taylor Swift doesn't have remotely as many male listeners. Most individuals I questioned felt almost offended that I had asked them. It seems that Taylor Swift is dismissed by boys as music for girls. The group I had interviewed also expressed that they were not open to listening to Taylor Swift's music. This behaviour is likely down to the fact that Taylor Swift tries to appeal to women and doesn't make much of an effort to establish a male audience.

On the topic of gender-based marketing, Taylor Swift's marketing team are some of the best in the business. If you haven't heard of Taylor Swift, you must be living under a rock. Taylor Swift is promoted in a unique way, in that you don't see any of her advertisements walking down the street, but once you enter the online domain, she becomes an omnipresent figure. This reflects the modern day, where on social media platforms

popular with younger generations such as TikTok and Instagram, you can pay for your videos to be shown to a greater audience. Unaffiliated advertisement of Taylor Swift is also quite common on such platforms, where fans are eager to flaunt their newest merchandise or discuss her newest releases.

A notable aspect of Taylor Swift's revenue is her concerts. Her recent The Eras Tour was the first tour ever to hit the \$1 billion revenue milestone. Later on in the tour, she managed to double this revenue, reaching \$2 billion. This is due to her ticket pricing, which can be almost exploitative at times, with fans having to cough up thousands of euros just to attend one concert. The prices, however, are set by Taylor's label rather than by her, so it is important to acknowledge that when assessing her as an individual.

Despite the record-shattering revenue figures, her tours can be quite expensive to fund, requiring money to transport extravagant props and stage effects from state to state, country to country. Additionally, her tours take a lot of effort. While some may be under the illusion that she just stands on stage and is under no strain, whether it's the constant travelling or performing between 44 to 46 songs per show, it is clear that she must work long hours for an extended period of time. There is clearly an element of selflessness in her character to go through all this trouble when she has more than enough money to live out the rest of her days in comfort. Instead, she travels to countless areas across the globe, no matter how homesick she may be, in the pursuit of giving her fans an unforgettable experience. There is no doubt in my mind that if she were to have control over the price of tickets, she would lower them for her fans.

My overall impression of Taylor Swift is that she is a good character. In a world that is filled with hatred and negativity, her songs spread positivity through themes such as self-love and acceptance. She creates a loving community for her fans and makes music that unites people all over the world. While I personally am not a fan, I commend her music and her work and wish her the best in her career.

- James Hurley



The value of the comic medium

Over the past few years graphic novels and comics have become a larger part of pop culture than ever before, and have become more widely recognised as great works of art in their own right. But what does a comic present that could lead to such widespread popularity, and why can they be seen as a lower art form than books or film?

So, what are the benefits of the comic medium? A quality graphic novel can be a blend between many forms of media, such as novels, films or classical artwork. Comics can use techniques from film to portray speed, action and emotion more subtly and effectively than it is often used in literature. But comics can also retain the benefits of novels and poetry, that being a long form story that can sometimes be spread over thousands of pages, or monologues and dialogue that can sound more unnatural than in film, due to the suspension of disbelief that comes with the illustrated medium.

But, the comic didn't get where it is today by merely copying the attributes of other pieces of media, comics have a distinct style all their own, with deceptively simple art that can be incredibly effective. Comics are also arguably the simplest way for an artist to portray their vision without much compromise, and many great artists, such as Bryan Lee O Malley, Hergé and Makoto Yukimura have used the comic medium to incredible effect when crafting brilliant works of art.

In the end, is it any wonder that graphic novels have gotten such a boost in popularity as of lately, due to the deceptively simple, quality story telling that it provides. After all a picture paints a thousand words.

- Kevin McCarthy



An dóchas do Mheiriceá nua é Zohran Mamdani?

Is í Mericeá an tír is caipitliche ar fud an domhain. Áit a imíonn caimiléireacht le ceann sreinge, áit a méadaíonn fiacha gan smacht is áit a mharaíonn ICE muintir na háite i gcorplár an lae. Pléann Oscar de Róiste an tír nua.

