

[00:00:18.710] - VO

On The Engender, Scotland's Feminist Policy Podcast.

[00:00:27.370] - Amanda Aitken

Hello and welcome to On The Engender. My name is Amanda Aitken and I'm joined by my wonderful colleague, Alys Mumford.

[00:00:34.700] - Alys Mumford

Hello. Welcome, listeners. We're going to start with some news from the podcast and that this will be our last, certainly for a wee while, episode of On The Engender. That's because Amanda, who you all know and love, is going to be leaving us for exciting things. Amanda, what could possibly be better than Engender?

[00:00:56.530] - Amanda Aitken

[Laughter] I know after so many years, so many years, people who listen to the podcast over the past couple of years will know that I've been slowly, through the pandemic, trying to retrain into a new career path as a carpenter. After many attempts at trying to find some work, a wee workshop got back to me and now this is me. It's my new life. Career pivot has pivoted. I'm moving on to build staircases and kitchens and things, which is very exciting.

[00:01:32.510] - Alys Mumford

Highly. Also, it gives you much time, I assume, for listening to podcasts while you're sawing things.

[00:01:38.600] - Amanda Aitken

It does.

[00:01:39.270] - Alys Mumford

Is that how it works?

[00:01:40.580] - Amanda Aitken

It does.

[00:01:41.440] - Alys Mumford

You do sawing?

[00:01:42.510] - Amanda Aitken

You saw some things.

[00:01:43.820] - Alys Mumford

Sure.

[00:01:43.930] - Amanda Aitken

You sand some things..

[00:01:46.500] - Alys Mumford

Hammer some things?

[00:01:48.470] - Amanda Aitken

You hammer some things. Sometimes you put screws and things, sometimes nails.

[00:01:55.730] - Alys Mumford

But for different purposes, right? I know these things. They're very exciting.

[00:02:00.230] - Amanda Aitken

Yes.

[00:02:01.150] - Alys Mumford

Congratulations, Amanda. Very cool.

[00:02:03.830] - Amanda Aitken

Thank you. I know. I'm so sad. I'm so sad to be leaving.

[00:02:06.920] - Alys Mumford

It is sad. But with goodbyes, often come hellos. That is the case on this podcast, because we're very delighted to be joined by Catherine Murphy. Did you like that segue? It's good, doesn't it? Not at all cheesy. Hi, Catherine. Welcome to On The Engender.

[00:02:24.480] - Catherine Murphy

Hi, Alys. Hi, Amanda.

[00:02:27.950] - Amanda Aitken

Hello.

[00:02:27.950] - Catherine Murphy

I hope it wasn't anything I said to make you leave - [laughter] but very excited. I should also say that one of my best and favourite time kills is I'm heavily invested in DIY TikTok and Instagram and people who use IKEA bookcases to make fabulous and in0-built wardrobes and things. I really hope that there's going to be something I can follow in terms of Amanda's carpentry on social media.

[00:02:58.470] - Alys Mumford

Oh, yes. We demand it.

[00:03:01.950] - Amanda Aitken

You're not the first person to ask me to do this. I don't know if I can be bothered, but maybe I'll just send the occasional video of things I've done. Them videos are very satisfying. The reality is, it's usually me really slowly trying to get something right- [laughter] - but maybe soon I'll be slick and have -

[00:03:25.670] - Alys Mumford

Just stick a Rihanna track over it and that's goals.

[00:03:30.270] - Amanda Aitken

Exactly. Stick a Rihanna track over it, speed it up, cut out the bad bits. That's it.

[00:03:37.530] - Catherine Murphy

Well, you've got one follower already, definitely. I'll be following - 100%.

[00:03:39.640] - Multiple voices

[Laughter]

[00:03:44.830] - Amanda Aitken

Before we find out a wee bit more about you, though, which is obviously what this episode is mainly about, I thought first we should start with some good things, as we do with the podcast every time, start with some good things. I'm going to come to you first, Alys.

