



Coventry and Warwickshire Humanists Newsletter November 2023

Dear Fellow Humanists

Welcome to the November edition of the Coventry & Warwickshire Humanist Newsletter. Although the weather is not very appealing at present as we sink further into winter, as a group we are in a reasonably healthy situation. We have a good regular attendance at our monthly meetings, and we are active with School Speakers and Celebrants. We do however need to raise our profile with Pastoral Care. Our funds are healthy and we have an active Executive Committee. Nevertheless, it is no time to rest on our laurels. We do need to increase our membership, especially with younger people. This is an issue that we need to address in 2024 as well as how we become more effective in our role of a Partner in the development of the Humanist's UK Group Representatives. Our representative at the recent Group Representatives Annual Meeting (GRAM) is key to that development. More of this later in the Newsletter.

I would like to thank all those Humanists that attended Remembrance Ceremonies throughout the area and placed a wreath on behalf of Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists

Brian Goredema-Braid

Chair of Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists

Meeting Thursday 16th November: We were very pleased to invite Ann Cross to address the meeting. Ann is the manager of Waverley Day Centre where we hold our regular in-person monthly meetings. Ann gave a very good outline of her duties and the purpose of the Waverley Day Centre. I was very pleased that Ann knew a few of our regular attendees and also had knowledge of some of our recent history. After her talk Ann stayed to join in with the rest of the meeting. For the rest of the meeting Jane Sault and I gave a brief outline of our attendance at the Group Representatives Annual Meeting on Saturday 28th October and the importance of being a partner with Humanist's UK. The meeting also discussed arrangements for the Social Meeting on Thursday 21st December.

Social Meeting and Get-Together Thursday 21st December at Waverley Day Centre: We hope that as many people as possible can attend this event. There will be a musical performance from some of our talented musicians; a comedy sketch from some of our thespians, and the singing a few non-religious Yuletide songs. Please bring some food and drinks to share with others. This should be a very enjoyable event.

Meetings on Thursday 18th January 2024 and Thursday 15th February 2024: These two meetings will be online events through Zoom. We will send out the Zoom link, ID and password nearer the date. As you may be aware, we chose to have online meetings in the winter months as many members prefer

not come out on winter evenings. We will be back with an in-person meeting on **Thursday 21st March 2024 at Waverley Day Centre**. Details to be announced nearer the event.

Group Representatives Annual Meeting Saturday 28th October:

Jane Sault and I were invited to attend this meeting in London. The meeting was very well attended by many Humanist Groups across England. The major issue for Jane and I was that naively we were not aware that Coventry & Warwickshire is in partnership with Humanist's UK? This understandable in that this group had decided to withdraw and disaffiliate from what was then British Humanist Association during the 2010's. When we re-joined in circa 2016, it had been assumed that we were 'partners' and not an independent group? Hence, my surprise when Andrew Copson telephoned me in September to ascertain our status. Well, we are clear now about our status as a partner and our role. The main issue is that unlike previously, we follow the guidance, policies and procedures of Humanist's UK. This is outlined thus:

Judging by some comments from the day, it is helpful to re-circulate the [IT guidance document](#) that may help enhance your partner group's activities. This document covers essential topics, including:

- *Logging into your Partner Group's email address*
- *Accessing your Partner Group's Dashboard.*
- *Submitting your group's events to the [Groups Event Calendar](#) on the Humanists UK website for greater visibility.*
- *Learning how to request mailings, sent by Humanists UK, to reach people in your area effectively.*
- *Accessing a list of your current group officers and how to complete a form to update the information.*
- *Requesting stall packs and materials.*
- *Obtaining information about local speakers available for your group's events.*
- *Accessing the shared Partner Group G Drive and resources, such as insurance documents and learning materials like the 'One Life' course.*
- *Viewing a map showing your group's location on the '[Local Humanism Map](#)' and the ability to update your location.*
- *Managing your group's information, including your website addresses and newsletter preferences.*

A more detailed overview of the GRAM meeting is provided by David Warden from his review of GRAM in 'Humanistically Speaking'