D'fhás Mamdani aníos i Uganda agus san Afraic Theas, mar gheall ar sin, is dócha gur sóisialaí é ó bhí sé ina leanbh. Dúirt Mamdani go raibh a leanbhaíocht san Afraic "taught me what inequality looks like up close." Ina dhiaidh sin, bhog Mamdani agus a theaghlach go dtí Cathair Nua-Eabhrac nuair a bhí sé seacht mbliana d'aois. I mbunscoil, ghlac Mamdani pháirt i dtoghchán bréige, bhí súil aige a bheith ina uachtarán, ina fheachtas, phléigh sé comhchearta agus beartais fritchogaidh, ag caitheamh tuilleadh airgid ar chaiteachas oideachas in ionad caiteachais cogaidh. Is léir dom go raibh a óige a bhí mar bhonn faoina luachanna sóisialacha.

"Justice has to be more than an idea; it has to be material."

Ní chreideann Mamdani i gcoincheap billiúnaí. Ina chéad chuid cainte, nuair a rinneadh é méara Nua-Eabhrac, dúirt Mamdani go "[tonight] we turn the page on a politics that abandons the many and answers only to the few."

Tá sé seo corraitheach. Sa tír leis an ngeilleager is saoire, go minic déantar cur síos uirthi mar thír rite mar chomhlacht, éiríonn sóisialaí gráite ag an tír.

Cuireann Mamdani béim ar chomhchearta, dlí agus laghdú caiteachais cogaidh, ag cur in iúl Meiriceá chomh difriúil ón Meiriceá sa lá atá inniu ann. Anuas ar sin, níl Mamdani ach ceithre bliana is tríocha d'aois, rud a thaispeánann go mbeidh sé níos ceangailte leis an domhan nua-aimseartha agus an lucht oibre.

Anois, feicimid na hathruithe a gheallann sé don phobal. Ba mhaith le Mamdani córas nua de bhusanna cathrach saor in aisce a chruthú, reo cíosanna sna tithe cíosfódúla a chur i bhfeidhm, agus siopa grósaera rialtais láimhseáilte a bhunú i ngach cúig bhuirg.

Cuireann Mamdani roimhe dhá chéad míle tithe ar chostas íseal le tógáil agus cúram páiste le fáil d'éinne. Ba mhaith le Mamdani íospá \$30 roimh 2030 agus cáin níos airde a ghearradh ar dhaoine a faigheann \$1 milliún bliantúil nó níos mó agus ar chomhlachtaí sárphroifideach.

Cháin Mamdani caipitleachas nua-aimseartha ag tarlú i Meiriceá, agus cáineann sé an mineastráil Truimp. Arís, dúirt Mamdani ina chéad chuid cainte nuair a rinneadh é méara Nua-Eabhrac,

"If we embrace this brave new course, rather than fleeing from it, we can respond to oligarchy and authoritarianism with the strength it fears, not the appeasement it craves. [...] After all, if anyone can show a nation betrayed by Donald Trump how to defeat him, it is the city that gave rise to him. And if there is any way to terrify a despot, it is by dismantling the very conditions that allowed him to accumulate power."

Is léir dom go bhfuil na hathruithe a chuir Mamdani i láthair ag brú Cathair Nua-Eabhrac i mbealach ceart. Is brú maith é, brú a thugann tosaíocht do phobal thar na saibhre. An leanann imoibriú slabhrúil trí Mheiriceá ar fad? An seasann níos mó polaiteoirí don mhuintir na háite? Éiríonn daoine bréan den chaimiléireacht uafásach, mar a deirtear, "tagann an t-olc de dhroim na cumhachta". B'fhéidir níl ach seans amháin fágtha againn chun ár ndomhan a athrú, agus is é sóisialachas an tslí sin.



