



Coventry and Warwickshire Humanists Newsletter April 2026

Dear Fellow Humanists

Welcome to the April 2026 edition of the Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists Newsletter. I hope that you are all enjoying the Spring-like weather that we have with us as I write this Newsletter. It was good to have an in-person meeting on 16th April – our first in 2026! It was good to see all those who attended. Modern technology gives us the opportunity for online meetings through Zoom – but there is nothing like a face-to-face meeting and the opportunity to share thoughts with fellow Humanists in an informal manner.

At the meeting on 16th April, we were very fortunate that Esther Gogo-Hassan gave us a very interesting outline of African Humanism. More about this interesting discussion later.

Further to my comments in the March Newsletter and the article 'Has Organised Humanism Had It's Day?' by Maggie Hall, we have decided that the next in-person meeting on Thursday 21st May will be devoted to discussing how we can build Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists, not just the content and quality the meetings, but building and developing our membership. Again, more about this later. I hope that you all continue to enjoy the current sunny Summer spell and we will look forward to seeing you on Thursday 21st May

Thank you and very best wishes to you all

Brian Goredema-Braid

Chair of Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists

Meetings:

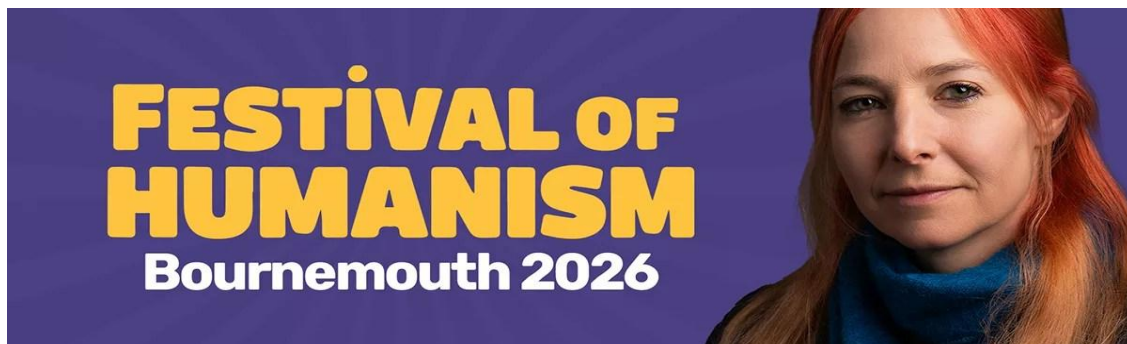
Thursday 16th April: We were very fortunate that Esther Gogo-Hassan from Birmingham humanists agreed to attend this meeting to share her professional and personal experience on African Humanism. Esther, originally from Nigeria, drew upon her familiarity with African atheism and the ways that people with African heritage navigate belief, doubt and cultural expectations, especially from Nigeria. Esther explored how a Humanist lens, focussing on shared humanity, dignity and ethical living beyond religious doctrine. How this can help us to make sense of the cultural traditions, values and heritage that shape identity in many African communities. Esther is a trained counsellor and Humanist Pastoral Support Practitioner. Esther is a former Christian raised in a deeply religious Nigerian household. Esther was a priest in training before finding Humanism. Esther currently supports people leaving religions, through deconstruction, loss of faith and rebuilding identity. Esther is also passionate about supporting women, apostates and those recovering from religious trauma. Definitely, a very interesting meeting led by an excellent speaker.

Thursday 21st May: We do not have a speaker for this meeting, but in light of the comments in the March Newsletter and the article 'Has Organised Humanism Had Its Day?' by Maggie Hall, we have decided that this meeting will be devoted to discussing how we can build Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists, not just the content and quality the meetings, but building and developing our

membership. There will not be a set agenda as such, just an opportunity for everyone to make a contribution. While we have had some very interesting meetings with some excellent speakers, many of whom have travelled quite some distance to be with us, the attendances remain slow and steady. Maybe we as a Committee are not recognising the needs and requests of all of our members? Whatever the reason, all comments and suggestions will be welcome. Or as the promoters of the TV wrestling of the 1960's used to say, 'No Holds Barred!'

Thursday 18th June: The Annual Humanist Convention, and 'Festival of Humanism' will be held on 12th to 14th June in Bournemouth. I do believe that it is important that as many of us as possible are able to attend the Convention as it is always useful to ascertain the current thinking of the various speakers at the Convention as well as mingling and networking with other Humanists from across the country and overseas. Three of us, Adrian Davis, Jane Sault and myself will all be in attendance at the Convention this year. We will be pleased to provide everyone with feedback and a resume of the Convention and comments on the various speakers and content of their presentations.

Humanist Convention 2026 – Festival of Humanism:



Bournemouth International Centre, Exeter Road, Bournemouth BH2 5BH

The Festival of Humanism is a true highlight of the humanist calendar. Kicking off on Friday evening with a fantastic evening of entertainment and welcome drinks in the bar, from Saturday morning through to Sunday afternoon we welcome scientists and campaigners, historians and artists, politicians and journalists, to fascinate, educate, entertain – and inspire!

There are many famous and interesting speakers at this Convention. One that is arousing a lot of interest is Dr Alfredo Carpineti who is an astrophysicist, science journalist, and dedicated social activist who has spent his career breaking down complex scientific concepts for millions of readers.



Holding an MSc in Quantum Fields and Fundamental Forces, alongside a PhD in Astrophysics from Imperial College London, he has served as the Senior Staff Writer and Space Correspondent for IFLScience for ten years. Over this decade, he has authored more than 6,000 articles, bridging the crucial gap between academic research and everyday public understanding. Beyond the written word, he is an avid science communicator who produces engaging videos and educational podcasts under the popular moniker The Astroholic.