Humanist groups shrinking and ageing but still fighting

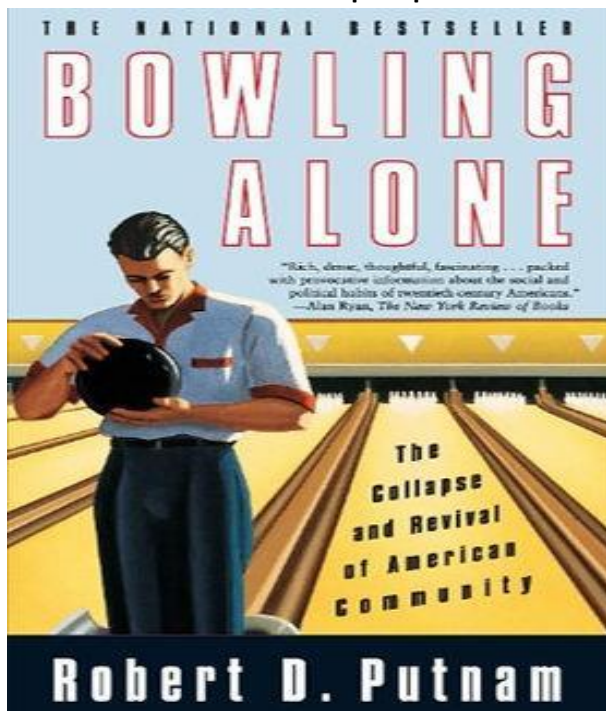
Group Representatives Annual Meeting in London *Report by David Warden*

Humanists UK hosted the Group Representatives Annual Meeting (GRAM) in Islington, London, on 28th October. Twenty partner groups were represented, plus about five "branch" groups (also known as "sections").

This was the first time UK humanist groups had met in person since the pandemic. Andrew Copson, Chief Executive of Humanists UK, reported on his recent telephone survey of partner groups. His findings painted a concerning post-pandemic national picture of group decline in terms of the number of groups, numbers of "bums on seats" at humanist events, and ageing in terms of active participation and volunteering. There are about 30 partner groups, some of which are down to single figures in terms of participation, although one or two manage to buck the trend with attendances of around 40 people per event. Humanists UK is attempting to address this situation by planting new branches /sections, about 11 of which currently exist or are in the pipeline, which will benefit from greater support from Humanists UK; greater, that is, than the support which can be given to partner groups which are autonomous and self-governing, apart from a light-touch partnership agreement with Humanists UK. It remains to be seen whether Humanists UK branches/sections will be able to

reverse the general trend of decline in local humanist groups. Andrew contrasted local groups with the "rapid" increase in the number of individual members and supporters of Humanists UK (now around 113,000) but he reiterated the strategic commitment of Humanists UK to developing and supporting local humanist communities, in addition to its networks of celebrants, pastoral care workers, school speakers, other sections such as LGBT and Defence Humanists, and campaign work. More positively, it was acknowledged that the impact of local humanist communities should not simply be measured by attendance at group events. Impact can also be assessed in terms of local recognition, for example through participating in interfaith events, civic remembrance services and Holocaust Memorial Day events, school visiting, university chaplaincies, and "blue plaque" campaigns to get recognition for historic humanists. Some humanist groups, including West London and Greater Manchester, reported that they are involved in support for refugees and asylum claimants while others, such as Dorset, raise money for food banks and other charities. *Faith to Faithless*, the Humanists UK section which supports "apostates" and those who have left high-control religions, had an afternoon slot to report on their work. One of the points which came across quite strongly was that local humanist groups are not always as welcoming as they might be. An ex-Muslim said that her local humanist group had not responded positively to her offer of a talk about leaving Islam and other ideas she put forward. On the other hand, an ex-Jehovah's Witness said that her local humanist group had been very welcoming.

