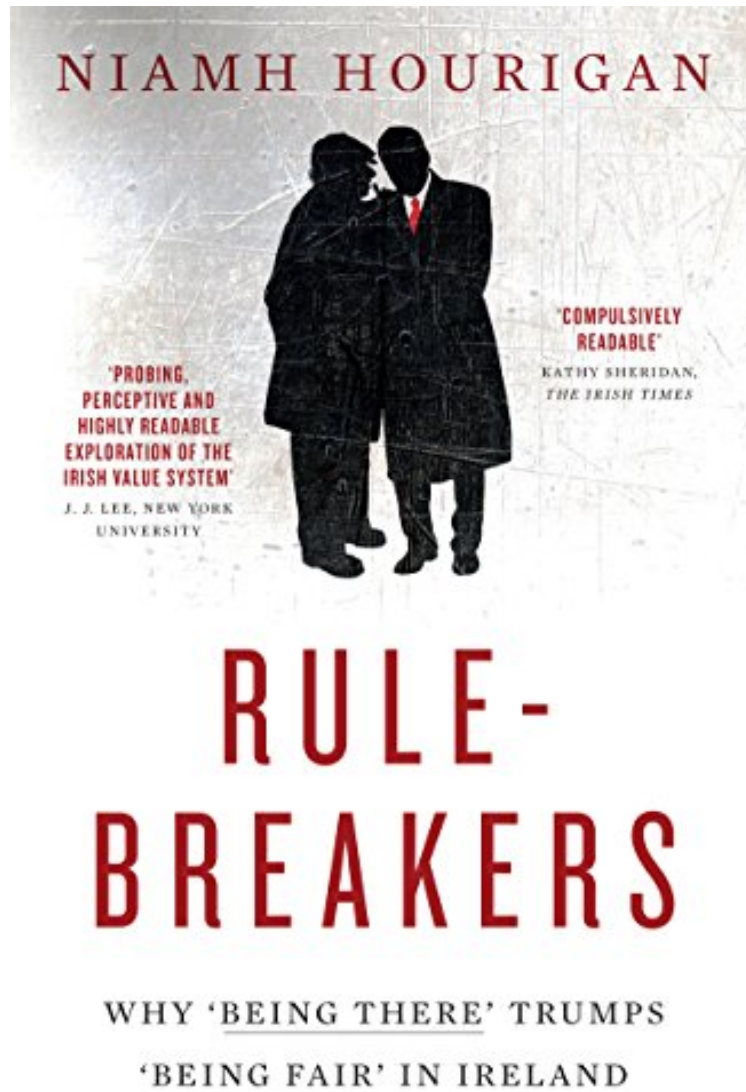


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Niamh Hourigan

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Ireland is a nation on a value system that equates 'being good' with 'being there for each other'. As a society we favour 'minding our own business' over 'doing what we're told'. So far, so Irish. It's become a commonplace to refer to the excesses of the Celtic Tiger years as an aberration, the product of a short-lived and inexplicable mania for cheap credit and unregulated consumption. But what if the roots of Ireland's economic crisis ran far deeper than the property boom or the hubris of the establishment elites who enabled it? In this, a ground-breaking survey of the Irish national character from its colonial history to its current day dramas, acclaimed sociologist Niamh Hourigan draws on a wealth of new and compelling research to reveal the fundamental conflict at the heart of the Irish society: that between our traditional faith in the politics of intimacy, all handshakes and favours, and the ruling systems in which we've invested power. The Ireland that emerges from her research is a country where outcomes are decided by who rather than what you know, and where – for good or for bad – rules are very much made to be broken. Probing, perceptive and highly readable exploration of the Irish value system. J. J. Lee, New York University; Compulsively readable. Kathy Sheridan, The Irish Times; Lucid, engaging and persuasive hellip; every politician should read this – and so should every voter. Colin Murphy, The Guarantee

About the Author Niamh Hourigan is a Senior Lecturer at the School of Sociology and Philosophy, University College Cork, where she specialises in the study of minorities groups, media and, most recently the sociological impact of debt and austerity on the Irish middle class. Having worked as a journalist and radio presenter while completing her PhD, she continues to make regular appearances in the national media, primarily as a columnist (Irish Independent, Irish Times and Irish Examiner) and expert commentator ('The Right Hook', 'Tonight with Vincent Browne', 'Morning Ireland', 'Today with Pat Kenny' and 'Prime Time').