As Humanists Chief Executive Andrew Copson said, 'We invite all humanists to join us in Bournemouth this June for what promises to be an essential and thought-provoking lecture within a packed weekend. As humanity looks set to return to the cosmos – willingly or otherwise – it is vital that we take our shared humanist values of fairness, equality, and compassion with us as we go. Space exploration raises profound questions around justice, freedom, and rule of law. Alfredo's talk will be a crucial reminder that these new frontiers must benefit all of humanity – not just a wealthy few.'

Other famous speakers include new Humanists UK President Janet Ellis, former President Professor Alice Roberts, and Maggie Ardiente the President of Humanists International, Lord Alf Dubbs,

Madeline Goodall, Adam Rutherford. Of special interest will be a talk from Jaswir Kawksby a former Muslim paediatrician and Yaniv Akinin a former secular Jewish scientist Muslim and Jewish. There are also many other interesting speakers.

If you are interested in attending, please be advised that the general ticket sales end on 6th May

“Money Lies and God” by Katherine Stewart

At the 2025 Humanist Convention, one of the highlights for me was the lecture by Katherine Stewart on her new book, ‘Money Lies and God. I am pleased to say that I have now read most of the book and I have found it an absolutely amazing read. This book follows on from her previous publication, ‘The Power Worshipers’ where she exposes the inner workings of the ‘Engine of Unreason’ roiling American culture and politics.



Katherine Stewart

In this new book, Katherine asks ‘Why have so many Americans turned against democracy?’ The book takes us to conferences of conspiracy-mongers, backroom strategy gatherings, and services at extremist churches, and profiles of people who want to turn it all down. The book also introduces us to reactionary Catholic activists, pseudo-Platonist intellectuals, self-appointed apostles of Jesus, disciples of Ayn Rand, women-hating opponents of “the gynocracy,” pronatalists preoccupied with the dearth of white babies. Covid truthers, militia members masquerading as “concerned moms”, and battalions of spirit warriors who appear to be inventing a new style of religion even as they set about attacking democracy at its foundations.

Katherine Stewart provides a compelling analysis of the authoritarian reaction in the United States. Demonstrating that the movement relies on several constituencies, with very different and conflicting agendas. Her comprehensive political analysis crucially reframes the debate about the moral collapse of American conservatism and points the way toward a democratic future. The dominant ideology that cultivate among the rank and file of America’s antidemocratic movement is Christian Nationalism. But this label can be misleading. It is not a religion – it is not even Christianity. It is a political identity with a political ideology, and the ideology does not have a lot to do with the way many if not most Americans understand Christianity. Plenty of patriotic Christians want nothing to do with Christian nationalism. The chief threat to American democracy comes from a collective psychosis of unreason – the first and last resort of enemies of democracy. The final sentence from Stewart’s lecture at the Humanist Convention still resonates with me – ‘It is not just the USA that is affected by Christian Nationalism – it is very apparent in the United Kingdom!’

Please do not just take my word for the impact of Katherine Stewart’s book – please read these two reviews of ‘Money Lies and God’

How Trump Rode a Wave of ‘Reactionary Nihilism’ to the White House

A new book by the journalist Katherine Stewart finds a far-right movement seething in resentment, suspicious of reason and determined to dominate at all costs.

Given that “Money, Lies, and God” was mostly written before the November 2024 election, the book reads as an eerily prescient guide to the phantasmagoria of our political moment. But it’s a measure of the upheavals of the last few weeks that even the book’s author, the journalist Katherine Stewart, failed to anticipate some of the early surprises of the second Trump term.

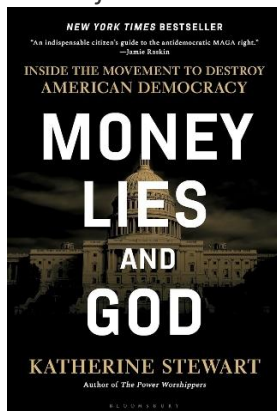
Stewart’s previous book, “The Power Worshipers” (2020) traced the rise of Christian nationalism; “Money, Lies, and God” expands the story to encompass the right-wing “movement to destroy American democracy.” A bulging cast of characters that Stewart handily divides into five main

categories: Funders, Thinkers, Sergeants, Infantry and Power Players. These groups don't always have one another's best interests at heart, nor do they always get along.

But as Stewart shows, this fractious movement has lined up under the banner of MAGA and Donald Trump. They speak the language of democracy while practicing the authoritarian politics of coercion and exclusion. What they all share, Stewart says, is an attitude of "reactionary nihilism." They denounce tolerance and pluralism as a catastrophic change to their preferred political order. Reactionary nihilists presume a world that is "devoid of value, impervious to reason and governable only through brutal acts of will."

Stewart should know — she has spent plenty of time with reactionary nihilists, whether in person or on the page. Her book gives us a tour through a raucous Christian nationalist event in Las Vegas and a fancy Moms for Liberty fund-raiser in Philadelphia. She offers a brisk intellectual history that includes the high-toned, illiberal musings of the Harvard legal scholar Adrian Vermeule and the gutter misogyny of the internet personality Bronze Age Pervert — a Yale political philosophy Ph.D. An adolescent boy's preoccupation with "manliness" turns out to be a common denominator among the thinkers on the right. Rational deliberation gets derided as a tool of liberal democracy, which they somehow depict as both tyrannical and toothless. All the strategies they offer boil down to domination.