[00:04:00.730] - Alys Mumford

I was going to say, I have a very self indulgent good thing. I think probably over the podcast, most of my good things have been like, I had a nice day, I ate some cakes, so they're always quite indulgent.

[00:04:09.330] - Alys Mumford

But I'm now a councillor. I've been elected to Portobello/Craigmillar Ward in Edinburgh, so my hours at Engender will also be changing a little bit, but I will be sticking around. But, yeah, so I'm fully in there discovering first-hand that everything we talk about women in politics is true. So yes, that's my good news.

[00:04:31.620] - Alys Mumford

Also, more generally, we saw increase of women at local council elections, a wee bit more diversity. There are still places where there aren't women representatives. 73% of wards that were uncontested were won by men. Sorry, it's a good thing.

[00:04:46.310] - Alys Mumford

No, generally, there have been good things among the patriarchy, so, yeah, local democracy, yay! Hopefully that might mean some good things for women in Scotland. How about you, Amanda? What's your good thing?

[00:05:01.480] - Amanda Aitken

Well, my good thing, it was quite hard to think of something that was good and then I was like, "Have I already mentioned this?" I can't remember. Obviously, it's going to be sports related because this is my last podcast, so keep with the brand, otherwise the people won't know.

[00:05:18.470] - Amanda Aitken

I was going to say, exciting news this week that I was reading is that the women's game in Scotland have now come under the control of the SPFL for next season, with, 20 clubs joining together to form different divisions, which is just them, maybe formalising a bit more. Hopefully as a result of that, get more coverage, maybe a TV deal. The growth is a very positive move in an admin way, very positive move for the women's football in Scotland. So I was pretty stoked about that.

[00:05:48.220] - Alys Mumford

It's very exciting.

[00:05:48.380] - Amanda Aitken

Then also, I booked my overnight sleeper train to London to watch the women's Euro finals in July, and I've never got the sleeper train, so I'm very excited about that.

[00:05:58.210] - Alys Mumford

Also, women's finals. The last time I got on the sleeper train to London, I was worried I wouldn't sleep. I had a berth and I slept so well that it was quarter past seven or something, and a guard came in and said, "The train is about to get back to Edinburgh." I woke up, in my jim-jams, like, "What?" He said, "You've got two minutes" So I had to like grab all my things. That's a good record. It is possible to sleep very well on the sleeper train, so enjoy that.

[00:06:31.200] - Amanda Aitken

I am so excited. I'm so excited. It felt a bit luxurious, but also I was like, the cost of an extra night in London versus getting a wee sleeper or do something never done before, go to the little bar. I've heard wonderful things - I wanna go to the bar on the train. I love that.

[00:06:47.150] - Alys Mumford

Get a little croissant in a plastic bag in the morning.

[00:06:49.920] - Amanda Aitken

Oh, great. Now I know that I'm going to have a great sleep, also, according to you.

[00:07:00.450] - Catherine Murphy

I've heard the bar car is very good fun on the sleeper train, that you meet all sorts of interesting people and get to chat to people and stuff. Not sure if that's true, but that's what I've heard, because some people just go and sleep.

[00:07:12.940] - Amanda Aitken

There's like a whole culture of people who go to and from and are just like that. Monday to Friday, sleeper train people. It's great. I'll be meeting for one night.

[00:07:25.230] - Alys Mumford

Hi, guys. Can I hang out with you? Great. You'll love it. Catherine, tell us a good thing.

[00:07:31.440] - Catherine Murphy

Obviously, at the moment, in the landscape of reproductive rights, it's not particularly a very happy landscape that we're in at the moment. My good thing was the news from the Scottish Government that the Scottish Government are going to extend telemedical abortion at home, which is very very welcome news and great news that Scotland seems to be moving in the right direction on abortion as opposed to other countries.