The Decline in Humanist Groups Explained: Book Review



In the November edition of *Humanistically Speaking*, some of our concerns about the apparent long-term decline of participation in humanist groups were addressed. Robert D. Putnam's book *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (2000) seems particularly relevant to our theme. It explored the decline of social capital and community engagement in the United States over the 20th century. The central thesis of the book was that there has been a significant decrease in social connectedness, community involvement, and civic participation in American society. In 2023, after the rise of social media, podcasts and YouTube, the impact of Covid on our willingness to leave home, and the continuing rise of mass immigration which may also impact on social cohesion, the trends which Putnam identified seem to be intensifying.

Should humanists be worried about this, or should we just accept that the future will be less social and more individual, or that our social lives are more networked and less local? Should humanists 'make an effort' to support their local humanist groups or just bowl alone or in virtual space?

Key points of the book

Decline in Social Capital: Putnam argues that there has been a decline in "social capital," which he defines as the connections and bonds that hold individuals and communities together. This decline is evident in reduced participation in community organisations, social clubs, and civic groups.

Rise of Individualism: The book suggests that there has been a shift toward individualism, with people becoming more focused on their personal lives and less engaged in collective activities. This shift is seen as contributing to the erosion of social capital.

Bowling Alone Metaphor: The title of the book comes from the example of bowling leagues. Putnam notes that while the number of people who bowl has remained relatively constant, the number of people participating in bowling leagues has significantly declined. This illustrates the trend of people engaging in activities alone rather than as part of a social group.

Causes of Decline: Putnam explores various factors contributing to the decline in social capital, including increased mobility (people moving more frequently), television and technology (reducing face-to-face interactions), and changing work patterns (less time for community involvement).

Consequences: The book discusses the negative consequences of declining social capital, such as reduced trust in institutions, diminished social cohesion, and challenges to effective governance. It argues that social connectedness is essential for a healthy and functioning society.

Possible Solutions: Putnam concludes the book by discussing potential ways to revive and rebuild social capital and community engagement. These include encouraging civic participation, strengthening social networks, and fostering a sense of shared identity and purpose.

Bowling Alone is a seminal work that has sparked discussions about the state of civic life in the United States and the importance of social capital in building strong communities. It highlights the need for individuals and society as a whole to address the challenges of social disconnection and find ways to rebuild and strengthen community bonds.

The author of the book

Robert D. Putnam is a prominent American political scientist and author. He was born in 1941, in Rochester, New York, USA. Putnam is best known for his extensive research in the fields of political science and sociology, particularly in the areas of social capital, community engagement, and civic participation.

In addition to *Bowling Alone*, he has written several other influential books and research papers on topics related to social and political behaviour. Putnam's work often explores the dynamics of social networks, trust, and the role of civil society in democratic governance. His research has had a significant impact on our understanding of how individuals and communities interact and engage in civic life.



Putnam has held academic positions at various universities, including Harvard University, where he has been a professor of public policy at the John F. Kennedy School of Government. His contributions to the study of social capital and community involvement have earned him numerous awards and accolades in the field of political science.

Humanist Philosophers and Thinkers:

Following on from last month's overview of the life of Bertrand Russell. For this month I have chosen a true innovator and forerunner of feminism and women's rights, **Mary Wollstonecraft**. (Not to be confused with her daughter Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley – the author of *'Frankenstein'* !!

Mary Wollstonecraft (Born 27 April 1759 and died 10 September 1797) was a British writer, philosopher, and advocate of women's rights. Until the late 20th century, Wollstonecraft's life, which encompassed several unconventional personal relationships at the time, received more attention than her writing. Today Wollstonecraft is regarded as one of the founding feminist philosophers, and feminists often cite both her life and her works as important influences.

During her brief career she wrote novels, treatises, a travel narrative, a history of the French Revolution, a conduct book, and a children's book. Wollstonecraft is best known for *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), in which she argues that women are not naturally inferior to men but appear to be only because they lack education. She suggests that both men and women should be treated as rational beings and imagines a social order founded on reason.

After two ill-fated affairs, with Henry Fuseli and Gilbert Imlay (by whom she had a daughter, Fanny Imlay), Wollstonecraft married the philosopher William Godwin, one of the forefathers of the anarchist movement. Wollstonecraft died at the age of 38 leaving behind several unfinished manuscripts. She died 11 days after giving birth to her second daughter, Mary Shelley, who became an accomplished writer and the author of *Frankenstein*.