Back row: L-R - Khaled Abdelrazik, Tom Huggins, Ger Kingston, Adam Kirwan, David Cronin, Hugo Raferty, Alex Maher, Cal McCarthy, Breanainn O Dalaigh, Jack Punch, Padraig Foley, Billy Sheehan, James Harrington, Sam Barry, Ronan O Sullivan, Patrick Spelman, Will Manley, Ben Hayes Front row L-R : Sean Riordan, Ciaran Kelly, Dessie Carroll, Oran Kingston, Conor Stack, Bobby Power, Ben Hegarty, Danny O' Donovan, Finn Brady, Colm Shannon, James Healy, Patrick McCarthy

Making History: CBC's Road to the Dean Ryan Final

Ben Hegarty reflects on CBC's historic run to their first-ever Dean Ryan Cup final, a campaign built on belief, resilience, and pride.

My Dean Ryan Cup experience is something I will always look back on with fond memories and pride, irrespective of the final outcome. From the opening rounds in Templemore to the final whistle in Kilmallock, the campaign was filled with moments that showed what we were capable of as a group. Before this year, the school had never won a single Dean Ryan match. Reaching our first ever Dean Ryan Cup final was a huge achievement for the school and the team.

Our first-round fixture drew us to an unpredictable rival, Our Lady's Templemore. We had played Templemore two years earlier, but, as we proved to ourselves, a lot can change in a year, from losing to each and every one of our opponents in previous years to beating almost all of them. We won comfortably, progressing into the next round of the competition against Midleton CBS.

Our rivalry with Midleton has been building over the years, but we had never really come close to beating them. The venue was Pairc Uí Chaoimh on a windy Friday afternoon. Not only did we beat Midleton, but we did so by a staggering 12 points. We dominated the middle third, with Conor Stack, Gerard Kingston and Ciaran Kelly impressing on the day.

The semi-final victory over Thurles CBS showed the character and intensity we had built up to all year. Even when things weren't going perfectly, particularly in front of goal early on, we kept trusting our system. We came in at half-time, and the team talk was simple: we were told to calm down and take our scores. We were nervous, and you could tell. The burst of goals that swung the game, along with massive performances from lads like Tom Huggins,

and Alex Maher proved how dangerous we could be when everything clicked. We conceded only one goal and a point from play as our backline gave an outstanding display. Our work rate, tackling, and resilience reflected the standards that had been driven into us since the start of the year.

The final against Ardscoil Rís was heartbreaking. We controlled large parts of the first half and handled the terrible conditions well, going in ahead at half-time. But as momentum shifted in the second half, we struggled to regain our foothold. Losing by such a small margin hurt deeply because it felt like the game was there for us.

A huge part of this journey was the input of our coaches. Mr. Traolach Martin, Mr. Tony Wall and Mr. Darragh O'Callaghan believed in us from day one and pushed us when standards dropped. Without a doubt they played a major role in the success of our team and found the right balance.

Overall, while the disappointment still lingers, this Dean Ryan campaign gave real recognition to hurling in CBC as well as lifelong memories and a real sense of pride in wearing the CBC jersey. A unique jersey I'm sure nobody will forget for a while. My valuable lessons learned from the experience were clear, for me: when things were tough I knew I could rely on my teammates. The importance of teamwork and trust has really grown in my eyes. My final lesson learned was that failure was much more of a lesson than winning will ever be. We have reflected as a team and have highlighted areas of improvement we never would have looked at. The ultimate goal in our view is to win a Harty Cup and this is just a stepping stone in our journey. I can't wait to play again next year.



Premier Class

CBC past pupil, David Meyler, played in the English Premier League and gained multiple caps for the Republic of Ireland. *James Hurley* profiles one of CBC's finest graduates from Mr. Hogan's famed Soccer Academy

David Meyler (Born 1989) is a former premier league midfielder, and international player. He represented CBC at school level and played for the Cork City Academy, before signing his first professional contract with Cork city in 2008. After a series of appearances for the Republic of Ireland national team, he was then signed soon afterwards by Sunderland, at the age of 19, for a fee roughly between £250,000-£500,000. However he would not debut until the next season, against Blackburn Rovers on the 28th of December 2009. Unfortunately, his debut season was not particularly notable, getting sent off in his third game, and suffering a serious cruciate ligament injury, which side-lined him for the rest of the season. He made a quick recovery and was able to join the Sunderland reserves team in November 2010. Throughout his career at Sunderland, he would fail to secure many minutes, and mostly played for the reserve team.