[00:08:02.900] - Catherine Murphy

That was my good thing. Then my other, if you'll indulge me, I have two-

[00:08:07.710] - Alys Mumford

Go on then.

[00:08:07.710] - Catherine Murphy

- was the thing that has brightened up my last couple of weeks was the Derry Girls' finale and the opportunity that gave me to indulge in a wonderful nostalgia for that period of 1997, '98, whenever everything looked rosy and it was just wonderful. I really hoped it would be brilliant and it surpassed my expectations and I ugly cried all the way through it. That has been one of the highlights in the last couple of weeks for me, for sure.

[00:08:42.440] - Alys Mumford

Incredible. I did have a meeting with someone the other day, not you, but they just said, "I'm sorry, I'm going to be 10 minutes late, because I watched the finale on my lunch break and I haven't pulled myself together yet." So, I think that is a shared feeling.

[00:08:59.590] - Catherine Murphy

It was so glorious.

[00:08:59.590] - Alys Mumford

Abortion rights. I mean, it's a funny world, isn't it? Because every time there's something awful and you know, the Roe vs. Wade stuff, there is also people come together and that activism and the shared stuff that comes from...

[00:09:11.820] - Alys Mumford

One thing I really like seeing was that the New York magazine dedicated a whole issue to it and their front page was just like, "This magazine will help you get an abortion." It was like a state by state handbook of where you can go, how you can get pills, which clinics let you in, how to avoid protesters, and it was awful that has to happen. But actually, when has that happened? I think it's making people come out for reproductive rights. So, that's something.

[00:09:37.390] - Catherine Murphy

Yeah, I totally agree. I think one of the things - you saw that in Poland as well, after the horrible legal restrictions that have been brought in, in Poland. One of the responses to it from activists was really almost a real movement to take the shame out of abortion.

[00:09:56.280] - Catherine Murphy

That struck me with that New York Times Magazine front page as well. It was really striking that one of the kind of impacts of these restrictions is actually people being much more willing to speak out and be defiant and move through the shame that's created around these things. It's really one thing that I think we can be thankful for overall.

[00:10:21.680] - Alys Mumford

So, it is, at least for a while, the last episode of On The Engender. As I said at the start, it's an episode of goodbyes and hellos, so it's the perfect opportunity to formally introduce Engender's new Executive

Director to you, our listeners. Talk a bit about you, Catherine, talk about what the future has in store for Engender and for the feminist movement in Scotland. First off, Catherine, can you tell our listeners just a little bit about you, about your background, what you were up to before you came to Engender?

[00:10:51.800] - Catherine Murphy

Thanks, Alys. Yeah so - I am Scottish, surprisingly. You may have guessed that by now from this accent, which is undeniable. I grew up in Scotland, I'm from Coatbridge in Lanarkshire originally.

[00:11:08.170] - Catherine Murphy

I started out in the Scottish Parliament and was in the Scottish Parliament in the early days of the Parliament when it used to set up in that building, which I think became the Missoni Hotel, if I'm correct, the Assembly of the Church of Scotland, so many many years ago. Then was in the Scottish Parliament when the new building opened.

[00:11:29.400] - Catherine Murphy

Then after that I worked for the sexual and reproductive health and rights and HIV organisation, the Terrence Higgin's Trust, and I worked for them for many years in policy and parliamentary work in Scotland, in Wales, in Westminster Parliament.

[00:11:46.860] - Catherine Murphy

Then I moved into international work on sexual and reproductive rights and women's rights for Amnesty International. I was at Amnesty in the International Secretariat in London for eight years. I was the Director of Gender, Sexuality and Identity for Amnesty and a few other different things over the years.

[00:12:10.680] - Catherine Murphy

I worked with a global remit, but often worked on issues in the UK as well, and sometimes in Scotland, and then surrounding countries like Ireland and different places.