"Money, Lies, and God" covers a lot of terrain, but it's Stewart's exploration of right-wing ideas that makes her book stand out. A chapter called "Smashing the Administrative State" explains the radical right's longstanding plans to replace the public administration of government services with a "privately controlled, corporate-managed" regime. Another chapter on the Claremont Institute, the right-wing California think tank, examines the influence of the political philosopher Leo Strauss and the Nazi jurist Carl Schmitt.



Yet Stewart is also careful not to overstate this movement's intellectual depth. So many of the ideas espoused by the cutting-edge figures on the far right are reflexively contrarian and fundamentally empty. Its leading intellectuals are Ivy League graduates who persist in being obsessed with the campus squabbles of the Ivy League. Stewart argues that their elaborate theories are constructed from feelings of elite entitlement and petty resentment: "When they talk about sticking it to the administrative state or fantasize about having their dictator buddy manhandle the libs, they seem to be dreaming about revenge on the people down the hall." This is a book with a decidedly strong point of view, even if Stewart maintains that she gathered her facts with an open mind.

"As a reporter, I like to look first and theorize later," she writes in her introduction. "I am interested in facts, not polemics." After spending a lot of time with the facts, Stewart has developed her theory of the case.

The Funders and Thinkers, she says, have worked out their own symbiotic ecosystem, with the Funders supplying the money that helps the Thinkers churn out the ideas that justify the Funders' power to make ever more money. Just don't tell that to the Infantry — those millions of lower- and middle-income Americans who turned out for Trump. Stewart explains that the only real role for the Infantry is to supply the votes. They might think they're voting for cheaper eggs, when what they're more likely to get are fewer meat inspectors and an expansionist war: "Satisfying the economic and emotional needs of this group is always the ostensible source of legitimacy of the antidemocratic movement, but it is never the actual goal."

As an antidote to so much cynicism, Stewart ends her book with some recommendations, calling for building coalitions and pursuing a "progressive system of taxation." It's the kind of noble, hopeful conclusion that nevertheless highlights the discrepancy between the incessant churn of the Trumpian news cycle and the more languid pace of what might be called "book time."

But Stewart maintains a commitment to deliberation — not just as an activity but as an essential principle. The far right, she points out, seeks to “demolish the very possibility of reasonable discussion” by treating politics as an extension of war by other means. Books like hers function not as weapons but as maps, navigating a way around the edges of the abyss.

**Money, Lies, and God: Inside the Movement to Destroy American Democracy
Reviewed by Jessica T. Mathews**

A combination of economic pain and cultural grievance over several decades has given rise, in Stewart’s analysis, to a loosely organized, but concerted and generously funded, political movement, albeit one peopled by an uneasy mix of bedfellows, that propelled Donald Trump back to the White House. It “fundamentally does not believe in the American idea,” but believes that the country should be dedicated to “a particular religion and culture” under which “certain kinds of Americans” (white, male, Christian, and conservative) have “a right to rule” and the rest “a duty to obey.” Its social media features “rank misogyny” and its pastoral leaders call for female subordination to male “headship.” The movement continuously provokes and exploits the country’s racial and ethnic divisions. Yet, Stewart writes, its “darkest aspect” is the rejection of the primacy of reason. It does not have a policy program per se (though elements overlap with, for example, the plans detailed in the right-wing Project 2025 initiative). Rather, it is “best understood in terms of what it wishes to destroy.” Stewart explores in depth the movement’s members, funders, and ideologues. Among the dozens of books that have attempted to identify the forces that Trump rode to power, this is one of the most closely reported and cogent

To add further fuel to this increasing fire, I have also included an article from The Guardian in November 2025 from Humanist UK Patron Polly Toynbee

“The hard right is claiming the cross – and true Christians should not allow it” Polly Toynbee



Polly Toynbee

Not here in this tolerant green and pleasant land of gentle, if deserted, country churches. No, surely Britain is well-fortified against American-style extreme evangelism. But Christianity erupts in its latest manifestation as far-right nationalist politics cosplaying as piety. Take seriously these Christian soldiers marching onward as to war under Tommy Robinson’s banner, some dressed as crusaders. “Are we still a Christian country?” a GB News reporter asked the prime minister, who wriggled uncomfortably beside Donald Trump at their press conference.

Keir Starmer is an atheist and a humanist who celebrates Jewish festivals with his family, so here’s his reply verbatim: “Yeah, look, I mean, in terms of a Christian country, I was christened. So, that is ... my church has been, um, all my life. And we are, that is, wired into our informal constitution. Of course, we celebrate many other faiths as well. I’m really proud that we’re able to do so as a country.” That was probably the best he could do without lying as he took on the excruciating duty, on our behalf, not to offend the bully who can wreck our economy at the click of his small fingers. Labour is not yet strapped into armour for the fight with the right, still tongue-tied, lacking the language, afraid of offending Tommy Robinson supporters instead of confronting them. Gloves-off, racist demagogues are on the march and the country is at more risk than it was when the threat came from Oswald Mosley’s blackshirts: he drew 10,000 to a rally at Olympia in London in 1934, plus the Mail’s raucous support. Nigel Farage and Reform UK keep their distance from the march, but they draw on anti-immigration emotions Robinson arouses. Farage has the voice of most of the right-wing press now: in an election tomorrow, he could take No 10. Church leaders finally produced a public letter this week against what they called “co-opting or corrupting of the Christian faith to exclude others”. But how timid: “Many individuals and communities felt anxious, unsettled and even threatened by aspects of the march.” Well, yes

indeed, terrified. “There were undoubtedly diverse motivations for those engaged in the event.” For too many there was just one motivation: racism. They sympathised: “We also understand that for many of those involved in the rally there is a deep sense of frustration at feeling unheard and forgotten in the democratic process” and society must deal with “poverty, inequality and exclusion”. I believe that lots of those marching were doing so because of racism and thuggery, not poverty or democracy. The churches, which said they were “deeply concerned” about the misuse of “Christian symbols, particularly the cross”, sounded like a company protecting its logo.