A big breakthrough in his career was his loan move to Hull City in the 2012/2013 season, where he was given more opportunity to develop as a player. After 6 months on loan,

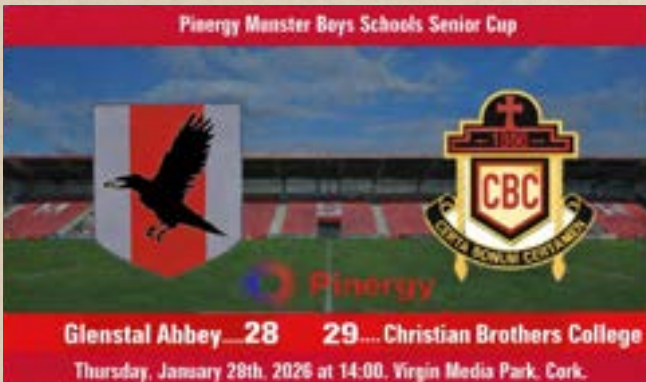
Hull City made the move to purchase Meyler, for a transfer fee of £1.8 million. In his debut season in the EFL Championship, he had 28 appearances, 5 goals and 3 assists as a midfielder. This played a significant role in Hull City's promotion to the Premier League for the 2013/2014 season, where Meyler would yet again play in the top flight of English football. Despite the challenging nature of the Premier League, he managed to achieve 2 goals and 1 assist, helping his team narrowly avoid demotion by four points. In the 2014/2015 season however, luck would not be on their side, as they were demoted to the championship, with Meyler only adding one goal and one assist to his tally. The following year (2015/2016), he would guide his side to the first tier again, with 2 goals and an assist. The 2016/2017 season would be Meyler's last in the Premier League. He managed to score one goal, but it was not sufficient to prevent his team from demotion. The 2017/2018 season was his last with Hull City, however he went out with a bang, scoring 5 goals and achieving 2 assists.

Meyler would proceed to continue his career with Reading FC. His time there was short-lived however, as he went on loan to Coventry after 5 appearances with Reading. He made 5 more appearances with Coventry, before retiring due to a long term knee injury problem.



CBC BREAK GLENSTAL HEARTS IN THRILLING QUARTER FINAL QUALIFIER

CBC Senior Cup squad are providing their large support base with memorable moments in a Cup campaign against Glenstal, Crescent College Comprehensive and PBC. **Rossa Kinirons** looks back at the thrilling encounter against Glenstal



Christians headed into this anticipated knock-out match as heavy favourites, despite underwhelming performances at the beginning of the season.

With only five minutes left on the clock, it was the Limerick side who had one foot in a first quarter-final in seven years. But the Cork side had other ideas. A breathtaking comeback, led by out-half Conor Mulvihill, sent the Cork side into the last eight.

After eight minutes of additional time, Mulvihill stepped up to take the potentially game-winning conversion. This was it. No second chances. It was win or go home. Wind into his face, right in the corner, the out-half made no mistake and sent the CBC faithful into a frenzy.

The defending champions got off to the ideal start, when winger Mal O'Leary crashed over in the corner after a set-play scrum move.

Mulvihill's conversion went just left of the posts as did a subsequent penalty effort from about 40m. Glenstal capitalized a few minutes later when second row Rory O'Neill went over. Oisín Rowan's conversion made it 5-7. Glenstal survived a scare from the CBC maul, which was held up. When Glenstal got an attacking lineout of their own they punished the Cork side. A clever lineout sent Aegnus O'Laughlin over. Rowan converted again to make it 5-14.