[00:12:22.670] - Catherine Murphy

So, I did that job and then last year I came back to Scotland, like many people did in the pandemic. I came home, I wanted to be closer to family after twelve years in London. I've been back for about a year, and I've been doing different bits and pieces for a work as a strategist for charities and NGOs. Then I saw the job at Engender and I thought, "Oh, quite fancy, quite fancy that job."

[00:12:51.500] - Catherine Murphy

Thankfully Engender were kind enough to give me the job. So I started full time on May the 2nd. I'm nearly a full month now, and it's been great so far. I'm really excited to be here, I'm really excited to be working on women's rights in Scotland. It just feels like a full circle moment to me so it's been great, really really nice.

[00:13:13.000] - Amanda Aitken

Oh, that's so good. Such an interesting background that you've had in your work previously that links really closely to the policy work of Engender. I guess what are you most looking forward to with working with Engender and what have you been getting involved with already since you've been here for the past month full time?

[00:13:33.230] - Catherine Murphy

One of the things that I've been doing so far has been meeting and making connections with people in the women's rights movement and other leaders and other staff and volunteers and different things in the women's rights movement in Scotland. Obviously that will take a bit of time because there's a lot of people involved.

[00:13:51.680] - Catherine Murphy

But that's the thing I think I'm most excited about because Scotland has got this phenomenally well thought of, historic really well organised, and dynamic women's rights sector. I'm really excited to get to know people and learn from the experts that are in the sector. There are so many great people that

have such a depth of knowledge on issues around violence against women for example, domestic abuse, things like that.

[00:14:19.160] - Catherine Murphy

I'm really eager and keen to get to know the sector and get to know the work. Then I also think as well just there's such a historic opportunity in Scotland because we have feminist leadership, quite strong feminist leadership in Government. I'm really excited to see what we can do and how we can move Scotland forward and the opportunities that exist to be really world-leading on, so many things on our feminist agenda so I'm excited about that.

[00:14:53.420] - Catherine Murphy

I'm also very excited to be able to use words like *outwith* regularly in my day to day work and not to have to modify my accent so that is another thing that I'm very excited about. There's just loads of stuff that I want to get involved in.

[00:15:16.770] - Catherine Murphy

I have done a wide range of different things I've worked on violence against women at international level but I'm really keen to learn more at domestic level and get really involved in that, get involved in learning what organisations like Rape Crisis and Women's Aid do.

[00:15:34.760] - Catherine Murphy

Then there's this really phenomenal work of Close The Gap and others and Zero Tolerance. I want to learn all this stuff and I'm excited to work in partnership. But then there's also really exciting things on the agenda for Scotland now, and the incorporation of the Convention on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and things like that. I think there's just amazing opportunities and great people so that is a good combination, I think.

[00:16:03.630] - Alys Mumford

Amazing and I guess looking further ahead, you said some of the things CEDAW Incorporation there. What are the big challenges, I guess, you see for women's equality in Scotland over the next few years. I feel like I'm... I'll try not to recreate your job interview but it'd just be interesting to get your perspective on - for Engender, for feminists in Scotland, what should we be looking out for, what are the key things we need to be getting involved in and what's on the horizon?

[00:16:34.110] - Catherine Murphy

I think there's huge opportunities because we do have a critical mass of feminist leadership in the Parliament and the Government and I think that's quite rare, unfortunately, across the world. That gives us a window to really make progress.

[00:16:53.010] - Catherine Murphy

As I say, it's exciting that we're looking at CEDAW being incorporated into Scot's Law because that's effectively a bill of rights for women and increases things like accountability and law for the realisation of women's rights, and socio-economic rights and things like that.

[00:17:10.420] - Catherine Murphy

I think that's really exciting. I think there's so much learning from the last two years of the pandemic as well and there has been such enormous transformative change in culture, the way we work and in employment. I think there's lots of opportunities.

[00:17:32.010] - Catherine Murphy

Like I mentioned, telemedical abortion, that's one of the things that has come out of the COVID Pandemic. These envelopes have been pushed, so we need to make sure that all those changes that have been good for women in Scotland are maintained.