Wollstonecraft's widower published a *Memoir* (1798) of her life, revealing her unorthodox lifestyle, which inadvertently destroyed her reputation for almost a century. However, with the emergence of the feminist movement at the turn of the twentieth century, Wollstonecraft's advocacy of women's equality and critiques of conventional femininity became increasingly important.

The life of Wollstonecraft has been the subject of several biographies, beginning with her husband's *Memoirs of the Author of A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1798, reissued 2001, in an edition edited by Pamela Clemit and Gina Luria Walker). Those written in the 19th century tended to emphasize the scandalous aspects of her life and not her work. With the renewed interest in women's rights beginning in the later 20th century, she again became the subject of several books, including *The Collected Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft* (2003), assembled by Janet Todd, and *Romantic Outlaws: The Extraordinary Lives of Mary Wollstonecraft and Mary Shelley* (2015), by Charlotte Gordon.



Wollstonecraft circa 1797

The daughter of a farmer, Wollstonecraft taught school and worked as a governess, experiences that inspired her views in *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters* (1787). In 1788 she began working as a translator for the London publisher Joseph Johnson, who published several of her works, including the novel *Mary: A Fiction* (1788). Her mature work on woman's place in society is *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), which calls for women and men to be educated equally.

In 1792 Wollstonecraft left England to observe the French Revolution in Paris, where she lived with an American, Captain Gilbert Imlay. In the spring of 1794 she gave birth to a daughter, Fanny. The following year, distraught over the breakdown of her relationship with Imlay, she attempted suicide. Wollstonecraft returned to London to work again for Johnson and joined an influential radical group, which gathered at his home and included William Godwin, Thomas Paine, Thomas Holcroft, William Blake, and, after 1793, William Wordsworth. In 1796 she began a liaison with Godwin, and on March 29, 1797, Mary being pregnant, they were married. The marriage was happy but brief; Mary died 11 days after the birth of her second daughter, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, who became a novelist best known as the author of *Frankenstein*. Among Wollstonecraft's late notable works are *Letters Written During a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark* (1796), a travelogue with a sociological and philosophical bent, and *Maria; or, The Wrongs of Woman* (1798), a posthumously published unfinished work that is a novelistic sequel to *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*.

A Vindication of the Rights of Woman is one of the trailblazing works of feminism. Published in 1792, Wollstonecraft's work argued that the educational system of her time deliberately trained women to be frivolous and incapable. She posited that an educational system that allowed girls the same advantages as boys would result in women who would be not only exceptional wives and mothers but also capable workers in many professions. Other early feminists had made similar pleas for improved education for women, but Wollstonecraft's work was unique in suggesting that the betterment of women's status be affected through such political change as the radical reform of national educational systems. Such change, she concluded, would benefit all society.

The publication of *Vindication* caused considerable controversy but failed to bring about any immediate reforms. From the 1840s, however, members of the incipient American and European women's movements resurrected some of the book's principles. It was a particular influence on American women's rights pioneers such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Margaret Fuller.

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Poetry Corner

This month's choice from Audrey Raishbrook is the delightful 'Tell Me Not Here' by AE Houseman

Tell Me Not Here by A. E. Housman

Tell me not here, it needs not saying,
What tune the enchantress plays
In aftermaths of soft September
Or under blanching mays,
For she and I were long acquainted
And I knew all her ways.

On russet floors, by waters idle,
The pine lets fall its cone;
The cuckoo shouts all day at nothing
In leafy dells alone;
And traveller's joy beguiles in autumn
Hearts that have lost their own.

On acres of the seeded grasses
The changing burnish heaves;
Or marshalled under moons of harvest
Stand still all night the sheaves;
Or beeches strip in storms for winter
And stain the wind with leaves.

Possess, as I possessed a season,
The countries I resign,
Where over elmy plains the highway
Would mount the hills and shine,
And full of shade the pillared forest
Would murmur and be mine.

For nature, heartless, witless nature,
Will neither care nor know
What stranger's feet may find the meadow
And trespass there and go,
Nor ask amid the dews of morning
If they are mine or no.