Moments later a pinpoint '50-22' from Mulvihill had CBC on the front foot, and the Christians' maul went to work again. It was held up initially, but Sam Healy went over eventually. Mulvihill added the extras to make it 12-14. Glenstal survived two further scares from the CBC maul to carry their lead into half-time playing against the wind. Strong carries from Jack O'Callaghan and suburb jacking by centre Caleb McKinnie gave CBC some possession, but they struggled for territory and were forced to kick back to Glenstal on many occasions.

Glenstal made their way into the '22' with the wind at their backs, and a smart kick by out-half Patrick Peters sent winger Roche over in the corner. Rowan's conversion made 12-21. CBC fought back through a break by O'Callaghan, leading to Healy's second try of the game, again converted by Mulvihill. But, again, Glenstal pulled ahead. A superb solo run by Peters was complete as he handed off the last defender to crash over under the posts. Glenstal celebrated as if they won the game, which most believed they had after Rowan's fourth conversion. But, once again CBC showed their resilience, as a period of sustained pressure resulted in a penalty by Mulvihill. However, CBC couldn't deal with the restart, and the ball was knocked into touch 10 metres out from their own line. Captain David MacCoitir led by example, winning a clutch breakdown penalty after the maul was stopped. The crowd had their hearts in their mouths when the ball was knocked on at halfway, as we were deep into additional time. The game was not finished yet, as Glenstal's set move off the scrum broke down, giving CBC another opportunity.

This time, they were not as forgiving. Glenstal gave away another penalty, and yet again the maul could not be stopped as Tom Kelly went over. Now Mulvihill stepped up, with the weight of the school and dreams of back-to-back titles on his shoulders. He did not miss.

RISE THROUGH UNITY

Michael Keane highlights Donncha O'Callaghan's achievements, values and inspiration to future generations.

Donncha O'Callaghan is someone who needs little introduction. A past-pupil of Christian Brothers' College, Cork, Donncha was a prolific rugby player, winning 94 caps for Ireland and a further four for the British and Irish Lions. He won a Munster Schools Senior Cup medal in 1997, and debuted for the Munster senior team in the same year. Donncha went on to make his Irish Senior debut in March 2003 against Wales.

Some of Donncha's most precious and most notable achievements include Munster's two European Cup victories in 2006 and 2008. Under the closed roof of the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff in '06, Munster broke new ground when overcoming Biarritz Olympique, 23-19. Two years later at the same venue, Donncha collected his second European medal when the Reds toppled Top 14 giants, Toulouse, in a nail-biting 18-16 win. During a golden era for Irish rugby, peopled with generational talents such as Paul O'Connell, Brian O'Driscoll, Ronan O'Gara and David Wallace, Donncha played a pivotal role as Ireland claimed a first Grand Slam in 61 years when overcoming Wales in Cardiff in 2009. Playing alongside another CBC great in scrumhalf Tomás O'Leary, Ireland achieved greatness collecting Triple Crown, Championship and Grand Slam honours after an epic tie against their greatest adversaries during this era – Wales (guided by former Ireland head coach, Warren Gatland). Donncha and company defeated France, Italy, England, Scotland and Wales in a remarkable Championship that saw Donncha and Paul O'Connell become one of the most feared second-row partnerships in world rugby.

When Donncha was invited to CBC for the traditional Jersey Presentation event in January, he delivered an inspiring speech to the Junior and Senior squads as well as a captive full school assembly in the College auditorium. Reminiscing about his own Senior Cup campaign, O'Callaghan told the gathering that the Jersey Presentation ceremony brought back special memories to him.

"It's a bit of a full circle moment for me," he said. "I was looking up from where you are seated today waiting to get my Senior Cup jersey in 1997 from Dominic Crotty. I was absolutely thrilled to be invited to come in and do what Dominic did all those years ago."

"In 1997 when I was able to play with an incredible 7 in Patrick Lee (2026 Senior head coach David Lee's younger brother), it was incredible to see how close we all were. A real small community but we, as a squad, represented the CBC community and that is so important. I just want to say thank you to everyone in CBC; it is an incredible education that you get here, but I was also taught about standards and passion. That will stay with me: that honesty of effort and that ability to excel."

