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Martin Amis calls for euthanasia booths on street corners

[Maurice Chittenden](#)

THE novelist Martin Amis has called for euthanasia booths on street corners, where elderly people can end their lives with “a martini and a medal”.

The author of *Time's Arrow* and *London Fields* even predicts a Britain torn by internal strife in the 2020s if the demographic timebomb of the ageing population is not tackled head-on.

“How is society going to support this silver tsunami?” he asks in an interview in *The Sunday Times Magazine* today.

“There'll be a population of demented very old people, like an invasion of terrible immigrants, stinking out the restaurants and cafes and shops. I can imagine a sort of civil war between the old and the young in 10 or 15 years' time.”

Amis, himself 60 and a grandfather, added: “There should be a booth on every corner where you could get a martini and a medal.”

The writer says his support for euthanasia has deepened since the deaths of Lord Kilmarnock, his stepfather, and Dame Iris Murdoch, the writer.

Amis said: “My stepfather died very horribly last year ... He always thought he was going to get better. But he didn't get better and I think the denial of death is a great curse.”

Murdoch died in 1999, aged 79, two years after her husband revealed that she was suffering from Alzheimer's disease. Amis said: “I'd known her a very long time, a friend, I loved her. She was wonderful. I remember talking to her just as it started happening, and she said, ‘I've entered a dark place’. That famous quote. That awareness of loss is gone, the track is gone. You don't know the day you've spent watching *Teletubbies*; it just vanished.”

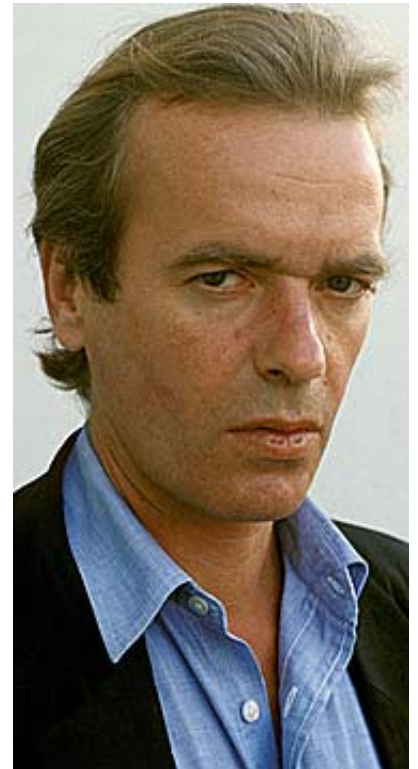
The novelist added: “There should be a way out for rational people who've decided they're in the negative. That should be available, and it should be quite easy. I can't think it would be too hard to establish some sort of test that shows that you understand.”

Would he kill himself? “There's a certain point where your life slips into the negative. If you can recognise that point . . .”

Meanwhile, he says, he is worried about the death of his talent as a writer: “Medical science has again over-vaulted itself so most of us have to live through the death of our talent. Novelists tend to go off at about 70, and I'm in a funk about it. I've got myself into a real paranoid funk about it, how talent dies before the body.”

He is back next month with a long-awaited new novel, *The Pregnant Widow*, after slashing 90% of the manuscript and starting again. An exclusive extract will appear in next week's *Magazine*.

He has already done the first draft of his next novel and got the idea for the one after that. The next book, *The State of England*, will feature characters inspired by Katie Price, who achieved fame as the model Jordan, and Michael Carroll, the “chav” who spent his £9m lottery winnings on new homes, drugs, parties, jewellery and cars.



Amis: fears 'silver tsunami'

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