Audrey Raishbrook 90th Birthday Celebration – 9th March 2024

One of our stalwart and popular supporters, Audrey Raishbrook will be celebrating her 90th Birthday on Saturday 9th March, 2024 from 3.00 pm to 8.00 pm at the Standard Triumph Club, Herald Avenue, Coventry CV5 6UB. All members and supporters of Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists and their guests are invited. Please respond by 9th February directly to Audrey to confirm attendance on either 07498 220984 or 024-7671-1839

Michael Rosen's Covid Enquiry Poem:

Not wishing to upstage Audrey's Poetry Choice, I was drawn towards this excellent poem by the Humanist poet and broadcaster Michael Rosen as a reflection of the current Covid Inquiry. As you may be aware that Rosen spent 48 days in intensive care after contracting coronavirus. He reflects and pens a poem on the 'chilling' evidence from the Covid Inquiry. The most frightening aspect was from former Prime Minister Boris Johnson's responses to the growing 'casualties' with the comment "so be it" and commenting that these casualties "have had a good innings". Rosen imagines Johnson as thinking that these people had 'notched up a good score', so no need to panic or fret.

Out of bedrooms and wards

long lines of the dead walk towards

you

asking you,

"Who were you to decide

that our innings was over?

Who gave you the umpires white coat

and upraised finger?"

Did you think that we would never speak

from the graves you gave us?

Dance First:

I had the pleasure of seeing this exceptional film on the life of Irish playwright Samuel Becket at Warwick Arts Centre. Unfortunately, this exceptional film will not be shown on the main circuit. *Dance First* is a 2023 biographical film about Irish playwright Samuel Beckett, directed by James Marsh and written by Neil Forsyth. Gabriel Byrne gives an excellent performance as Beckett, with a supporting cast featuring Fionn O'Shea as a younger Beckett and Aidan Gillen as James Joyce. The film documents the Irish writer's life, from his childhood, his friendship with James Joyce until the incarceration of the latter's mentally ill daughter Lucia Joyce, his relationship with his future wife Suzanne Dumesnil, excellently played by Sandrine Bonnairehis. His time as a fighter for the French Resistance during the Second World War, his post-war literary rise and subsequent Nobel Prize for Literature in 1969. The film also explores his affair with translator Barbara Bray played by the brilliant Maxine Peake and his later life until his death in 1989. Throughout the film, Beckett carries out an interior monologue with himself. This is undoubtedly one of Gabriel Byrne's finest performances and deserving of an Oscar nomination. It is such a pity that the film is not being shown widely

Film Preview:

A selection of films being released over the next few weeks

Napoleon: A spectacle filled epic that details the chequered rise and fall of the French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte and his relentless journey to power through the prism of his addictive, volatile relationship with his wife, Josephine. Directed by Ridley Scott, starring Joaquin Phoenix and Vanessa Kirby. Be prepared for inaccuracies and assumptions! Two and a half hours long! In most cinemas

Dream Scenario: Nicolas Cage stars as a professor who discovers he has begun to appear in other people's dreams and becomes an overnight celebrity. The Faustian bargain of fame. Probably Cage's finest ever film

Maestro: Bradley Cooper directs and stars in this bio-pic of the composer Leonard Bernstein famous for West Side Story and the first American conductor to receive international acclaim. Carey Mulligan brings strength and grace to her role as Montealegre. Made with the cooperation of the couple's three children, Maestro is a glorious symphony of life and art.

May December: Twenty years after their notorious tabloid romance gripped the nation, a married couple buckles under pressure when an actress arrives to do research for a film about their past.

