

## The psychotic freakshow rolls on

“I’m not guilty ? Does that include the time I stole a comic book when I was five years old ? I’m not guilty of the charges which have been filed against me.”

- Ted Bundy, quoted in *Conversations with a killer: the Ted Bundy tapes*.

“Theresa May has admitted that she used to “run through fields of wheat” with a friend and that the local farmers “weren’t too pleased about that”.”

- Theresa May admits 'running through fields of wheat' is the naughtiest thing she ever did, *The Daily Telegraph*, 5 June 2017.

Jonathan Demme’s masterpiece *The Silence of the Lambs* forms part of the answer to perhaps the best pub quiz question ever. Namely: which three films are the only ones to have won the so-called ‘royal flush’ at the Oscars (i.e. Academy Awards for best film; best director; best actor; best actress; best screenplay) ? Which were the other two ? Ah, that would be telling.

Watch the film a few times and the proximate villain of the piece, ‘Buffalo Bill’, turns out to be an amalgam of at least two real life serial killers: Ted Bundy, and Ed Gein. Bundy confessed to 30 murders of young women, although the true figure may never be known. In one of *Silence’s* eeriest sequences, ‘Buffalo Bill’ lures a victim into his van through the pretense of dragging a sofa whilst nursing a plaster cast (Bundy used a variation on the same trick as part of his M.O.). Ed Gein was a murderer and body snatcher who fashioned trophies out of his victims, including their skin. He helped inspire the Anthony Perkins character in Hitchcock’s *Psycho* as well, probably, as the character Leatherface in Tobe Hooper’s *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. Somewhat disconcertingly, American horror films are grounded in more reality than you might wish.

Meanwhile, in the more prosaic quotidian world, what Sam White calls “the psychotic freakshow” of Brexit (or perhaps he meant Twitter) rolls on. Twitter is the perfect medium to debate Brexit, because it doesn’t masquerade under messianic delusions of objectivity, unlike the hopelessly conflicted mainstream media.

Twitter user Dan Salt (@danieljohnsalt) takes up the story:

Brexit is going to be the most profound geopolitical event in recent UK history, but not in the way many think. It could have been a simple divorce but has escalated due to the UK parliament and EU's position into something far deeper. It's a crisis in democracy.

It has crushed belief in democracy and our democratic institutions. Many people have no trust in parliament, the media, the EU, policy elites or even major public quangos. This is having a severe impact and will do for years. We are at the beginning of the end of the two party system and with it our electoral system.

This will be accelerated by any push for a new referendum but will happen either way now. The major parties are now seen as corrupt, self serving and stuffed with identikit politicians. But before the end it will lead to multiple minority governments before it becomes obvious that the two parties have no mandate any more and are only held in place by the voting system. It's now obvious to many that neither party actually like their traditional bases. In fact, quite the reverse; they actively hold them in contempt. Tories MPs hate the shires and Labour MPs loath the working class. This has been true for decades but the voters now know it. This will impact international relations as will make any deal with the EU unstable.

Any government will struggle to sign something they know will be hated by so many and held up as an example of the two parties serving themselves. This will be especially true as the EU has demonstrated that it doesn't want a fair deal. Trust has now gone and it won't come back.

Moving into the future you can expect these events to mean that the EU and UK will drift apart politically. UK politicians will find it easier to deal with for domestic and international reasons other countries. Being honest, economically that's where the growth is anyway.

This will impact military investment with an increase in the navy versus the other services. As the UK moves to project force and influence globally. This in turn will mean the UK is simply less interested and less willing to deploy forces into mainland Europe.

There will be no upside to supporting European countries after this debacle. Many will read this and think: "but maybe the UK will stay in the end". This should not be ruled out. But the same impacts will be seen. Furthermore, a new vote would happen shortly. Driven by the same domestic trends. The idea that should the UK stay now it would make a happy member, would be constructive, would sign up for anything or that parliament would electorally get away with supporting the EU is for the birds. Frankly only the deluded would think that.

There is a price you pay for forcing a country down a route for generations without an electoral mandate. There is an even bigger one you pay when you try and ignore democracy because it's inconvenient. The EU and UK are about to pay for both.

Wherever your sympathies lie in relation to Brexit, the Leave campaign won a national plebiscite – that the government of the day promised to implement – in the teeth of fierce

resistance from Establishment players including most City firms, the Bank of England, the government of the day, the CBI, the then US president, the IMF, the EU and a motley band of celebrities and self-serving entrepreneurs with a shaky grasp of democracy.

But as Tim Dawson puts it (on Twitter, naturally):

The root cause of our national discontent is simple. We had a referendum, but the losing side refuses to honour it. We are therefore stuck in a political groundhog day; forced to replay the same exhausting, exhausted arguments over and over again. 2 years on – tempers are fraying.

Actions have consequences. One of the perhaps unforeseen consequences of the Conservative Party irredeemably botching Brexit and traducing legitimate democracy is that it opens the possibility, if not necessarily the probability, of a Corbyn / McDonnell government. (Put to one side the damage done to belief in the integrity of the British political system, business continuity and long-standing commitment to fair play.) Labour, if elected, is considering introducing a Universal Basic Income. UBI in turn would require significant tax rises. Separately, rumours are now legion that John McDonnell, as shadow chancellor, has been discussing just how far his remit to destroy the UK economy might stretch. An IFA tweets:

I hear from a good source that they plan a top rate income tax of 70%, and a one off 20% tax on all private wealth above £1 million. Be warned.

This is admittedly hearsay and it may just be as insubstantial as a trial balloon. Maybe.

The Conservative Party has had multiple chances to drop their leader and install someone who *might* be capable of delivering what 17.4 million voters actually wanted back in June 2016. The political scales are now being reset, and the UK political world is in flux. On plain valuation grounds alone, we seek listed investments in other, more favourably positioned, markets.

Theresa May may not be a murderous psychopath. But given the wider implications of what her continued and regrettable service as ostensible leader of the country represents, that doesn't make her any less of a monster.

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@timfprice

Tim Price is co-manager of the [VT Price Value Portfolio](#) and author of 'Investing through the Looking Glass: a rational guide to irrational financial markets'. You can access a full archive of these weekly investment commentaries [here](#). You can access the archive of our regular 'State of the Markets' podcasts, with Paul Rodriguez of ThinkTrading.com, [here](#).

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