

Michael adores smoking cigarettes, and has been doing so since he was 17 years old. He started to smoke because he wanted to be as cool and sexy as Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall are when they smoke in *To Have And Have Not* (1945), and immediately liked it. Bacall after all has what must be the sexiest smoking line of all time when saying “you know how to whistle don’t you Steve? You just put your lips together and blow...” Michael has given up smoking twice, but both times started again after a period of nine months. Michael finds it impossible to write without smoking. Now approaching 50 years of age, Michael remains healthy and doesn’t inhale cigarette smoke. He also smokes very mild cigarettes, and has no intention of giving up again. Michael believes the passive smoking scare to be a public nonsense, and deeply resents the 48% tax on cigarettes. In Britain at least, smokers pay £9.3 billion a year in tax, more than enough to pay for the entire National Health psychiatric services. And Michael is deeply opposed to the NHS. It’s the nanny state writ large.

Michael believes writing is a sacred pursuit. Writers are the eyes, the ears, the witness of the people, the witnesses of truth in all its forms. Michael rejected the soap opera of an *Albion Market* Granada TV commission in 1984 in favour of finishing his PhD. Financially this was the wrong decision, but philosophically it was the right one, since all soap operas exist only to keep the working classes ignorant, as Albert Camus pointed out in *L’Homme Revolté*.

Michael is a French revolutionary, a *citoyen* of 1789. Democracy is impossible without revolutions, and it normally takes more than one. Writing this in November 2011, there currently needs to be a new one in Ukraine, given the unjust imprisonment of the former prime minister Yulia Tymoshenko simply for signing a gas contract (the EU have strongly objected as well). Michael is also a Roman Catholic in many moral ways, although he doesn’t practice because he believes God is dead, as he makes clear in his mental health memoirs *Angels, Cleopatra And Psychosis* and *Leonardo, Romancia And Ra*. Michael however believes abortion is a moral crime, legalised murder (there have been 5.2 million abortions in England alone since 1967), and he also believes sex should be confined to marriage, although he knows this will never be absolutely achieved. However, even as late as 1960, 70% of women in England married as virgins. Michael believes other things about sex as well. Prostitutes, hookers, call girls, professional escorts and courtesans should all be respected and fully legalised. Brothels should be legal too, as they were in Paris until as late as 1946, when they were banned to punish the girls for sleeping with German officers during World War Two, this despite the fact that most of the officers were from the in the main honourable Wehrmacht. It’s the SS and Gestapo that were the problem.

Ever since the 1832 Parliamentary Reform Act UK, the British (by which Michael really means the English), have been congratulating themselves on establishing a democracy without having a revolution. This explains why most English literature is so studiously apolitical in both the 19th and 20th centuries. The British are wrong. If the Peterloo Massacre had been in London and not Manchester, there probably would have been a British revolution during the 1820s, but British society today remains a closed clique of public school boys with the monarchy as the ultimate validator. Monarchies are incompatible with democracy, and, in the 21st century, very rare. Even the Queen of England (herself from the theological backwaters of Protestantism), claims direct descent from God, as all monarchs ultimately must, and that family tree got lost long ago.

Michael rejects the Protestant Settlement in England of the *King James Bible*, most recently restated in 2011 by both *The Bush* and *Shakespeare’s Globe* theatres, and he also rejects the Protestant Tudor apologies of the plays of William Shakespeare. Shakespeare plays are always too long, the iambic pentameter poetry is inimical to true drama’s essential conflict, and they are frequently very badly written (the 4th act of *Antony And Cleopatra* for example).

In 2009, Michael produced his first film script, a version of Sir Walter Scott’s novel *Redgauntlet*, it being a tale of Jacobite rebellion against the Protestant king of England, set in 1765 on the Solway Firth. Next, Michael plans to adapt for film Ivan Turgenev’s 1871 novel *Virgin Soil*. Michael never watches television, he hates reality TV and celebrity culture in general, but he does love film. However, he doesn’t like modern multiplex cinema screens, believing them to be both too big and too loud. Further Michael doesn’t believe Hollywood has

produced a truly great film since Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall's *Key Largo* of 1948. *Terminator 3* and *Pirates Of The Caribbean 3* demonstrate everything that is wrong with Hollywood today, a case of always putting the profit first. The terminator has been destroyed forever at the end of *Terminator 2* after all, so how can any plot bring back a new terminator for a third time? *Pirates Of The Caribbean 3* is one of the worst films ever made. The plot makes no sense at all, the movie is far too long and it takes 45 minutes for Captain Jack Sparrow to even appear. And when he does appear, why is he found to be hallucinating in a desert? How on earth did he and his ship end up there? There's no reason at all.

Michael was married to an English Protestant 1991-1995, from which relationship Michael has one son, Robert, now studying drama and theatre studies at Kent University. Michael likes living in big cities, and dislikes countryside walking. Long distance walking tires you out, but the true problem with the countryside is that there's nobody there. Michael listens to a lot of music. When younger, he listened a great deal to Gustav Mahler and Ludwig van Beethoven, but now finds the overall lack of lyrics in classical music a major drawback. Nowadays, Michael finds male rock music disturbingly hedonistic, and mainly listens to female pop music – Tanita Tikaram, Shania Twain, Alanis Morissette, Spanish language Shakira, Natalie Imbruglia and Gabriella Cilmi. Since his 1995 divorce, Michael has had two romantic relationships, the first with an Indian girl, a linguist who went to Beijing, China, and the second with a Ukrainian girl, an arts manager who went to Chicago, USA. Michael now seeks a relationship with a fertile, continental European actress.

Cigarette statistics: <http://www.the-tma.org.uk/tma-publications-research/facts-figures/uk-cigarette-prices/>