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FACE OF THE NATION?



A man walks along the south bank of the River Thames backdropped by the Elizabeth Tower, known as Big Ben, of the Houses of Parliament, in London, Tuesday, Jan. 17, 2023. ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Duty to report?

From clergy to coaches, states debate who should report child abuse and neglect

By Robbie Sequeira
STATELINE.ORG

Conversations with survivors of sexual abuse left Missouri state Sen. Tracy McCreery wondering what could have prevented the harm, leading her to sponsor a bill that would require clergy and religious workers to report suspected child abuse or neglect.

Her bill would have forced ministers to report even if they learned of abuse during confession or another religious rite. She urges people to view the issue through the lens of child safety and not against religion.

"Children are just very vulnerable and it's up to us as adults to not allow them to be harmed," the Democrat told Stateline. "There shouldn't be an exception for adults that know about something and just don't report it."

Her bill failed to advance as the Missouri legislative session drew to a close. Other state lawmakers across the country also are grappling with the question of who should be required to report suspected child abuse or neglect, known as "mandated reporters."

Some legislators are weighing whether clergy should be included — and whether they should be forced to reveal information from confessions. Other lawmakers are wrestling with whether sports coaches, talent agents, camp leaders and other professions with access to children should be mandated reporters.

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Are you doom spending? 5 ways to stop

By Nerdwallet
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By Kimberly Palmer, NerdWallet
After a long day of working, taking care of my kids and worrying about the state of the world, it's easy for me to relax into one of my favorite activities: online shopping.

I may not be able to control how much groceries cost this week or stop a global conflict, but I can find some relief from a not-so-good habit. Hitting "purchase" on a new gym outfit or scented candle somehow calms my nervous system before bed. I get a little dopamine boost, feel more relaxed and, well, more in control.

I'm not the only one soothed by so-called "doom spending," a term that's popped up in recent years. It refers to making unne-

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As America hits 250, many Brits say one man defines it: Trump

By Laurie Kellman
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON, England — Loud. Broken. Baffling.

Ask Brits what they think of their former colonies in 2026, and they note these long-held views of America and Americans. But after 250 years of independence from Britain, the country's former rulers cannot discuss the United States without mentioning President Donald Trump, almost always before listing the many qualities they admire and appreciate in the upstart nation across the pond.

"It's Trump's world now, isn't it?" says Mark Keightley, a printer technician who serves the Cambridge area, about an hour north of London.

Over the past year, The Associated Press asked Britons — from George Washington's ancestral home near Scotland to Cambridge, Bristol and London — a neutral question: "What do you think of America now?" Virtually every answer, even from those like Keightley who support some of the president's policies, begins with a considered pause, followed by a crisp euphemism such as "He..." with no ambiguity about who.

Is it possible to talk about America now without referencing Trump, they are asked? The unanimous answer, according to these interviews: No.

"My own opinion of America is now dictated by the president and he's not covering himself in glory as far as I'm concerned," said Eddie Boyle of Falkirk, Scotland, as he walked across Westminster Bridge in London last week. "It's a shame that such a long arrangement



President Donald Trump and Britain's King Charles III talk on stage during a State Visit arrival ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House, on April 28 in Washington. ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

between the two countries has been tarnished."

'THE COUNTRY DISAPPOINTS ME'

Being British and disappointed by the reality of the United States isn't a new phenomenon.

Charles Dickens wrote to a friend that he felt just that way during his 1842 visit to the new nation, where he was feted from Boston to New York and Washington. But he was horrified by the ongoing practice of slavery, which Britain abolished in 1833.

"This is not the Republic I came to see. This is not the Republic of my imagination," he wrote to William Charles Macready on March 22, 1842. "In every respect but that of National Education,

the Country disappoints me."

Several inflection points inspired Britain to take America seriously as a permanent power and not a temporary, rebellious whim. Among them, the War of 1812 — a rematch of sorts between the two nations. It ended in a draw, but the conflict boosted the sense of American independence and established the United States as a sturdy trading and military force to be reckoned with.

The new country then survived its own Civil War. Then, before a century elapsed, the United States helped Britain fend off Nazi occupation and, with the rest of the Allied powers, defeated Germany during World War II. Four

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Q&A about Knoebels history with the president of the park

By Asha Prihar
SPOTLIGHT PA

There's no place like Knoebels.

Nestled inside Northeast Pennsylvania's forested mountains, the pay-as-you-go amusement park boasts retro rides and games, award-winning food and campgrounds — among many other amenities. Its affordable prices and throwback atmosphere have earned it a global and fiercely loyal following. Some rank it among the best amusement

parks in the world.

The park will have been in operation for 100 years on July 4, and has managed to remain consistent even as it's grown into a full-on resort. Nine members of the family that founded it still work there and call the shots.

Brian Knoebel, 52, said his earliest memory of working at the park founded by his great-grandfather is handing out "a little Dixie Cup of ice cream" at catered events. Since then, he's stepped into many other roles, from trash crew to

ride inspector to funnel cake maker. Last fall, he succeeded his father as president of the park.

Ahead of the centennial, Knoebel spoke with PA Local about the park's ups and downs, its commitment to free admission, and its knack for taking visitors a "step back in time."

This interview has been condensed for length and edited for clarity.

Q: Could you tell me a little bit about how Knoebels got

started?

A: My ancestors came over from Germany, and one was actually a minister on horseback. They bought a plot of land where two streams come together. And we built our lumberyard. We were farmers — my ancestors were — and they made charcoal, and they had Christmas trees and potatoes, and they had animals.

The farm itself was slightly upstream. People started to



Riders on Knoebels' Phoenix roller coaster begin their descent. COURTESY OF KNOEBELS

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