On the Robinson march in London, the great wooden crosses looked like armaments: 26 police officers were injured, four seriously. The marchers’ “Christ is King” flags declared a radicalised ethno-supremacism. Robinson claims he was “led to Christ” by a far-right pastor, Rikki Doolan, while in prison; Farage is warier of God, but rallies crowds for “standing up for our Judeo-Christian culture”.

Humanists UK was a lone voice sounding the alarm about far-right Christians looking to dissolve the boundaries between church and state, and promote deeply conservative values. The idea was long dismissed as an Americanism that couldn’t happen here, but here it is. The assassination of Charlie Kirk was a horrible reminder of democracy in danger, but his dictums define the Christian nationalist threat: “If I see a Black pilot, I’m going to be, like, boy, I hope he’s qualified.” “Prowling Blacks go around for fun to go target white people, that’s a fact.” To Taylor Swift: “Reject feminism. Submit to your husband. You’re not in charge.” “Islam is the sword the left is using to slit the throat of America.”

The Liberal Democrats fearlessly warned “the country is in peril” at their party conference. Ed Davey wisely refused the Trump banquet, calls for sanctions against Elon Musk for “inciting violence” and cleverly packed their hall with union flags, encouraging everyone to put out more flags, reclaiming them from the right. While Kemi Badenoch trails after Robert Jenrick into the arms of Faragism, Labour is not yet in full-throated, no-holds-barred refutation of Farage, with Blue Labour delusions of wooing back lost “red wall” voters: they’ve gone. Faith-flag-and-family Lord Glasman is mostly on GB News calling Brexit “magnificent” and demanding European Convention of Human Rights withdrawal, as monitored by the New World.

Labour is held back by misplaced social conscience, sympathising with left-behind places where Reform flourishes. But mumbling self-doubt is no way to face down a hateful mob. Xenophobia always lurks beneath the skin, waiting for some opportunist demagogue to inflame it into a festering boil. It requires decent politicians uniting to lance it, countering it with values broadly shared by most people.

You might think this most secular country is vaccinated against Christian nationalism, when 53% have no religion and only 37% call themselves Christians. But the Christian label offers a veneer of respectability to tribal racists unlikely to fill actual pews, an identity cloak for gut nativists who abhor anyone a bit brown.

Remember how Brexit began with a few harmless “fruitcakes”. And don’t underestimate the power of the vastly wealthy right. Foremost is the hedge-funder Paul Marshall, Brexiter, joint owner of GB News, founder of UnHerd, owner of the Spectator: he helped fund his close friend Michael Gove’s plan to send a King James Bible to every school when Gove was education secretary. (Gove is now editor of the Spectator.) He attends service at the Holy Trinity Brompton (HTB), which founded the Alpha course, hotbed of the Christian conservatism that opposes same-sex blessings. As the chair of the Sequoia Trust, he has funded both HTB and the Church Revitalisation Trust, whose stated goal is “the evangelisation of the nation”, with millions of pounds. And he is a founder of the HTB spin-off St Mellitus College, which by 2019 was training a quarter of all future clergy, according to Prospect’s in-depth analysis.

Hope Not Hate also reported that Marshall liked or reposted messages with crude anti-Muslim content: “there has never been a country that remained peaceful with a sizeable Islamic presence”, “If we want European civilization to survive we need to not just close the borders but start mass expulsions immediately” and “once the Muslims get to 15 to 20 per cent of the population, the current cold civil war will turn hot”. A representative for Marshall noted that the examples

“represent a small and unrepresentative sample of over 5,000 posts. This sample does not represent his views.” And that, “all his posts have now been deleted to avoid any further misunderstanding”. Note also this growing civil war talk, trumpeted by Reform UK and Robinson, less warning than urging. “We’re now bordering on a British revolution,” Robinson has said, according to Matthew d’Ancona’s New World profile. Take no comfort from Farage and Robinson’s mutual detestation: Farage parades as “moderate” beside the violence that surrounds Robinson. But I believe they would collude as necessary.

In their long-delayed choice of a new archbishop of Canterbury, the C of E needs an unhesitating opponent of Christian nationalism. There is a time for understanding, but this is a time for denouncing racist demagogues and shaming their supporters. However, that duty falls mainly on politicians, the government above all. Protecting borders from unregistered migrants is every government’s difficult task, but dithering over sympathy with Reform backers or even far-right protestors, not necessarily poor, only insults the great majority of the hard-up, who are at ease in mixed communities and don’t turn to the far right.

Assisted Dying Bill:

At the time of writing this Newsletter, I have just heard the House of Lords have blocked the Assisted Dying Bill. This is devastating news. I can understand the anger of many Humanists, especially those who will feel let down on behalf of every terminally ill person who looked at this Bill and saw a small piece of comfort, hope and control in the middle of so much fear.

As Humanists, we are not asking people to die; we are asking for reassurance and compassion. We are asking for the peace of mind that comes from knowing that if a person’s suffering becomes too much, that there is a choice.

Unfortunately, it appears that a small group of peers have dragged this Bill out until it fell.

People who are suffering do not necessarily want to die. They are trying to face the inevitable with dignity, honesty and as much grace as possible. Like the majority of the country, as Humanists, we are thoughtful, reflective people simply asking for choice.