Munster Schools Senior Cup Winners 1997



Back row L-R: Eoin Daly, Andrew Mullins, Pat Hanlon, Alan Hickey, Donncha O'Callaghan, David Soden, Tadg Daly, Cian Bradley, Darragh Holt.

Front row L-R: Tom Olden, Mark Nathan, Kieran Scully, Brian O'Mahony (capt.), Michael Manning, Patrick Lee.

Replacements: Michael Barrett, Jack D'Arcy, Pat McCarthy, Denis Lyons, Paul Farragher, James Coughlan, Robert McGrath.

O'Callaghan spoke openly on what wearing a Christians rugby jersey means. "It is an important part of being young men for the Senior Cup team and the Junior Cup team that you're going to come across a lot of important moments in your life. This is going to be the first time you realise that pressure and that comes representing us, the school, your parents that give so much of their time and effort. That type of pressure can be a lot, so it's really important to learn as well. I encourage all the boys who are lucky enough to receive a jersey today to embrace the pressure.

The jersey represents us all to aim for the highest of standards. In Christians that means the pressure can lead to two things - it can feel like a strait-jacket, or it is a cape. It has that ability to show off your superpowers."

Our famous past-pupil reassured the players to not allow the jersey become a burden. "We don't expect these boys to be anything different, to grow another arm or another leg. We need them to bring up the standards and their values to be their very best."

O'Callaghan has fond recollections of that famous 1997 campaign that saw the first in a four-in-a-row of Senior Cups come to the College. "Today I saw a photo of us playing in the Senior Cup in 1997. That photo was taken before the game kicked off. That was the most pressure I've ever felt. You are lucky enough to get a jersey, and stand up here, so make it the best possible spot you can."

"I was lucky enough to go to a community lunch and one of the people at the tables was a teammate, Michael Barrett. Michael basically didn't get picked in our starting Senior Cup team, but fought, and he found a way to get into the squad. We were 16-0 up against St. Munchin's in the final, but somehow lost our way and trailed 20-16. Everyone thought, 'it's over it's gone'. Michael Barrett came on and showed enthusiasm and energy - nothing he hadn't shown all year - and he cared so much. He scored one of the most amazing tries I have ever seen in rugby, Michael Barrett won us that Senior Cup game. The point I'm trying to make to you is, I know that there are people that are disappointed with selections, but be ready, be ready to come on and you'll never know."

O'Callaghan officially retired from rugby in April 2018 at the age of 39. After retirement Donncha went into different areas of the media. He became a coach/trainer on the popular TV show, Ireland's fittest family in 2017, having coached an impressive five families to victory across seven seasons and Christmas specials so far. In May 2021 he became a presenter on the 2FM Breakfast Show alongside Doireann Garrihy and Carl Mullan before deciding to step down from that role in July 2024.

In October 2024 Donncha wrote a Children's book - Disaster Dad: Chicken Chaos, a fun children's book with a young boy named Finn as the main character and narrator. The book did so well that a sequel entitled Disaster Dad: Fun Day Fiasco was released.

As well as his professional career, O'Callaghan is a father of four, three daughters and a son.

In 2009 he married Jennifer Harte. He is also widely considered as a philanthropist, becoming a UNICEF Ambassador in 2009, then going on to becoming a board member in 2012. He was responsible for the launch of UNICEF's survival gifts campaign, which tries to bring good clothing, food and warmth to those who needed it in 190 countries and territories.



Munster Schools Senior Cup Squad 2026, Jersey Presentation in School Auditorium

History Made: CBC Win First Munster Senior Schools Cup

CBC created history when claiming the Michael Twomey Munster FAI Schools U19 Soccer Cup against Douglas CS at St. Colman's Park during the February mid-term break.