Saltburn: A young man struggling to fit in at Oxford University finds himself drawn into the world of the charming and aristocratic student, who invites him to Saltburn, his eccentric family's sprawling estate, for a summer never to be forgotten. Starring Barry Keoghan and Jacob Elordi

Eileen: In the 1960s New England, Eileen Dunlop is working at a prison when a captivating, glamorous counsellor arrives and helps her access new facets of her personality but may be drawing her into something more dangerous. Starring Thomasin McKenzie and Anne Hathaway

The Eternal Daughter: A good horror film for a winter's evening? A woman and her elderly mother arrive at a fog-enshrouded hotel in the English countryside. A brusque clerk, lack of other guests, and disturbing sounds from the room above. Say no more! Starring Joanna Hogg and Tilda Swinton

The Peasants: A Polish adult animated historical drama film adapted from Władysław Reymont's Nobel Prize-winning novel. Starring Kamila Urzędowska, and Robert Gulaczyk,

Fallen Leaves: A Finnish-German tragi-comedy-drama. A single woman who works in a supermarket, stocking the shelves. One night she accidentally meets the equally lonely worker and alcoholic. Against all odds and misunderstandings, they try to build a relationship.

Wish: An animated musical comedy, tipped to be the popular Christmas favourite. This is the one to take your grandchildren to!

Still on the Circuit:

Killers of the Flower Moon: An epic Western crime drama film directed and produced by Martin Scorsese, based on the book of the same name by David Grann. Its plot centres on a series of Oklahoma murders in the Osage Nation during the 1920s, committed after oil was discovered on tribal land. The film stars Leonardo DiCaprio, Robert De Niro and Lily Gladstone.

Anatomy of a Fall: A German writer, is arrested for murder in France following her husband's death in the snow under mysterious circumstances. The couple's 11-year-old, blind son is the only witness to her husband's death. She tries to prove her innocence during the trial. Starring Sandra Huller

The Great Escaper: This film is bound to be a big hit with many people. Based on a true-life story. In the summer of 2014, a World War 2 veteran 'breaks-out' of his care home to attend the 70th anniversary commemoration of the D-Day landings in Normandy. Starring Michael Caine and Glenda Jackson. It is hinted that this will be Caine's last film. Jackson died within days of completing the film.

Seasonal Films at the Cinema:

One good thing about the Festive Season is that you do get a revival of past Christmas films. Some are excellent and worth a second look – others are best forgotten! Here is a list of those that are or will be on the main circuit and at Warwick Arts Centre and Midland Art Centre:

Love Actually – Always a favourite with a great stellar cast

White Christmas – Bing Crosby and Danny Kaye never let you down

It's a Wonderful Life – It is still the best vintage with James Stewart at his best

The Holiday – One of my favourites starring Cameron Diaz, Kate Winslet, Jude Law and Jack Black. A lovely cameo from Eli Wallach

Santa Claus – A good story starring Dudley Moore and John Lithgow

The Snowman – Short and sweet and over-sentimental with the voice of a young Aled Jones

Bing's Christmas – If you must? On at most cinemas?

Elf – Will Ferrell as the misfit elf – very funny in places

The Muppet Christmas Carol – Remember the Muppets? (Exactly!) Some cinemas are offering a sing-song version

Preview of TV Programmes and Films:

Friday 1st December: A great night for fans of Dionne Warwick

21.00 – BBC4: Dionne Warwick – Don't Make Me Over

22.00 – BBC4: Dionne Warwick at the BBC – 00.00 Fern Britten Meets Dionne Warwick

22.40 – BBC1: Graham Norton Show – This week, Tom Hanks, Julia Roberts and Cher (Wow!)

Saturday 2nd December: A great night for fans of Bob Dylan

19.25 – BBC1: Strictly Come Dancing – The final is getting nearer – It is Musical Night Tonight!

21.25 – Channel 4: The Father – An absolutely brilliant film. Anthony Hopkins won a well-deserved Oscar for this superb portrayal of a man suffering from dementia. His daughter played by Olivia Colman decides to move to Paris. He must deal with this change as he begins to lose his grip.

22.00 – BBC2: Bob Dylan: Shadow Kingdom – 22.50 – Bob Dylan: No Direction Home

22.40 -BBC4: The Sound of Movie Musicals with Neil Brand – Also at 23.45 and 00.45

Sunday 3rd December:

18.00 – Channel 5: The Man Who Invented Christmas - Period comedy drama starring Dan Stevens, Christopher Plummer and Jonathan Pryce. In 1843 London, Charles Dickens is desperate to write a bestseller, after a series of flops have left him in financial hardship. Drawing on his own experiences, he creates Ebenezer Scrooge and the characters of *A Christmas Carol*, and a classic is born.