[00:17:47.200] - Catherine Murphy

Also, obviously there's been a lot of really negative things that have come out of the COVID pandemic that we need to push for and we're looking down the barrel of a cost of living crisis and deepening

inequality. We have a lot of challenges around that that we need to address.

[00:18:04.720] - Catherine Murphy

I think one of the things that has loads of potential that I'm excited about is the Scottish Government's mainstreaming agenda. I think that there's a lot of scope to build an architecture, a policy, an institutional architecture in Scotland that integrates women's rights, not just as this something this issue that is nice to talk about, that is actually built into root and branch of everything that the government does.

[00:18:41.220] - Catherine Murphy

There's a lot of state objectives about that and the Scottish Government are committed to it. But I think for us in the women's movement, we're going to need to push hard to make sure that that's resourced properly and that it really does come to pass.

[00:18:56.760] - Catherine Murphy

I think there's a lot of really interesting stuff on the horizon, but we will need to make sure we're not complacent in Scotland because I think that things like mainstreaming can be really tricky to implement. So we need to make sure that we push for it to be implemented in the most effective way.

[00:19:19.980] - Catherine Murphy

Then also I also don't think we can afford to be complacent about the broader landscape of pushback against women's rights globally. I think we are quite fortunate in Scotland that we do have that feminist leadership. But things can change and you always need to be aware of the broader landscape externally and globally, that women's rights are foreseeing rollbacks right across the globe. So we need to be alert to challenges and making sure Scotland is a progressive country on women's rights and doesn't have any kind of slip backs around that.

[00:19:59.890] - Alys Mumford

I feel like there was quite a long time on the podcast where we were saying, "Constant vigilance," quite a lot. I'm disappointed, we maybe now missed our chance for a little jingle of that. But constant vigilance, I think, is always a good watchword for feminists, given that we're still getting press inquiries. Has #MeToo gone too far, all of this jazz, it doesn't go away. The people that want to find the opportunities to push back.

[00:20:28.380] - Catherine Murphy

Yeah it is part of the experience of being a feminist is just repeating yourself a lot for many years and just saying the same things over and over again, finding new ways to say it. The constant vigilance thing is a big issue, and I think that Scotland has a good environment for women's rights, a reasonably positive one, but we can't afford to be complacent about it.

[00:20:59.930] - Amanda Aitken

Yeah, most definitely. I guess, obviously to stay somewhat positive also, looking further ahead, what about for you personally, do you feel to be excited about? What should our listeners - you mentioned on some of these things about CEDAW and stuff, about looking out for. But what about for you personally, what are you excited about getting started on or getting more involved with?

[00:21:24.230] - Catherine Murphy

Yeah, for me, I've worked a lot throughout my career at the intersection of different things. I've worked on the intersection of women's rights, public health, identity, LGBTI rights, racial justice, and I've worked on a wide range of different things. I've worked a lot in the HIV sector as well.

[00:21:49.980] - Catherine Murphy

One of the things that I've been really exposed to in my career is that intersectional way of working and the commitment to intersectionality and everything we do. So I'm really excited from that point of view, and I'm looking forward to doing work around intersectionality and what that means in practical terms at Engender, but also in the Scottish landscape.

[00:22:11.980] - Catherine Murphy

I know that there's a lot of brilliant people that are already doing that work in Scotland, so I'm keen to get involved. I know that there's a big commitment within Engender already about developing our intersectional analysis and how women - gender discrimination, intersects with racial discrimination, LGBTI rights, et cetera.

[00:22:34.760] - Catherine Murphy

So I'm really excited to do some work on that and come up with a framework for Engender's way of working on that and also just how we roll that out in Scot's policy and the landscape of government in Scotland, et cetera. That's something that I'm really committed to. So that's something I'm looking forward to doing, I think.