This is CBC's first provincial title at this level, with the Sidney Hill school proving worthy winners after a brave display against a gallant Douglas side. Level after extra-time, the penalty shoot-out proved to be just as tense as game-time. A dramatic shoot-out saw Christians shot-stopper, Harry Walsh, make a vital save, while Darragh Morley's coolly-converted spot-kick gave CBC a dramatic victory. A well drilled Douglas Community School side looked to dictate the midfield exchanges from the first whistle in a game that played in testing wet conditions. CBC, however, ably handled the inclement conditions, and as the game settled down, Finn Dalton and Liam Lynch began to find their rhythm at midfield



The breakthrough for CBC almost came in the opening exchanges when Conor Burke nearly carved open the defence after some beautiful interplay between Larry Butler and Max Murphy, while Darragh Morley remained a constant threat, twice coming inches away from the opener.

A disallowed Douglas goal in the 30th minute served as a wake-up call. CBC responded instantly, with Emmet Cronin and Calum Carroll linking up to thread a dangerous ball through, only for a brave Douglas block to keep the deadlock intact as the halftime whistle blew.

Second Half Drama

The second half saw CBC turn the wind to our advantage, with Ben Phillips and Tom Hickey doing well down the left wing. However, a Douglas free-kick caught in the wind wasn't dealt with, and suddenly, we were a goal in arrears.

After Finn Dalton was brought down on the edge of the box, he took charge of the situation himself, aided by a slight deflection, found the top corner to send the CBC support into a frenzy.

The closing stages were a heart-pounding affair. Shane Kavanagh saw a powerful header saved, and Luke O'Keeffe came agonizingly close when his shot rolled through the keeper's legs, only to find no one there for the tap-in.

After a scoreless, tense period of extra time where Harry Walsh stood tall under immense pressure, it came down to the ultimate test: a penalty shootout.

The composure from the spot was remarkable. Finn Dalton, Luke O'Keeffe, Max Murphy, and Conor Burke all buried their efforts with clinical precision. Then came the moment of magic: Harry Walsh guessed right, diving to deny Douglas's fourth effort.

The weight of history fell to Darragh Morley. With ice in his veins, Darragh stepped up and duly obliged, sparking scenes of pure jubilation. For the first time in our history, the Michael Twomey Cup is coming home to CBC.

Christians now progress to the Dr Tony O'Neill National Cup semi-final.

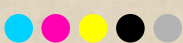
Christian Brothers College, Cork Squad: Harry Walsh, Charlie O'Riordan, Jack Mills, Conor Burke, Larry Butler, David Callanan, Calum Carroll, Coleton Corkery, Emmet Coughlan, Evan Coughlan, Finn Dalton, Tom Hickey, Shane Kavanagh, Rossa Kinirons, Darragh Lawless, Liam Lynch, Oisín McCarthy, Tom McGrath, Darragh Morley, Max Murphy, Adam O'Brien, Donal O'Connor, Luke O'Keeffe, James O'Mahony, Aidan O'Shea, Ben Phillips and Jack Punch.

