

Questions for *We Don't Know Ourselves* by Fintan O'Toole

Part Two of the Discussion

1. In the 1960s and 70s, US companies started opening up businesses in Ireland. Why were they drawn to Ireland?
2. O'Toole makes an interesting point about how the ones who were now in power after declaring independence from the UK aspired to big houses, fine furniture, and horses. These were the very things the Irish had resented. Comments?
3. The author seems to have a vendetta against Haughey — nothing good to say about the man. He had no money, but married into money and was able to get friends to give him funds. He was a Catholic, but a womanizer, too. Did he convince you that Haughey was not a good person/leader?
4. The Hunger Strikes of 1981 are (in)famous in Irish history. What is your reaction to O'Toole's description of Bobby Sands, the H Block, Long Kesh? Gandhi used hunger strikes as a method of protest. Do you approve? Disapprove?
5. In the 1980 emigration came roaring back. People were referred to as Ireland's greatest "export." What is your reaction to this? Would you consider emigrating from your homeland? Is moving to, let's say, California emigrating?
6. Donnelly visas were given to two of Obie's cousins. Let's listen to him tell about their experiences.
7. Abortion is a huge issue for O'Toole. And today, here in the US, it has emerged once again as a huge issue. In 2018 Ireland voted to allow it. (In 2015 they had voted to allow gay marriages.) Does this change your view of Ireland?
8. If you wrote your autobiography, what are some of the major events you would include?

NOTE: I didn't have any questions about all the economic problems O'Toole mentions. Mainly because I didn't really understand it. But if you have some question or comments about that topic, please feel free to add to this list.