[00:23:01.690] - Alys Mumford

Exciting times. I guess we should reassure listeners that we... Although you might not have podcast episodes on these things, obviously we'll be keeping you informed on everything that we're up to, that Catherine is up to, in our blog, our Friday Feminist Five for members and with webinars and events and all these other things where you can still get deep dives into the policy work coming up.

[00:23:26.640] - Alys Mumford

We're going into recess soon in the Scottish Parliament, so that'll be a chance for doing some of this deeper thinking work that Catherine is talking about. Then we'll be September new term, looking for things like incorporation of CEDAW, looking at the women's health plan, what's happening with that, looking at strategies on economic transformation, national planning framework. Four? Are we up to four? I'm not sure. Jill would know.

[00:23:53.140] - Alys Mumford

And all the other things that we've got coming up, the Parliamentary Audit, all these things will be happening and you can keep in touch with us on socials and all the other ways you can find us to find out more about that. But I think, Cat, unless there's anything else you want to tell our listeners, leave us with words of wisdom. Anything like that, otherwise [inaudible 00:24:13].

[00:24:28.260] - Catherine Murphy

I'm the wrong person for that - I'm really sorry. Wisdom is not in my job description, sorry [Laughter]. I think, I'm really pleased to be here and the team at Engender are really great. I'm really sad Amanda's going, though.

[00:24:40.870] - Alys Mumford

We've already agreed several side WhatsApp groups to discuss various Wagatha Christie trials, trash TV shows and of course, the joinery TikTok will be coming along very soon, I'm sure. As soon as you stop making the podcast, you'll be like, no, I need a way to bring in a feminist joiner TikTok, I think.

[00:25:04.290] - Amanda Aitken

I just got to create content.

[00:25:06.200] - Alys Mumford

Yeah, definitely. #ContentCreation.

[00:25:10.770] - Amanda Aitken

Wouldn't work so well as a podcast.

[00:25:15.510] - Multiple voices

[Crosstalk 00:25:15]

[00:25:18.590] - Alys Mumford

It'd be like *The Archers* and they have a very obvious tractor or cow in the background. You just have to have some hammering and sawing to be like, "Look, I am in a joiner studio. I promise I'm in the workshop right now." Bang, bang, bang would be great.

[00:25:31.470] - Amanda Aitken

It's like the opposite of ASMR, isn't it? It's pain to listen to.

[00:25:36.840] - Alys Mumford

Maybe that's actually a better stress reliever. Just listen to people hammering. I was about to do our first swear on the podcast. Other than Baroness Kennedy. Like a wreck room where you go and smash stuff up. It could just be a therapeutic, listen to Amanda hammering things and creating beauty out of bits of wood.

[00:26:03.450] - Alys Mumford

Cool. I've gone on a tangent. Let's go to recommendations. Now, I feel like I put a lot of pressure on myself, on all of us, by being like, "This is going to be the last recommendation for a while. Make it really good," and I got very little to recommend. But Amanda, I'm going to go to you first.

[00:26:25.030] - Amanda Aitken

Oh, no. I recommend going back to the first episode of On The Engender.

[00:26:32.470] - Alys Mumford

Nice.

[00:26:35.810] - Amanda Aitken

I really struggle with this because I feel like we knew this day would come at some point, but I've got no idea.

[00:26:42.870] - Catherine Murphy

I have one.

[00:26:47.570] - Amanda Aitken

Oh, there we go.

[00:26:47.570] - Alys Mumford

Save us.

[00:26:47.570] - Catherine Murphy

I don't know if this is off-brand. It's certainly not off-brand for me. One of my recommendations that I have annoyed people with for the last six months is another podcast. I'm sorry, if-

[00:27:03.450] - Alys Mumford

Love it.

[00:27:03.450] - Catherine Murphy

- maybe it's a podcast, it can take the place of this one. [crosstalk 00:27:06]. It's another podcast and it is called Dolly Parton's America.