20.00 – ITV1: Three Little Birds – The final episode of this interesting drama created by Lenny Henry

21.00 – BBC1: Boat Story – Another episode of this exceptional and interesting serial

22.45 – BBC2: Hell or High Water - Crime drama starring Ben Foster, Chris Pine and Jeff Bridges. A man and his loose-cannon brother put aside their differences to carry out a series of robberies. They target branches of the Texas Midlands Bank, an institution that is threatening to foreclose on their family farm.

23.55 – BBC1: Booksmart – One of the finest ever coming-of-age comedy starring Beanie Feldstein and Kaitlyn Dever. Two school friends decide to let their hair down with an outrageous party

00.35 – Channel 4: The Lighthouse – A good creepy horror film to go to bed with! Based on a true story. Early 20th century, 2 men are assigned to a lighthouse 20 miles off the Welsh coast. No love is lost between the men, so when a ferocious storm leaves them stranded and their food supplies start to dwindle, it's not long before tensions flare and tempers flash.

Monday 4th December:

21.00 – BBC1: Boat Story – The tensions build in another episode of this intriguing story

21.00 – BBC2: Julius Caesar: The Making of a Dictator – The rise to power of the Roman Emperor

23.15 – BBC2: Ordinary Love - Romantic drama starring Lesley Manville and Liam Neeson as a loving couple until she discovers a lump on her breast. The two cope with the ups and downs of cancer treatments, and begin to face their own mortality.

Tuesday 5th December:

21.00 – Louis Theroux Interviews Chelsea Manning – This week he meets ex-US Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning, discussing her decision to release a set of classified documents, detailing human rights abuse, torture of prisoners and more. The pair examine her time in prison, its impact on mental health and her upbringing in rural Oklahoma

22.00 – BBC4: The Wicker Man - Classic horror starring Edward Woodward and Christopher Lee. A policeman receives an anonymous letter suggesting that a girl has mysteriously disappeared from a small island community, he sets out to investigate.

Wednesday 6th December:

21.00 – BBC1: Shetland – Another episode of the crime series from the most northernmost region of the UK. (Bob Jelley's favourite programme – I hope you watched the Wicker Man on Tuesday?)

21.50 – BBC2: Upstart Crow: A Crow Christmas Carol – Another repeat of this excellent comedy series with David Mitchell as William Shakespeare.

Thursday 7th December:

20.00 – BBC4: Witness for the Prosecution – The classic 1957 version directed by Billy Wilder and starring Marlene Dietrich and Charles Laughton

22.45 – BBC3: Fleabag – A welcome return of series 2 of this great comedy written and starring Phoebe Waller-Bridge

Cartoons from Glyn & Heather Evans:



A Few One-Liners to Cheer You Up:

I am still having trouble with our boiler, we managed to get a man out
How he got in there I'll never know!

After 3-and-a-half years' hard work I'm proud to announce I've finally finished my first novel.
I might start reading another one tomorrow.

I once had a girlfriend called Peg....We met online.
Well, I say girlfriend... Really, I just used to hang out with her

I went to a charity do for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution
They really know how to push the boat out!

Cilla Black and Carol Decker once opened a tool shop together.....
it was called Cilla and Carol's tool shop... (*I am sure they could have had a better name?*)

Went to B&Q with the wife today and she got a ladder in her tights...
She's an amazing shoplifter.

I met a girl today who said her face was allergic to all cosmetics.
Honestly, you couldn't make it up.....

I started my puncture repair business from a small flatthen I had to expand due to inflationnow
I'm hoping to re-tyre soon

I wanted a permanent record of my time working as a lumberjack, so every day I kept a log. – A treemendous job!!

Computer Hacker: I have all of your passwords – Me: Oh thank you - What are they?

And now for the corny one!

When I served Lionel Richie a roast dinner, he asked once, twice three times for gravy!