When Roy Keane Walked In

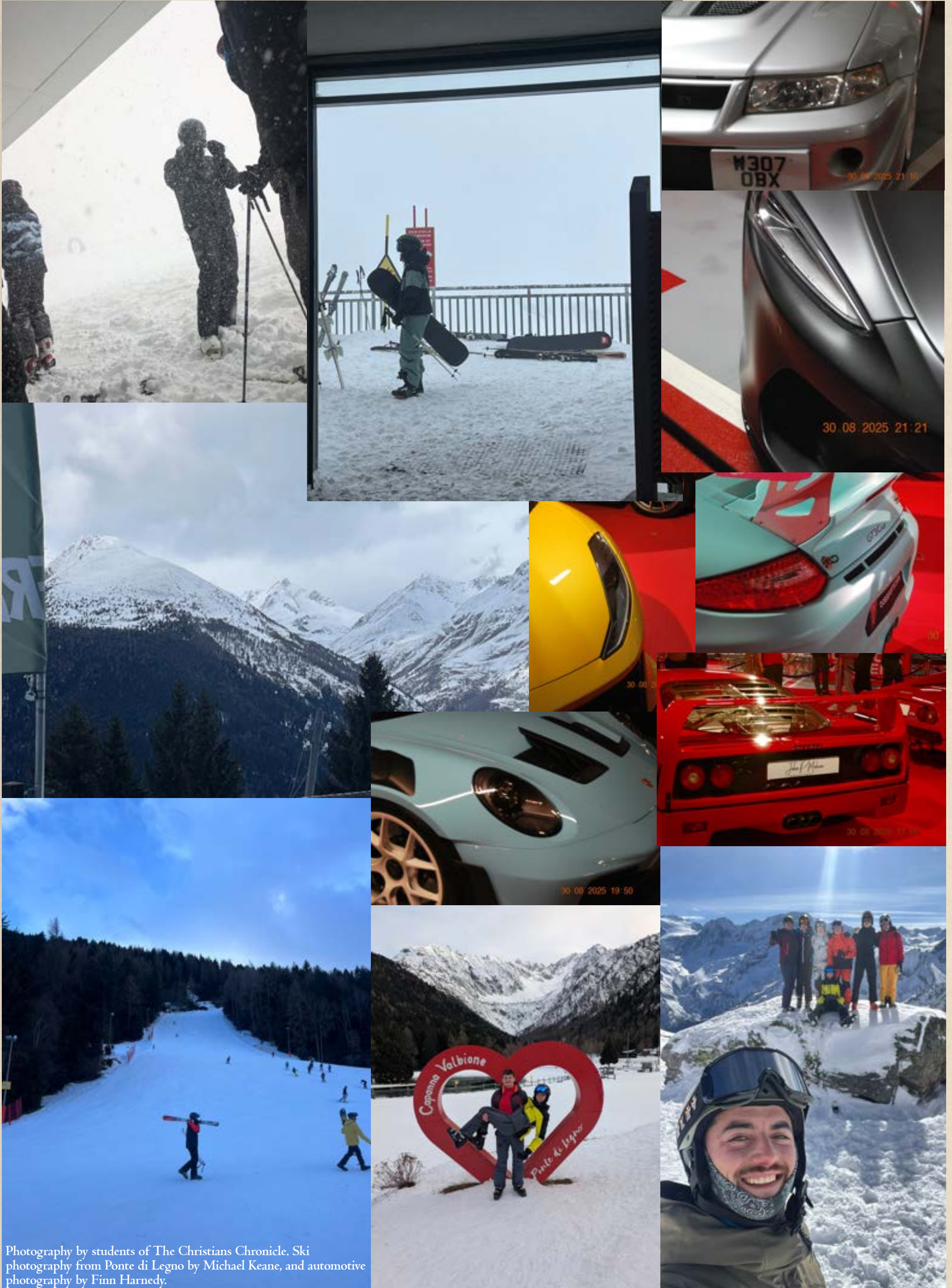
It was only my first day of volunteering for the Irish Guide Dogs when a very special guest strolled into the building. We were gathered around a table in the canteen, myself and a few other volunteers, when our supervisor told me to peek my head out the window. There I spotted a familiar face with a very large beard. It was the inimitable Roy Keane.

Roy Keane was very polite. He came in and greeted everybody individually, even Aumo, the rogue puppy in the corner! He grabbed a coffee and sat down for a chat with us. We talked mostly about soccer and the upcoming ski holiday for us. He was very informed about the Irish players and how they were doing. What stood out to me was how much he enjoyed being around the guide dogs. He spoke to us about the importance of the work The Irish Guide Dogs do and what he does as an ambassador of The Irish Guide Dogs. Meeting Roy Keane, Manchester United and Ireland legend, was, simply, inspiring. The volunteering work itself felt very rewarding, and I'm sure I will go back some day to help out again. And maybe, even, meet once again the man himself.

- Ben Hegarty



MOMENTS IN FOCUS: A STUDENT PHOTO COLLECTION



Photography by students of The Christians Chronicle. Ski photography from Ponte di Legno by Michael Keane, and automotive photography by Finn Harnedy.