[00:27:14.500] - Alys Mumford

So good.

[00:27:16.510] - Catherine Murphy

I am a huge fan of Dolly Parton. This podcast actually predates the point at which she saved humanity through vaccination. But it speaks about, I don't know if you've listened to it, but it's about the current climate in America. It's about working-class feminism. It's about how Dolly Parton has managed through a really impressive and complex way to be able to speak across these divides in American culture.

[00:27:55.550] - Catherine Murphy

And also, a working-class glamorous woman that has been just hugely undermined and

underestimated, who is musical genius, really extremely intelligent woman who has won out through all. I just love it so much. It was such a fabulous podcast. So that would be one of my recommendations.

[00:28:22.290] - Alys Mumford

She was on Colbert the other night and just did a tiny wee bit of singing. He was in tears and he was just saying, "I've had a tough few years. Everyone's had a tough few years. This got me Dolly." I love her so much, and yeah that podcast is great. [Laughter]. Do you know what? This is no shade, but I think it might have already been recommended on the podcast once. I can't remember Amanda... That's fine because everyone should - if people didn't listen to us a few years ago. But it is a cracking podcast. Excellent recommendation.

[00:28:52.460] - Amanda Aitken

I would go back and listen to it again just because it is such a good listen. Also, I was going to say, Miley Cyrus, obviously, Dolly's Goddaughter, was on one of these late-night shows the other night, I don't know who, one of the Jimmys, I think, I don't know. [Laughter]. But she was talking about... she was talking about how Dolly only communicates with her via fax, which I just thought was so good.

[00:29:23.030] - Alys Mumford

Oh, incredible. That's very good.

[00:29:25.900] - Amanda Aitken

Dolly gets a typewriter out, writes a letter, faxes it and then someone has to then take it from fax form into iPhone form for Miley Cyrus. I was like, that's such a beautiful way of communicating.

[00:29:41.210] - Alys Mumford

That's amazing. I love it.

[00:29:42.900] - Catherine Murphy

I have actually, for my big birthday a couple of years ago, big 4-0. I went to Dollywood in Tennessee and it was everything I ever dreamed of and more. It was wonderful. It was actually really good. From a social justice point of view, it was actually really interesting because it was one of the most affordable theme parks I've ever been to.

[00:30:19.890] - Catherine Murphy

It was in Tennessee and it was a really diverse group of people that were going to it on the day we went. It was free for everyone, just randomly and there was loads of stuff built in that was really thoughtful about catering to people on a lower socio-economic and lower incomes. It was wonderful in that sense - [crosstalk 00:30:52] that it just met what I was hoping for - it absolutely met my expectations. There was roller coasters, and rocky mountains, theme rides, and all sorts of stuff.

[00:31:01.110] - Alys Mumford

Amazing. I will go next, Amanda, give you time to think.

[00:31:07.030] - Amanda Aitken

I mean, do you know what, my actual recommendation was country music related. Now I'm like-

[00:31:13.910] - Alys Mumford

Incredible.

[00:31:14.420] - Amanda Aitken

I'll save it.

[00:31:14.460] - Alys Mumford

You can do that you can't save it. I'm going to recommend a book. It's a book that lots of people probably read because it's quite old now, but *Klara and the Sun* by Kazuo Ishiguro. I have just been listening to an audiobook and it's so good. Really enjoying it. I think one of the few men that can write

women, and in this case, writing a robot woman, it's real good. Go read it or listen to it. I'm listening to it from my local library, so do that.

[00:31:49.160] - Alys Mumford

I'm also going to have a cheeky two, because it's the last one, obviously, the *Great British Sewing Bee*. Did I already recommend this? I don't know.

[00:31:57.190] - Amanda Aitken

Probably.

[00:31:57.190] - Alys Mumford

Even if I did, watch *The Great British Sewing Bee*, people cutting things and making garments out of them. Wonderful. Amanda, give us your country music rec.