What has happened in the Lords has been cruel. Scaremongering and distortion have too often drowned out the voices of the very people this Bill was supposed to protect. Many people who are suffering have spoken honestly about pain, fear, loss of control and what it means to know your life will be cut short.

However, this is not the end, and a new Bill will more than likely be re-introduced in 2027, which apparently will not need to be presented to the House of Lords.

Humanists UK’s Chief Executive Andrew Copson said:



‘The actions of a small group of unelected peers on this Bill have been deplorable. It’s a stain on our democracy and a slap in the face to hundreds of terminally ill people and their families, who were given hope when MPs voted in favour last year.

‘The elected chamber must bring back this Bill. Dying people want choice and compassion at the end of their lives. The status quo leaves people dying in pain with three awful options: fly to Switzerland, refuse food and treatment, or suffer. Those options are unacceptable.’

Father Mother Sister Brother

I had the pleasure of recently seeing this very thoughtful, sensitive and interesting film.

A film that explores the awkwardness and closeness of parents with their grown-up children in three slyly comic panels of drama set in the US, Dublin and Paris directed by Jim Jarmusch

It's the sense of mortality and the gathering cloud of darkness over our heads as we enter middle age, a perpetual nagging worry about the health and happiness of our elderly parents, with the guilt and sadness of not going to see them, or seeing them only rarely, and the related feeling of closeness – or perhaps the opposite – with your siblings for whom these parents are the number one topic of conversation. Then there's the feeling of relief mixed with dissatisfaction and unease on the long car journey home.



The movie is divided into three (apparently) unrelated panels of drama, events taking place in parallel in three different parts of the world: rural US, Dublin and Paris, and with images and gestures that fortuitously echo each other. In the first, Mayim Bialik and Adam Driver play siblings making the arduous trip out into the countryside to see their ageing dad, played by Tom Waits. His place seems chaotic and on the verge of poverty, an instant source of worry to them both, and his son reproaches himself with having given his dad money over the years. And yet in the course of their awkward visit, they are disconcerted to notice what appears to be a genuine Rolex on the old guy's

wrist and there is evidence that their father is slyly faking his elderly disarray for opaque reasons of his own.

Meanwhile, in Dublin, Charlotte Rampling plays a characteristically self-possessed and self-assured woman who is welcoming her two grownup daughters for their annual visit for tea. She is entirely content to make these visits a rarity. They are the trendy Vicky Krieps with pink hair, and the more staid and uptight one played, a little stagily, by Cate Blanchett, with glasses and sensible shoes. And finally, in Paris, siblings, – non-identical twins, played by Indya Moore and Luka Sabbat; their parents have just died, apparently piloting a light aircraft in the Azores, a deadpan-jokey demise that the actors carry off with complete real-world seriousness. They pay a final visit to their late mum and dad's Paris apartment, and chat to the housekeeper, played by iconic French veteran Françoise Lebrun. And they make a trip out to a storage depot and gaze at their parents' belongings, crammed into a lockup. This was the material of their parents' lives, and the siblings have already wonderingly gone through old photos and marriage and birth certificates. It all seems like evidence of something. But what?

The movie returns us to an age-old question: who are or who were our parents? Did they have real existences before we were born that we will never understand? And are our own existences destined to be effaced and rendered irrelevant or taboo by our own children? For me, the first and third sections are the most naturalistically convincing as portraits of real life, the second is more theatrical, although the weird, slyly comic echoes of each other in each of the sections undermine or at least complicate this reality effect. You might sit through this film waiting for a crisis or a confrontation: some explosion of temper or passionate demand for honesty. None will arrive. Basically, there is a contentment and calm here, an acceptance and a Zen simplicity that is a cleansing of the moviegoing palate, or perhaps the fiction-consuming palate in general. It is a film to savour.

Colours of Time:

A country girl's search for answers is ingeniously intercut with the adventures of her ragtag descendants in Cédric Klapisch's film. It is an imaginary a romantic backstory to the career of Claude Monet and his contemporary, the pioneering photographer Félix Nadar. These two whiskey bohemians are effectively involved in a paternity puzzle concerning the drama's female lead. Adèle (Suzanne Lindon) is a fictional young woman who makes a fateful journey to find her errant mother in Paris, leaving behind her sweetheart and the village where she was brought up, in the countryside near Monet's home town of Le Havre. Her life and times are rediscovered by her descendants in the present day, and we intercut enjoyably between past and present.



In the present day, dozens of descendants of Adèle are contacted by the lawyers and PRs working for a property company that wants to build a vast new shopping mall, which would mean bulldozing Adèle's derelict cottage, closed up since 1944. This garrulous ragtag bunch – including teacher Abdelkrim (Zinedine Soualem), fashion photographer Seb (Abraham Wapler), executive Céline (Julia Piaton) and beekeeper Guy (Vincent Macaigne) – need to give their collective consent.

Intrigued by their inheritance, they crowbar their way into the dusty cottage to find a veritable Tutankhamun tomb of historical secrets: photos, letters and even what might be a painting. Their detective work is interspersed, often ingeniously, with what Adèle in her own day discovers about her errant mother, Odette (Sara Giraudeau), and what she has been doing in Paris all these years to get the money she has been sending back to Adèle. It all comes to a wacky climax when our present-day claimants have an Ayahuasca psychoactive experience, which sends them back in time to encounter these historical culture icons in person at an exhibition, resulting in Victor Hugo making improper advances towards Céline. Try not to miss this sweet delicate French movie.