[00:32:07.600] - Amanda Aitken

Well, there's a book that came out this month called, *Her Country* and it's about women of country music and how they fought against the male-dominated industry to become successful. But it's only done from the last 20 years, so it's more modern. It starts '90s with the chicks and all the battles that they faced.

[00:32:30.170] - Amanda Aitken

Side note, if you've not watched the documentary, *Shut Up and Sing* must watch that. But then also this book goes from there then through the Shania Twain era to Kacey Musgraves and all that stuff. But yeah, really good insight into what women in country music faced, trying to make it in the industry and the backlash to that. Really interesting book.

[00:32:54.580] - Amanda Aitken

But also my cheeky number two also is going to be that I listened to a podcast this morning that my friend recommended to me and it's called, *Cocaine & Rhinestones* and it's about the history of country music. I just listened to one about Loretta Lynn and how she got a song banned, which had many songs banned on country radio. But the first one she got banned was called, *The Pill* and it was about the contraceptive pill and it was a deep dive into the history of that and how she got banned from country radio because of it.

[00:33:24.760] - Amanda Aitken

Then they talk about all different songs that women have had banned, which are just ridiculous reasons. Just being an outspoken woman meant country radio weren't going to play you, which ties into all. That's my recommendations.

[00:33:45.250] - Catherine Murphy

Well if you're going to have two - can I have another cheeky one? [Laughter]

[00:33:45.250] - Amanda Aitken

Of course.

[00:33:46.250] - Alys Mumford

Go for it - you know you had two good things [Laughter] [crosstalk 00:33:48].

[00:33:51.050] - Catherine Murphy

The other one I would recommend is—I don't know you've seen it. It's a TV show that's on BBC, it's on iPlayer, and it's called *Alma's Not Normal*. It was written and starring a stand up comedian called Sophie Willan. I think she won a BAFTA recently for it.

[00:34:12.280] - Catherine Murphy

The reason I loved it was yet another example, along with Michaela Coel's, *I May Destroy You* of the antithesis of the *Fleabag* phenomenon. I really find it annoying when everything is well, I've just done it, but every [laughter] [inaudible 00:34:37] one woman female lead and the complexity of womanhood

and exploring a woman moving through life in a TV show is the new *Fleabag*.

[00:34:48.250] - Catherine Murphy

But I think that both of those things, *Alma's Not Normal* - it's better than *Fleabag*. So I would really highly recommend this. But a young woman growing up, coming out of the care system and just her struggles in life and it's hilariously, hilariously funny. As I say the women who wrote it, she just won a BAFTA for it and it's on iPlayer. It's brilliant, *Alma's Not Normal*.

[00:35:11.820] - Amanda Aitken

We'll have to watch that.

[00:35:12.850] - Alys Mumford

Incredible. We will link to all of those various—I think we all managed to squeeze about six recommendations in there in the show notes, so they should keep you going while you're missing our dulcet tones. You can just listen to country music. Put on your cowboy boots. Oh, no. I can't add another recommendation. That -we'll stop there. Off recording. Guys, I'm going to talk to you about the *Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders* programme I've been watching, honestly. [Laughter].

[00:35:45.700] - Alys Mumford

On that note, thank you for joining us, Catherine, and telling us about yourself, introducing yourself to our listeners. Thank you, Amanda, for being an amazing podcast producer and editing all of my mistakes. Thank you, listeners, for sticking with us and carry on staying safe. Seeing as it's the last episode, I think I can say, catch you on the flip side.

[00:36:11.820]

[Jingle]

[00:36:18.290] - Amanda Aitken

On The Engender is hosted by Alys Mumford and produced by myself, Amanda Aitken. The music featured throughout was written and performed by Bossy Love. To find out more about the work of Engender, head to engender.scot or follow us on Twitter @EngenderScot and be sure to click, *Subscribe* to this podcast so you don't miss the next episode.