Cinema Film Preview:

(Some are shown on the main cinema circuit, but most are available at the small art cinemas, Warwick Arts Centre, Midland Arts Centre and Leamington Spa Theatre)

Colours of Time: Brought together by an unexpected inheritance, four cousins explore their mysterious family history. In 1895, their ancestor Adele leaves her hometown to search for her mother in Paris. As her descendants retrace her steps, they unravel a surprising past and the two timelines collide, leaving everyone's future forever changed. **A definite 'must see' film!**

Rebuilding: A subtle and sensitive film of a divorced Colorado rancher reeling from the after-effects of a ruthless wildfire that's cost him nearly everything besides his family land and some cattle. Estranged from his ex-wife and their young daughter, he re-enters their lives now distraught and displaced, living out of boxes in a FEMA-operated trailer park. Starring Josh O'Connor

The Stranger: Albert Camus's classic of existential literature (L'Étranger), which follows an apathetic Frenchman as his daily routine is disrupted by his mother's passing and a fateful event on a beach, is brought thrillingly to life in the latest from French master François Ozon

Primavera: In 18th Century Venice a talented orphan musician's life changes forever when she meets the orphanage's new music teacher, Antonio Vivaldi. Under his mentorship, she gains courage to break free from life in the orphanage.

Rose of Nevada: In a tiny, sparsely populated Cornish fishing village, a boat that had been lost at sea 30 years ago, suddenly reappears portside, fully intact and without its long-missing crew. Two local fishermen desperate for work take jobs on the boat as it sets out for a return voyage. When they return, all is no longer what it once was. Shot on 16mm, this psychological portrait of a working-class community's cyclical existence is an atmospheric plunge into the eerie.

Dead Man's Wire: A gripping suspense thriller based on a true story. A man enters the office of the president of a mortgage company and takes him hostage with a sawn-off shotgun connected to a 'dead-man's-wire' from the trigger to the man's neck. Starring Colman Domingo and Al Pacino

Kim Novak's Vertigo: At 92, Kim Novak remains one of Hollywood's most enduring enigmas - a luminous star who, at the peak of her fame, turned her back on the spotlight to embrace a life of self-expression and authenticity. Once the top box office draw in the world, she rebelled against the studio system and the confines of celebrity. Vivid glimpses into her reclusive life. While Hitchcock's

Vertigo remains her most iconic role, the film explores how that performance - and the duality it captured the ongoing tension between image and identity that shaped her life.

Redoubt: At the height of the Cold War, a Swedish farmhand obsessively fortifies his house into a community haven from what appears to be an imminent global conflict.

Father Mother Sister Brother: Three stories that concern familial relationships marked by emotional detachment. An engaging character study whose connecting motifs subtly reveal themselves, it's beautifully shot and features a fine cast. (More detail above)

The Blue Trail: An entrancing, inspiring and striking critique of ageism and authoritarianism. In a near-future Brazil, the government gives priority to the country's younger generations, while older people are put away in colonies so they will not 'get in the way'. A 77-year-old woman refuses and decides to escape, embarking on a transformative journey through the Amazon to fulfil one last wish before she loses her freedom.

Miroirs No3: After surviving a car crash that kills her partner, a young pianist forms an unsettling bond with an older woman living in rural isolation. A quietly gripping study of loss, doubling and the fragile human connections that make reinvention possible.

H for Hawk: When a Cambridge academic's father dies, the grief sends her spiralling into an abyss. In an effort to process her loss, she retreats from the human world to train a fearsome Northern goshawk. Starring Claire Foy and Brendan Gleeson

The Devil Wears Prada: A welcome return for the film of the cut-throat atmosphere of the fashion industry. Starring Meryl Streep, Ann Hathaway and Stanley Tucci

Funny Girl: The bittersweet musical comedy telling the story of the indomitable Fanny Brice a girl who dreamed of a life on the stage and her tempestuous relationship with an entrepreneur and gambler. This critically acclaimed production features Sheridan Smith in an unforgettable star turn

The North: Two former best friends meet up after a decade to hike Scotland's West Highland Way and Cape Wrath. Having taken the same 250-mile trek in youth, they hope to rekindle their friendship by spending 30 days together, surrounded by the stunning beauty of the Scottish Highlands. Starring Bart Harder and Carles Pulido

Mother Mary: A returning pop icon approaching the beginning of her new tour, reunites with her long-lost best friend and former costume designer when she needs a new dress for her grand comeback. However, this reconciliation brings with it repressed hurt and emotional scars that bubble up to the surface the night before the first performance. Starring Ann Hathaway and Michaela Coel

Glenrothan: After 35 years in the USA, Donal returns to his family-owned whisky distillery in the Scottish Highlands. On the day of his mother's funeral, he and his brother wound up in a violent exchange with their father. Now, with the survival of their treasured family business on the line, Donal hopes to make amends before it's too late. Starring Alan Cumming and Brian Cox

Our Land: Who has the 'right to Roam' in the English countryside? This energetic documentary takes us to the heart of the 'Right to Roam' movement as it embarks on a provocative campaign to mass trespass and education, while exploring landowners' concerns. A definite film for hikers and walkers!

Hokum: When a reclusive novelist retreats to a remote Irish inn to scatter his parents' ashes, the staff's tales of an ancient with haunting the honeymoon suite take hold of his mind. Disturbing visions draw him into a nightmarish confrontation with his past. Starring Adam Scott

The Christophers': An art restorer's fortunes look up when she's approached by the estranged heirs of a painter to steal a series of abandoned paintings, "The Christophers." To complete them and reap a huge percentage once they are sold after the painter's imminent death. Starring Ian McKellen and Michaela Coel.

Still on the Main Circuit:

Pale View of the Hills: An adaption of the Kazuo Ishiguro novel. A daughter is anxious to know about her mother's time in Nagasaki. A story of loss, exile and the generational impact of war and tragedy. Starring Camilla Aiko and Suzu Hirose

The Drama: A couple's bond is tested when an unexpected turn sends their wedding week off the rails. A black comedy of a picture-perfect couple sliding towards darkness. Starring Robert Pattinson and Zendaya

Peaky Blinders: The Immortal Man: The long-awaited feature film of the popular TV series.

Birmingham, 1940. Amidst the chaos of WWII, the dilemmas for Tommy Shelby with the future of the family and the country at stake, Tommy must face his own demons, and choose whether to confront his legacy, or burn it to the ground. Starring the excellent Cillian Murphy as Shelby.

Project Hail Mary: Based on the novel by Andy Weir, a science teacher wakes up on a spaceship light years from home with no recollection of who he is or how he got there. He realises he's been sent on a mission to solve the riddle of why the sun is dying out and save Earth from annihilation – but an unexpected friendship means he may not have to do it alone. Starring Ryan Gosling

Midwinter Break: Based on Bernard MacLaverty's novel, which follows retirees Stella and Gerry on a trip to Amsterdam at a crunch point in their marriage. Their city break has the potential to become something much more life-changing as the pair reflect on the past, their problems in the present, and consider their future together. Starring Lesley Manville and Ciaran Hinds

The Voice of Hind Rajab: The last recorded words of a 6-year-old girl in Gaza into a vital act of remembrance. The film captures both the unbearable suspense of the complex rescue attempt and the impossible choices faced by first responders, creating a devastating and unforgettable portrait of innocence in the face of unspeakable violence. A definite 'must-see' film

The Screening of Live Theatre Plays from the West End:

All My Sons: Bryan Cranston and Marianne Jean-Baptiste feature in a five-star, triumphantly acclaimed new production of Arthur Miller's classic play, from visionary director Ivo Van Hove

Playboy of the Western World: Nicola Coughlan joins Éanna Hardwicke and Siobhán McSweeney in John Millington Synge's riveting play of youth and self-discovery.

Les Liaisons Dangereuses: Lesley Manville joins Aidan Turner in a striking new staging of Christopher Hampton's celebrated adaptation of the classic novel, where among the glittering salons of the super-rich, one misstep can mean ruin.

Art Exhibitions on Screen:

Frida Kahlo

TV Programmes and Films – For those who are interested, there is quite a lot of snooker on BBC channels right up until May Day Bank Holiday

Monday 27th April:

21.00 – BBC1: Mint – The romantic love story drama set against the backdrop of a dangerous crime family – **the next episode is at 21.30**

21.00 – ITV1: Secret Service – New series -Kate Henderson, the head of the Russia desk at MI6, is in Malta to meet asset Lena, asking her to smuggle a listening device into the villa of Igor Borodin, head of the Russian secret service, for whom she works as a nanny.

Tuesday 28th April:

21.00 – ITV1: Secret Service - Another episode of the spy drama series

22.05 – BBC3: Booksmart – An excellent coming-of-age comedy starring Beanie Feldstein and Kaitlyn Dever. On the eve of their high-school graduation, super-studious best friends Molly and Amy decide to let their hair down for a change by going to a wild end-of-year party.

22.40 – BBC1: Half Man – A new drama series -As Niall celebrates his wedding, he follows his estranged friend Ruben into a barn, and in an explosion of violence, he attacks him. The story then goes back in time to reveal how they formed such a close bond years before, came to such a point.

23.35 – BBC1: The Woman in Black - Horror thriller starring Daniel Radcliffe. A young solicitor is sent to examine documentation left by a recently deceased woman. When he arrives at the isolated house, he discovers that the property holds a dark secret.

Wednesday 29th April:

21.00 – ITV1: A Taste for Murder – A new detective series - A Grieving DCI and his daughter seek solace in Italy but murder follows wherever he goes.

22.00 – BBC3: Candyman - Horror sequel starring Yahya Abdul-Mateen II and Teyonah Parris. Artist Anthony and his girlfriend Brianna become fascinated by the legend of a supernatural killer who supposedly menaces their Chicago neighbourhood.

23.35 – BBC1: Denmark – A 34-year-old man with a knack for fixing things, can't get a proper job and has an estranged son. He's also lost his welfare, and has a neighbour who plays incessant music. After discovering Danish convicts live a luxurious life he could only dream of, he decides to get arrested overseas and hopes to be sent to a Danish prison. Starring Rafe Spall

Thursday 30th April:

20.00 – BBC1: Race Across the World – I find this programme quite hypnotic – the teams battle their way from Greece to Mongolia

20.00 – Channel 4: Paul Merton Driving amazing Trains - The comedian takes charge of some of the world's most iconic locomotives.

21.00 – Channel 4: Taskmaster – One of my favourite programmes. Greg Davies and Alex Horne set out more ridiculous tasks for the comedians to solve

22.45 – ITV1: Minority Report - Futuristic action thriller based on the Philip K Dick short story, starring Tom Cruise, Colin Farrell and Samantha Morton. In the mid-21st century, by being in charge of the Justice Department's Precrime unit, an elite force that can predict offences and make arrests before the crimes are committed.

23.00 – BBC2: On the Basis of Sex - Based on a true story, starring Felicity Jones and Armie Hammer. In the 1950s, a woman works day and night to complete a law degree while taking care of her infant daughter and her husband, who is in recovery from cancer. In 1970, despite her career being hampered by sexist discrimination, she is asked to fight a minor civil rights case that will become a legal landmark and make her reputation.

Friday 1st May:

19.30 – BBC1: Extraordinary Portraits - I love this excellent programme!! Artists create breath-taking portraits of people with incredible personal and powerful stories - creating a picture of modern Britain. Comedian Bill Bailey brings the artists people together

20.00 – BBC1: Beyond Paradise – Last episode of the 'Death in Paradise' spin-off series set in Devon. Starring Kriss Marshall and Zahra Ahmadi

21.00 – BBC1: Have I Got News for You? Richard Ayoade is in the Chair and Stephen Mangan and Sanita Evans join Paul Merton and Ian Hislop

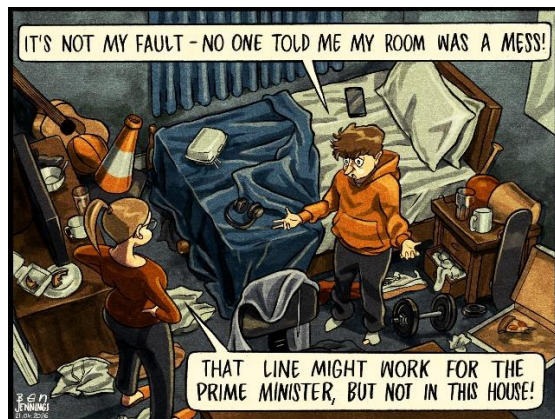
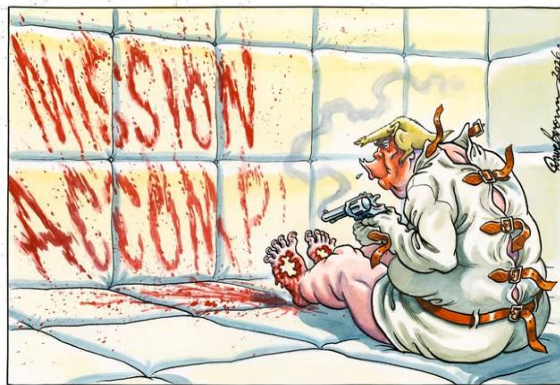
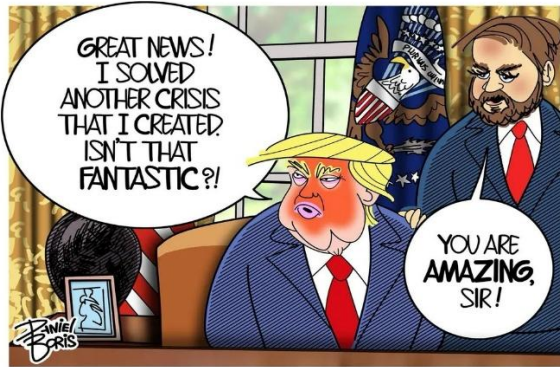
21.30 – BBC1: The Young Offenders – The last 2 episodes of this funny sit-com – Alex Murphy and Chris Walley play the 2 incompetent delinquents. **Final episode is at 22.40**

23.00 – BBC2: Get Carter – One of the best ever British crime dramas starring Michael Caine and Britt Ekland. London gangster Carter travels to Newcastle to find out who killed his brother

23.10 – BBC1: St Denis Medical – A welcome return of the US comedy set in a hospital. It's quite the operation. The eclectic team of dedicated medical staff are trying their best - have they got the patience for their patients? **Next episode is at 23.30**

22.00 – BBC4: Dusty at the BBC – a selection of archived appearances over the decades from the late great Dusty Springfield. **More Dusty at 23.05 and 01.05**

A Few Cartoons:



A Few Funnies to Finish With:

Tommy is in his 40s and seriously overweight and unhealthy so he goes to the doctors, after the examination he says "Sorry sir but you need a triple bypass, so Tommy replies " Do I? What should I do next? "

"Well you should bypass the tobacconist, the pie shop and the pub!!".

A bloke walks into a pub and sees three men and a dog playing cards. He says to the landlord, "Wow, clever dog." "Not really", said the landlord.

"Every time he gets a good hand his tail starts wagging"

As I got out on the 11th floor, the lift operator said "Have a good day, son"

"Don't call me son. You are not my dad", I replied sarcastically

As the doors closed, he looked me in the eye and said "No, but I brought you up, didn't I?"

Baby snake: "Mum are we venomous snakes?"

Mummy snake: "No darling. Why do you ask?"

Baby snake: "Cos I've just bitten my lip!"

Why is there a corned beef but no beefed corn?

My mate has been in training for the last few months to get into the Guinness book of records for an eating competition

I think he's ready to step up to the plate

I was feeling a bit hungry earlier today and I saw a cafe with a sign in the window that said "food at popular prices."

I went in and said to the man behind the counter "a cheese roll and a cup of coffee please."

He said "that's £35 please."

I said £35? You've got a sign in the window that says "food at popular prices!"

He said "well I like them."

Doctor: "I'm sorry but you suffer from a terminal illness and have only 10 to live."

Patient: "What do you mean, 10? 10 what? Months? Weeks?!"

Doctor "Nine"

The foreman said to me "can you make tea?"

I said "of course I can make tea."

He said "can you drive a forklift truck?"

I said "how big is the teapot?"

I just wanna be rich enough to throw leftovers away after dinner instead of putting them in Tupperware and throwing them away a week later!

I've been thinking long and hard for a pun about coal mines; I had to dig deep for this one.

I bought one of these 'smart' light switches, but it was too clever for me... so I replaced it with a dimmer switch.

I've just bought a mobile phone from a Vicar.... It's pray as you go.